

# COUNCIL

15 MAY 2018

## REPORT OF HEAD OF LEADERSHIP SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY

### A.1 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 21<sup>st</sup> November 2017 a report was considered on Community Governance Reviews and it was agreed that:-
  - a) *the terms of reference attached at Appendix A to item A.5 of the Report of the Head of Leadership Support and Community, 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 now 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, Mistle, Thorrington, Weeley and Wix;*
  - d) *a Community Governance Review to merge Lawford, Manningtree and Mistle Parish Councils be undertaken only if all three parish councils ask for one; and*
  - 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 and that their recommendations be brought to a future Council meeting.*
- At the meeting of Full Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018 a further report was considered on Community Governance Reviews and it was agreed that:-
  - the terms of reference attached at Appendix A to item A.5 of the Report of the Head of Leadership Support and Community, for a Community Governance Review for the number of seats on Harwich Town Council, be approved.*
- The consultation for both the St Osyth and Harwich Community Governance Reviews ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.
- The Electoral Review Working Group considered the responses to the two consultations at a meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018. It was noted that:-
  - In relation to the Harwich Community Governance Review that Harwich Town Council had requested an increase in the number of Councillors from 16 to 17 to even out the representation across the wards. There were 26 replies of which 6 (24%) supported an increase in Councillors and 19 (76%) did not.

Having considered the outcome of the public consultation, the Working Group agreed to recommend to Council that the number of Harwich Town Councillors remained at 16 with the existing ward distribution.

- The St Osyth Community Governance Review was implemented because there is currently a small area of land that, following the District Boundary Review, sits within the St Osyth District Council boundary but is not within the St Osyth Parish boundary. The review asked whether this section of land should be brought within the St Osyth Parish boundary. There were 8 responses of which 5 (62%) agreed with the proposed boundary change and 3 (38%) did not.

Having considered the outcome of the public consultation, the Working Group agreed to recommend to Council that the boundary change should be implemented, in order to make the Parish and District boundaries coterminous.

- The remaining timetable for both the St Osyth and Harwich Community Governance Reviews is as follows:-

Action	Date
Draft recommendations considered by Full Council	15 May 2018
Consult on draft recommendations	16 May 2018 to 15 June 2018
Consideration by Electoral Review Working Group	June 2018
Final recommendations considered by Full Council	3 July 2018
Final proposal and order publicised	September 2018
Final arrangements incorporated in Local Elections	May 2019

- In relation to other Community Governance Reviews, as set out above, it was agreed at the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November that for some Town and Parish Councils further information be gathered. This further information was also considered by the Working Group at the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

Having considered the additional information (and following a further update provided to the Working Group after the meeting in relation to Thorpe-le-Soken Parish Council) it was agreed that the Working Group recommends to Council that no further Community Governance Reviews be undertaken. This is on the basis that:-

- no other request for a Community Governance Review had been received from any Town and Parish Council;
- no other member of the public had raised any relevant issues; and
- the additional information had not provided any overriding indication that any other Community Governance Review needs to be undertaken.

- The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 provides for a principal council to undertake Community Governance Reviews but unless these are triggered by a community governance petition and certain criteria apply, they are at the principal Council's discretion. Apart from the reviews of St Osyth and Harwich, there is no statutory requirement for the Council in relation to the other

Town and Parish Councils. However, the work that has been undertaken in considering whether Community Governance Reviews should take place is in accordance with the former Department of Communities and Local Government's good practice recommendation to consider conducting a review every 10-15 years, as set out in their 2010 "Guidance on Community Governance Reviews" document."

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**It is recommended that:-**

- a) in relation to the two Community Governance Reviews for which public consultation has been undertaken:-**
- i. the number of Harwich Town Councillors remains at 16 with the existing parish ward distribution; and**
  - ii. a boundary change should be implemented in order to make the St Osyth Parish and District boundaries coterminous.**
- b) draft recommendations as set out in a) be made available for public comment in line with the previously agreed timetable;**
- c) no Community Governance Review be taken forward at this time for the following Parish Councils: Ardleigh, Alresford, Beaumont, Elmstead, Frating, Great Bentley, Great Oakley, Lawford, Little Bentley, Little Bromley, Little Clacton, Little Oakley, Ramsey and Parkeston, Tendring, Thorpe-le-Soken and Wrabness.**

## **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 is incurred in undertaking Community Governance Review consultations but this is not expected to be significant and can be met from existing budgets.

#### **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**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION</b>
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There are no background papers.
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<b>APPENDICES</b>
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