

COUNCIL

21st NOVEMBER 2017

REPORT OF HEAD OF LEADERSHIP SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY

A.5 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEWS

(Report prepared by Karen Neath)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an update on Community Governance Reviews across the district.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At the meeting of Full Council on 5th September 2017 it was agreed that:-

“a Community Governance Review be undertaken in relation to the land in the St Osyth District Council area but not in the St Osyth Parish area.”
- Accordingly, draft Terms of Reference for this review are attached at Appendix A for approval.
- At the meeting of Full Council on 5th September 2017 it was further agreed that:-

“in principle, a wider Community Governance Review of parished and unparished areas in the Tendring District be supported subject to specific terms of reference, having regard to the initial views which are currently being sought, coming to a future meeting of Council for agreement.”
- The initial views submitted were considered by the Electoral Review Working Group at their meeting on 7th November.
 - 16 Town / Parish Councils responded and 11 did not.
 - Of those that responded only 1 – Harwich Town Council would welcome a review of its number of councillors.
 - Lawford, Manningtree and Mistley have discussed the idea of a joint parish but this does not appear to be fully decided at this time.
 - Clacton Town Partnership responded and were fully supportive of a Clacton Town Council. No other comments in support of a Town Council for Clacton were received but neither were any objections.
 - 3 district councillors and 3 parish councillors replied.
 - 5 residents responded but of these 4 were expressing concerns about the running of the same Parish Council.
- The working group discussed the initial responses. They also had in front of them a summary of the current position regarding the number of seats on each Town / Parish Council, the number of seats filled, suggested number of seats and whether an election had been held in 2011 and / or 2015. Following discussion it was agreed that a review be carried out for those that have asked for it and that those that have had elections in 2011 and / or 2015 are not reviewed. Officers were asked to provide further information on those which had not been contested in both 2011 and 2015

including functions, precept and the make-up of the Council. This will be considered at a future meeting of the Working Group to determine whether the group wishes to make any recommendation about Community Governance Reviews being undertaken.

- In summary, the working group concluded that :-
 - A Community Governance Review of the number of seats on Harwich Town Council be undertaken.
 - The suggested merger of Lawford, Manningtree and Mistley Parish Councils be kept under review and a Community Governance Review be undertaken if all three Councils ask for one.
 - The position regarding a Town Council for Clacton be further considered following consideration of the related motion at Council.
 - No Community Governance Review be taken forward at this time for the following Town / Parish Councils: Bradfield, Brightlingsea, Frinton and Walton, Great Bromley, Thorrington, Weeley and Wix.
 - Further information be considered for other Town / Parish Councils.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:-

- a) **The terms of reference attached at Appendix A, for a Community Governance Review for the land in the St Osyth District Council area but not in the St Osyth parish area, be agreed and that this Community Governance Review be commenced;**
- b) **a Community Governance Review of the number of seats on Harwich Town Council be undertaken and that terms of reference be brought back to the next Council meeting for approval;**
- c) **no Community Governance Review be taken forward at this time for the following Town / Parish Councils: Bradfield, Brightlingsea, Frinton and Walton, Great Bromley, Manningtree, Mistley, Thorrington, Weeley and Wix;**
- d) **a Community Governance Review to merge Lawford, Manningtree and Mistley Parish Councils be undertaken only if all three councils ask for one;**
- e) **Community Governance Reviews for areas of the Tendring District not mentioned in a) to d) above be further considered by the Electoral Review Working Group following the receipt of further information with their recommendations brought back to a future Council meeting.**

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The Council is encouraged to periodically consider whether Community Governance Reviews are undertaken.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

Some cost would be incurred in undertaking Community Governance Review consultations but this is not expected to be significant and can be met from existing budgets. Any subsequent decisions to abolish, set up or otherwise change the

arrangements for Town and Parish Councils would be likely to have financial implications but would depend on the action to be taken and cannot be quantified at this time.

Risk

Community Governance Reviews would need to be carefully considered and undertaken in line with statute and guidance to ensure that the outcome is the best one for local residents.

LEGAL

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 sets out the legal responsibility and arrangements for undertaking Community Governance Reviews.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are none.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

There are no background papers.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review – St Osyth