

**Time** 9.00 am **Public Meeting?** Yes **Type of meeting** Advisory group  
**Venue** Training Room - Ground Floor - Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

## Membership

**Chair** Cllr Andrew Johnson (Lab)

### Labour

Cllr Mary Bateman  
Cllr Roger Lawrence  
Cllr Rita Potter  
Cllr John Reynolds  
Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE  
Cllr Stephen Simkins

### Conservative

Cllr Paul Singh  
Cllr Wendy Thompson

### Liberal Democrat

Quorum for this meeting is three Councillors.

## Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

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Copies of other agendas and reports are available from:

**Website** <http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/>  
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Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

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# Agenda

## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i>   |
|-----------------|--|
| 1               | <b>Apologies for absence</b>   |
| 2               | <b>Declarations of interests</b>   |
| 3               | <b>Minutes of the previous meeting - 24 November 2017</b> (Pages 3 - 6)<br>[For approval]            |
| 4               | <b>Matters arising</b><br>[To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting] |

### DECISION ITEMS

- |   |  |
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| 5 | <b>Community Governance Review</b> (Pages 7 - 12)<br>[To consider an action plan identifying key actions arising from the principal issues identified by the citywide community governance review in 2017] |
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## Attendance

### Members of the Special Advisory Group

Cllr Andrew Johnson (Chair)  
Cllr Mary Bateman  
Cllr Rita Potter  
Cllr John Reynolds  
Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE  
Cllr Stephen Simkins  
Cllr Paul Singh  
Cllr Wendy Thompson

### Employees

Dereck Francis	Democratic Services Officer
Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services Manager
Claire Nye	Director of Finance
Colin Parr	Head of Governance
Martyn Sargeant	Head of Democratic Services

## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No. Title*

- 1 **Apologies for absence**  
Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Roger Lawrence.
- 2 **Declarations of interests**  
No declarations of interests were made.
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting (8 September 2017)**  
Resolved:  
That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 September 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 4 **Matters arising**  
There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 5 **Polling Stations**  
Martyn Sargeant, Head of Democratic Services presented the report on proposed minor changes to the Council's polling station arrangements in the Wednesfield and Graiseley wards, in advance of the elections to be held in 2018.

Councillor John Reynolds commented that polling district NDA (Graiseley) contained an electorate of almost 2000. He asked that the proposed reallocation of the electorate in the Northern districts of Graiseley ward not result in any further increase to the number of the electorate for polling district NDA. With that caveat he was content with the proposed arrangements for Graiseley ward. The Head of Democratic Services reported that he would investigate whether there were small changes that could be made to polling district NDA and consult the Chair of the Advisory Group accordingly.

Councillor Mary Bateman reported that she had no objections to the proposal for the St Albans area (Wednesfield North ward) but she had concerns with the distance electorate living at the top of Kitchen Lane would have to travel to access their new polling station. Councillor Rita Potter added that she did not want the proposals and distances to new polling stations discouraging the electorate from voting. The Head of Democratic Services reported that he would consider whether suitable permanent alternative premises were available, but from previous investigations nothing suitable had been identified. He also undertook to run a campaign in the ward to increase the take up of postal votes.

Councillor Stephen Simkins stated that he was opposed to any closures of polling stations as he felt that it disenfranchised voters.

Other members of the Advisory Group made general observations on the location of polling stations in other wards of the city that could benefit from a review of polling districts. The Chair suggested that these issues be picked up during the statutory five year review of polling stations. He also asked that where members of the Group had individual issues that they raise them with the Head of Democratic Services.

Councillor John Reynolds also suggested that any voters affected by the changes to polling stations receive a letter of explanation with a map highlighting the location of their new polling station.

Resolved:

1. That Council be recommended to:
  - a. Approve that two polling stations in Wednesfield North ward be merged to be one double station and that the number of polling stations in Graiseley ward be reduced from seven to six.
  - b. Delegate authority to the Returning Officer to make such changes to polling station arrangements as may be operationally necessary to ensure the smooth and efficient delivery of the elections in 2018.
2. That the Head of Democratic Services be requested to deliver a campaign in the Wednesfield ward to increase the take up of postal votes.

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### **Changes to the Constitution**

Jaswinder Kaur, Democratic Services Manager presented the report on proposed changes made to the constitution for approval by the Council.

Claire Nye, Director of Finance requested a slight amendment to the proposed change to Part 4 - Financial Procedure Rules, to enable timely decisions in relation to new external funding received by the Council. It was requested that the words 'or Cabinet (Resources) Panel' be added following the word 'Cabinet' where it appeared. The Advisory Group supported the proposed change.

The Advisory Group also discussed the rationale for the proposed amendment to Part 4 - Contract Procedure Rules (Section 3.10) relating to the removal of the requirement for the Cabinet Member for Governance to approve agency staff above a day rate of £350. They also discussed the threshold above which engagement of agency staff should be approved by the Cabinet Member for Governance and the process for open and transparent reporting of engagements approved. It was agreed that the Cabinet Member for Governance be required to approve the engagement of agency staff above a day rate of £500 and for the Human Resources Business Partner to approve engagements with a day rate below £500; and that the quarterly report on the use of agency staff be submitted to Cabinet (Resources) Panel for information.

Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE also reported that she had concerns about day rates paid to interim employees. The Director of Finance advised the Group that any interim agency staff appointed above the threshold were reported to the Council's Strategic Executive Board for sign off.

The Chair congratulated the Democratic Services Manager and other employees involved in the work on the refresh of the Constitution.

Councillor Wendy Thompson added that the refresh had been a huge piece of work and important tidying aspects had been addressed. She indicated that there had been missed opportunities during the work, and asked that as part of the iterative approach to maintaining the Constitution, consideration be given to the Rules of Debate in Full Council with a view to them more mirroring the House of Commons rules, and to the provision in the Constitution to support and encourage members of the public to attend and participate in Council meetings.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to:

1. Adopt the new format of the Council's Constitution.
2. Adopt the changes to the current content as summarised in the report and detailed in Appendix 1 to the report subject to:
  - a. The proposed change to Part 4 – Financial Procedure Rules, to enable timely decisions in relation to new external funding received by the Council being amended by the inclusion of the words '**or Cabinet (Resources) Panel**' between the words 'Cabinet' and 'and' to read as follows:

“Where all of the following apply, an overall increase or decrease in the Council's total budget may be approved Cabinet **or Cabinet (Resources) Panel** and not require the approval by Council:”

and at the end of clause (iv) to read as follows:

“(iv) The Section 151 Officer agrees that approval may be granted by Cabinet or **Cabinet (Resources) Panel.**”

b. The proposed change to Part 4 - Contract Procedure Rules (Section 3.10) being amended to require the Cabinet Member for Governance to approve the engagement of agency staff above a day rate of £500 and for the Human Resources Business Partner to approve engagements with a day rate below £500; and

That quarterly report on the use of Agency Staff also be submitted to Cabinet (Resources) Panel for information.

3. Authorise the Director of Governance to implement the new format and the changes set out in Appendix 1 to the report, as now amended, with immediate effect.
4. Note that further amendments to the Constitution would be presented in May 2018.

## 7 **Calendar of Meetings 2018-2019**

A revised timetable for Council and committee meetings for the next Council Year (2018-2019) was tabled.

The Chair reported that he had asked for comments on the revised calendar from the political groups on the Council by next Friday with a view to the schedule of dates being submitted to Council on 13 December 2017 for approval.

Resolved:

1. That the revised City of Wolverhampton Council Calendar of Meetings for 2018-2019 be endorsed for recommendation to Full Council on the 13 December 2017.
2. That consultation with the political groups on the City of Wolverhampton Council Calendar of Meetings for 2018-2019 be approved.
3. That any amendments to the City of Wolverhampton Council Calendar of Meetings for 2018-2019 be delegated to the Chair of Special Advisory Group in consultation with the Director of Governance following consultation with political groups.

<b>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</b>	<b>Special Advisory Group</b> 16 February 2018
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<b>Report title</b>	Community governance review	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Andrew Johnson Resources	
<b>Key decision</b>	No	
<b>In forward plan</b>	No	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Kevin O'Keefe, Governance	
<b>Originating service</b>	Democratic Services	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Martyn Sargeant	Head of Democratic Services
	Tel	01902 555045
	Email	<a href="mailto:martyn.sargeant@wolverhampton.gov.uk">martyn.sargeant@wolverhampton.gov.uk</a>
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	n/a	

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**Recommendation(s) for action or decision:**

The Advisory Group is recommended to:

1. Agree the action plan arising from the community governance review.
2. Recommend that the Council formally closes the citywide community governance review and delivers the action plan arising from it.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 To outline an action plan identifying the key actions arising from the principal issues identified by the citywide community governance review in 2017.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Council received a formal request for a community governance review, specifically in relation to Tettenhall Wightwick and Tettenhall Regis, to which it had a statutory obligation to respond. As the request met the legislative criteria for triggering a review, the Council agreed to undertake a community governance review during 2017. The review was in two parts – a specific review focused on the two Tettenhall wards and a wider review looking at the city as a whole.
- 2.2 A principal authority can initiate a community governance review of its own volition or in response to a petition from local electors. Guidance from the government in 2010 recommended that a community governance review should take place every ten to 15 years. A review should consider the arrangements for parish councils (including, where they are already in existence, whether they should be discontinued) with the objective of ensuring that local government arrangements are ‘effective and convenient’ as well as reflecting ‘the identities and interests of the community in that area’.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 7 July 2017, the Special Advisory group reviewed the outcomes from consultation in Tettenhall about the possibility of implementing a parish council in that area. Its subsequent recommendation to Council was not to proceed with a parish council, which was agreed by the Council at its meeting on 19 July.
- 2.4 At a subsequent meeting on 8 September 2017, the Special Advisory Group reviewed the outcomes from the citywide consultation and requested further work to be undertaken to identify how the Council could most appropriately respond to the issues highlighted by residents. This report details the action plan arising from that work.
- 2.5 The key findings from the citywide review were:
- (1) There was not clear support for ‘harder’ forms of community governance (e.g. a parish council) but there was interest in mechanisms to facilitate engagement with and influence of decision-making processes.
  - (2) There is scope for both the Council and Councillors to improve communication with residents.
- 2.6 The findings from the community governance review were supported by the outcomes from the Local Government Association’s peer review earlier in 2017, specifically that the Council should seek to:
- (1) Strengthen the connection between city leadership and community leadership at a neighbourhood level.
  - (2) Develop a stronger and more consistent communication on the social value outcomes and impact for Wulfrunians.



### 3.0 Action plan

3.1 The table below highlights a series of actions intended to address the main points arising from the community governance review, and facilitate improved communication and engagement with residents. These will also support the actions arising from the LGA's peer review, as well as the emerging empowering communities work stream under Public Service Reform.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>To facilitate</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Commission an independent review of current citizen perception testing ('rep tracker') and make cost-effective recommendations for improvement.	A robust methodology for testing communication with residents and levels of engagement.	Insight and Performance Manager	May 2018
Develop a business case for an annual, independent resident perceptions survey.	A clear understanding of how residents perceive the Council and its activities.	Head of Corporate Communications	April 2018
Develop a new public consultation and engagement strategy, including a one-stop consultation portal.	Enabling local people to engage with and influence decision-making and service delivery.	Head of Corporate Communications	Sept 2018
Exploit the functionality in the new CRM to 'push' engagement opportunities about pertinent issues to residents.	Enabling local people to engage with and influence decision-making and service delivery.	Head of Corporate Communications	May 2018
Develop and deliver a local 'Be a Councillor' initiative (as part of the LGA programme).	Enabling local people to engage with and influence decision-making and service delivery.	Electoral Services Project Manager	July 2018
Consider a scrutiny review or task and finish group on Councillor engagement.	Enabling local people to engage with and influence decision-making and service delivery.	Chair of Scrutiny Board/Head of Corporate Communications	June 2018
Consider scope to incorporate public questions at Council or other meetings.	Enabling local people to engage with and influence decision-making and service delivery.	Leader/Head of Corporate Communications	Sept 2018

<b>Objective</b>	<b>To facilitate</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Develop a package of social media training for Councillors, building on the experience of existing champions.	Enabling local people to engage with and influence decision-making and service delivery.	Head of Corporate Communications	Sept 2018
Promote Crowdfund Wolves* as a mechanism for local people to influence and fund local initiatives.	Enabling local people to promote and directly influence local priorities.	Head of Local Economy	April 2018
Develop a business case for the Council to contribute funding to Crowdfund Wolves initiatives (building on the Community First Neighbourhood Match fund**).	Enabling local people to promote and directly influence local priorities.	Head of Local Economy	July 2018
Develop an online 'community offer' to improve information and advice for residents.	Signposting local services and empowering local people to make their own decisions about service delivery.	Head of Strategic Commissioning	April 2019

\* Crowdfund Wolves is a crowdfunding platform for civic projects in Wolverhampton. It utilises smart technology to attract funding and support for community initiatives as part of Spacehive, the UK's dedicated civic crowdfunding platform.

Spacehive has streamlined key processes involved in proposing, funding and delivering projects – from checking the viability of ideas to identifying and applying for funding from grant-makers and the “crowd” at the same time and reporting back on the impact they make.

People can pledge from £2 to support projects and the money only leaves their bank account should the project secure their target funding. However it is the first and only tool in the UK to integrate grant funding and crowdfunding and has the support of funders such as Esmee Fairbairn, and Growing a Greener Britain. It can also capture experts' time as match funding. As a result, the success rate for projects on Spacehive is much higher than other basic crowdfunding sites – a 52% project success rate compared to a crowdfunding platform average of 24%.

Crowdfund Wolves launched in November 2017, and work is underway supporting a number of community projects to develop their ideas in order to pitch them successfully.

\*\* The Community First Neighbourhood Match Fund was an innovative small grants programme targeting deprived wards and getting local people involved in funding decisions and delivering projects. The £30m programme was managed by the Community Development Foundation (CDF) for Cabinet Office between April 2011 and March 2015. The programme was independently evaluated by IPSOS Mori and the New Economics Foundation through a combination of surveys of those involved, longitudinal cases studies within a small selection of communities and analysis of administrative data.

The evaluation found that distributing public money using panels of local people is a good model for small grant funding programmes. Nearly 600 communities (594) established panels, and these panels were able to attract bids for local projects in keeping with the needs of the local community. Importantly panels were able to attract matched funding in the delivery of actual projects. In total panels made £27.2 million in funding recommendations to 17,956 projects. This yielded £93 million in matched funding, including just over £15.3 million in cash match and over 5.5 million volunteering hours.

#### **4.0 Financial implications**

- 4.1 The costs of the community governance review were met from the £50,000 budget set aside for that purpose. At this stage it is expected that any communications costs incurred in pursuit of the action plan objectives will be funded from the £159,000 corporate marketing budget held by Corporate Communications. It is anticipated that funding will be required to support the Crowdfund Wolves initiative. This will be assessed as part of the business case referred to in paragraph 3.1.  
[GE/06022018/R]

#### **5.0 Legal implications**

- 5.1 Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, decisions on whether to implement parish council arrangements and the associated electoral provisions were delegated to principal authorities, with due regard to the views of local people. This legislation was updated in the Legislative Reform (Community Governance Reviews) Order 2015.  
[TS/06022018/Q]

#### **6.0 Equalities implications**

- 6.1 Individual initiatives will be the subject of specific equalities analysis as required. There are no specific equalities implications arising from the report itself.

#### **7.0 Environmental implications**

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

#### **8.0 Human resources implications**

- 8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

## 9.0 Corporate landlord implications

9.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

## 10.0 Schedule of background papers

Report to the Special Advisory Group, 8 September 2017: *Community Governance Review*

<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=165&MId=7521&Ver=4>

Report to the Special Advisory Group, 7 July 2017: *Community Governance Review*

<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s47461/Community%20Governance%20Review.pdf>

Report to the Special Advisory Group, 2 May 2017: *Community Governance Review update*

<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s41448/Community%20Governance%20Review%20Update.pdf>

Report to the Special Advisory Group, 13 January 2017: *Community Governance Review – draft consultation document*

<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=165&MId=5971&Ver=4>

Report to the Special Advisory Group, 21 October 2016: *Community Governance Review*

<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=165&MId=5968&Ver=4>