

# Special Advisory Group

## Minutes - 8 September 2017

### 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
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 - 7 July 2017**  
Resolved:
  1. That Councillor Paul Singh be added to the list of apologies received for the meeting.
  2. That the fourth paragraph to minute no. 5 (Community Governance Review) be corrected by the substitution of the words 'a number of people are on lower incomes' with the words 'a lot of people are on low incomes'.
  3. That subject to 1 and 2 above, the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 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 that were not otherwise covered on the agenda for the meeting.

## 5 **Community Governance Review**

Following on from the decision approved by Council on 19 July 2017 not to proceed with the implementation of a parish council for the two Tettenhall wards, Martyn Sargeant, Head of Democratic Services presented the report on progress of the community governance review in regard to the rest of the city. In doing so, he circulated a paper correcting the table at paragraph 4.3 to the report, which should read as follows:

- A majority of residents do not feel well-informed by the Council (59%), whilst over two-thirds do not feel well-informed by their local Councillor.

	<b>North-east</b>	<b>South-east</b>	<b>South-west</b>
Well-informed by Council	36%	30%	41%
Well-informed by Councillors	31%	21%	23%

The Head of Service reported that the principal headline from the citywide consultations was that there was no strong sense for more community governance across the city, but there was support for more informal methods of community governance. The results from online surveys conducted by Ipsos indicated that there was scope for the Council to engage more effectively with communities across the city. In light of this it was proposed to undertake further work with local communities.

Members of the Advisory Group supported exploring 'softer' community governance models in operation within the West Midlands and nationally. It was also felt that any model(s) needed to grow out of the community and that ways of assisting existing community forums in a cost effective may also needed to be identified.

Councillor Stephen Simkins commented that it would be useful if a session were arranged on how the Council communicated with local communities and how effective were those methods. The Head of Democratic Services agreed and suggested that a paper on that question could be submitted to Scrutiny Board for their consideration and comment.

The Advisory Group also discussed the level of response to the citywide community governance consultation compared to that for the Tettenhall wards, and how levels of awareness could be raised across the city. The Head of Democratic Services reported that the level of information provided for the Tettenhall community governance review meant that there were more levels of awareness in that part of the city.

Resolved:

1. That the results of the citywide community governance review consultation be noted.
2. That proposals for further work to explore how the Council can more effectively communicate with and engage local communities be noted.
3. That it be noted that the outcomes of the additional work referred to in 2 above, together with a proposal for a formal recommendation to Full Council on the citywide community governance review would be submitted to a future meeting of the Advisory Group.