

Community Governance Review

Report number:	COU/WS/22/007	
Report to and date:	Council	22 March 2022
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Decisions Plan: **Not applicable as this is not an executive matter**

Wards impacted: **All wards**

Recommendation: **It is recommended that:**

- 1. the draft recommendations, as set out in Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/22/007, be approved for consultation.**
- 2. The Director for HR, Governance and Regulatory be authorised to prepare the draft recommendations for consultation, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.**

- 3. The Community Governance Review Task and Finish Group be authorised to amend draft recommendations and re-consult where necessary.**

- 4. The Chief Executive be asked to write to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBEC) to request their support with any consequential changes to district warding arrangements ahead of the elections in May 2023.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Council to approve the draft recommendations to be put forward for consultation as part of the interim Community Governance Review (CGR).
- 1.2 At its meeting on 14 December 2021, Council approved the Terms of Reference for the CGR. Stage one of the CGR invited initial submissions to be put forward on future arrangements in accordance with the terms of reference for the review. The CGR Task and Finish Group met to consider the submissions received and to agree draft recommendations for consultation.
- 1.3 There will be a three-month consultation period on the draft recommendations between 1 April and the end of June 2022. Following this there will be two months for the CGR Task and Finish Group to consider the comments received, undertake any follow up consultation where necessary, and to draft the final recommendations. The final recommendations will then be considered by Council at its meeting in September 2022.
- 1.4 Subject to Council approval, officers will prepare the draft recommendations for consultation, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 1.5 The timetable for the review is below

Stage	Action	Dates
Authorisation	Council resolves to undertake CGR Terms of Reference Approved Task and Finish Group established	Council – 14 December 2021
Commencement	Notice of Review published	17 December 2021
Stage One	Consultation with stakeholders – initial submissions invited on future arrangements in accordance with terms of reference	January 2022 – February (2 months)
Stage Two	Consideration of submissions received Draft recommendations prepared	March 2022
Stage Three	Draft recommendations to be considered by Council and approved for further consultation	22 March 2022

Stage	Action	Dates
Stage Four	Consultation with stakeholders on draft recommendations Final recommendations prepared	April 2022 – June 2022 (3months)
Stage Five	Final recommendations to be considered by Council with resolution to make a Re-organisation Order	Council – September 2022
Stage Six	Re-organisation Order made	As soon as practicable after publication of final recommendations

2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 The submissions received during stage one of the review were used to prepare draft recommendations which are attached at Appendix A.
- 2.2 It should be noted that there is not currently a consensus among stakeholders in relation to some of the issues. However, testing the recommendation during consultation will assist the Council with its decision on final recommendations in September 2022.
- 2.3 Below is a summary of the responses received during the first stage of the Community Governance Review.

Issue	Comments received
Issue 1 – Bury St Edmunds Town Wards	Submission received from Bury St Edmunds Town Council supporting a single town ward for Westgate.
Issue 2 – Haverhill Town Wards	Submission received from Haverhill Town Council supporting a single town ward for Haverhill (Central).
Issue 3 – Newmarket Town Wards	Submission received from Newmarket Town Council requesting that the Freshfields, Several and All Saints wards remain as is and be subject to a wider review in future.
Issue 4 – Lark Grange	Submissions received from Bury St Edmunds Town Council and Moreton Hall Residents Association supporting the extension of Bury St Edmunds parish boundaries to include the Lark Grange growth site.

Issue 5 – Dunstall Green Road	Submission received from Ousden Parish Council support the extension of Ousden Parish boundary to include some properties on Dunstall Green Road. Submission received from Dalham Parish Council requesting that the boundary be left 'as is'.
Issue 6 – Bardwell Road	Submissions received from Cllr Jim Thorndyke and Suffolk County Cllr Joanna Spicer regarding anomalies with the boundary between Stanton, Bardwell and Barningham.
Issue 7 – Wickham Street	Submission received from Wickhambrook Parish Council requesting that the Wickhambrook/Denston boundary follow the A143. Comment received from Suffolk County Cllr Roberta Bennett supporting the submission.
Issue 8 – Withersfield	Submission received from Haverhill Town Council proposing that the Withersfeld parish be split into 2 parish wards for the 'Arboretum Estate' and 'The Village'. Submission received from Withersfield Parish Council requesting an increase in members from 7 to 8.
Issue 9 – Red Lodge	Submission received from Red Lodge Parish Council requesting an extension of the Red Lodge parish boundary to include the development on Turnpike Road.
Issue 10 – naming of Newmarket Town Wards	Submission received from Newmarket Town Council requesting that two of their town wards be renamed. The submission also included a suggestion that the number of members could be increased to be an odd number, and this is being investigated.
Other comments	1 x issue that is not being considered as it was resolved at the 2016 Community Governance Review. 7 x no comment or no change Haverhill Town Council requested West Suffolk to petition the Boundary Commission for two matters which are separate to this review.

3. Alternative options that have been considered

- 3.1 The CGR Task and Finish Group noted that there is not currently a consensus among stakeholders in relation to some of the issues and that alternative options could be put forward. However, testing the recommendation during consultation will assist the Council with its decision on final recommendations in September 2022.

4. Consultation and engagement undertaken

- 4.1 The Council will undertake proportionate consultation with stakeholders and those with an interest, including but not limited to:

- Local government electors/residents of the district
- Parish and town councils
- Parish meetings
- District councillors
- County councillors
- Members of Parliament
- Residents Associations
- Local businesses
- Local public and voluntary organisations
- Suffolk Association of Local Councils

4.2 The public engagement plan is overseen by the CGR Task and Finish Group. Information about each stage of the review will be published on the Council's website and will be made available for inspection at West Suffolk House. Public libraries and parish and town councils will also be encouraged to make information available where facilities are available. Press releases and other publicity will be issued where appropriate.

5. **Risks associated with the proposals**

- 5.1 The parish electoral arrangements for Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and Newmarket are protected for five years following the 2019 Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) review for West Suffolk Council and will require the consent of the LGBCE before any Order implementing changes can be made.
- 5.2 There are also some draft recommendations that, if adopted, would require a consequential amendment to the district ward to ensure ongoing coterminosity of governance arrangements at parish, district and county level. This would ensure effective and convenient local governance.
- 5.3 Subject to Council approval, the Chief Executive will contact the LGBCE to request their support with any consequential changes to district warding arrangements ahead of the elections in May 2023.

6. **Appendices referenced in this report**

- 6.1 Appendix A - Draft recommendations for consultation

7. **Background documents associated with this report**

- 7.1 Guidance on Community Governance Reviews: [Guidance on community governance reviews \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance-on-community-governance-reviews)
- 7.2 Council meeting: [Agenda for Council on Tuesday 14 December 2021, 6.30 pm \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://westsuffolk.gov.uk/agenda-for-council-on-tuesday-14-december-2021-6-30-pm)