

## **Wiveliscombe Town Council – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

### **Proposals for a Review on the Governance of Wiveliscombe Town Council**

#### **Recommendations**

1. That a working group be established to review how Wiveliscombe Town Council is governed, including:
  - a) The Council's Standing Orders and Code of Conduct for Members.
  - b) Committees, working groups and representation on outside bodies.
  - c) Terms of reference and delegated powers for committees.
  - d) The number of town councillors elected at future elections, including how they represent areas within the town and how current arrangements could be changed if requested by the Town Council.
2. Up to five town councillors be nominated to form the working group, along with up to three nominees from local organisations, such as the Civic Society, 10 Parishes Business Group and youth groups.
3. The working group to report back within six months with findings and any recommendations for consideration by the Town Council, which may include an interim report to decide on initial proposals that then require further work.
4. That interim appointments are made by the Town Council to Committees and Working Groups, pending any changes made as a result of this review.

#### **Background**

The election of a new Town Council is a good time to consider a review of its governance and whether arrangements are still fit for purpose.

Over recent years, the council has taken on new responsibilities, notably public toilets and funding for the library. In the last year, questions have also been raised over the interpretation of the Council's Standing Orders and Code of Conduct for Members.

Wiveliscombe Town Council has 18 town councillors, which some think a large number for its size. Somerset West and Taunton Council have advised that the Town Council could request that the district council undertake a community governance review for the town, using powers in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Somerset West and Taunton Council would decide how to undertake such a review, which needs to include consultation of local people.

Guidance, models and templates provided by the National Association of Local Councils should be considered as part of the review. Other Town and Parish Councils also have a variety of structures, especially for their committees, and it could be worth investigating whether features of these may be worth considering for Wiveliscombe Town Council, particularly those for other councils with similar circumstances and responsibilities.