

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan

**Report of the Executive
Director Core Services**

Community Governance Review 2017/8 – Draft Proposals

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To present for consideration the draft proposals arising from the Community Governance Review undertaken during 2017/8.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the outcome of the Community Governance Review set out in Appendix 1 be received and the draft proposals as summarised at paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 be approved for publication;
- 2.2 That comments on the draft proposals be sought over a four week period commencing on 4th June 2018;
- 2.3 That, in the event that no significant comments are received in respect of the proposals, the Executive Director Core Services be authorised to issue an order to implement them with effect from 2nd May 2019.

3. Introduction

- 3.1 Cabinet on 5th April 2017 agreed that a Community Governance Review of the whole borough be undertaken. This was in the context that such a review had never been undertaken for Barnsley and that Government guidance, following the transfer of the review function to principal councils by the Local Government and Public Involvement and Health Act 2007, suggested that this should be done at least every 10 years.
- 3.2 Cabinet approved terms of reference for the review to consider the community governance needs of the whole borough, in particular to secure arrangements that reflect the identities and interests of the communities in the area and is effective and convenient. The terms of reference also identified the need to take into account existing or potential community governance arrangements in addition to those relating to parishes in arriving at its recommendations.
- 3.3 The report noted that recommendations might include establishing new or abolishing existing parish councils, grouping or amalgamating parishes, or changing the names or styling. Recommendations might also consider changing the electoral arrangements or numbers seats on parish council or adjusting boundaries to provide for better representation of local communities.

3.3 This report presents draft proposals for consideration by full Council following the conclusion of the Community Governance Review.

4. The Review Process

4.1 An initial meeting was held with representatives of each of the 16 Parish and Town Councils and one Parish Meeting in the borough to outline the terms of reference for the review. Parish and Town Councils were then asked to submit comments or proposals for consideration as part of the review. The wider public were also asked for their views on the effectiveness of the current Community Governance arrangements, both in the parished and unparished parts of the borough.

4.2 An officer working group was established from representatives of Governance & Member Support, Business Improvement and Intelligence, and Stronger Communities areas of the Council. The group considered the submissions from Parish and Town Councils and the public, together with a range of data that might impact on the effectiveness of Community Governance. This included recent / proposed development, the local demography, and electoral information, as well as an assessment of Parish and Town Councils in relation to the Council's neighbourhood arrangements.

4. Proposal and justification

4.1 The report on the outcome of the Community Governance Review is set out at Appendix 1. The overall conclusion is that the current arrangements are effective. However, there are concerns that the number of members on some parish councils in relation to the local electorate results in a difficulty in attracting sufficient candidates when vacancies arise.

4.2 As a result, it is proposed that the number of parish councillors be reduced in the following parish councils:

- a) Cawthorne Parish Council – to be reduced from 9 to 7
- b) Dunford Parish Council - to be reduced from 7 to 5
- c) Little Houghton Parish Council - to be reduced from 7 to 5
- d) Tankersley Parish Council - to be reduced from 11 to 9
- e) Wortley Parish Council - to be reduced from 9 to 5

4.3 It is also proposed that Oxspring-Hunshelf parish boundary in the Sheffield Road area of Oxspring be changed to place the whole of the playing field in that area into Oxspring. This was suggested by Oxspring Parish Council and supported by Hunshelf Parish Council, and is shown on the plan at Appendix B to the Community Governance Review report.

4.4 With these exceptions, there are no further proposals to change the existing arrangements for Community Governance as they are considered to work effectively. The changes will take effect on 2nd May 2019, the date of the next scheduled Parish / Town Council elections. The proposals will be published and the public given an opportunity to comment over a four week period before an order is issued to implement the changes.

5. Implications for local people / service users

- 5.1 There are no direct implications for service users as there are no significant changes to the Community Governance arrangements proposed by the review.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications for the Council arising from this report. If the proposals result in more Parish Council elections, this cost will need to be funded by the Parish Council concerned.

7. Employee implications

- 7.1 None

8. Communications implications

- 8.1 The outcome of the review and the draft proposals will need to be published and any comments considered before the proposals are confirmed.

9. Consultations

- 9.1 Public consultation on the existing Community Governance arrangements has been undertaken as part of the review. Parish and Town Councils have also been consulted. Officers from Governance & Member Support, Business Improvement and Intelligence, and Stronger Communities have been involved in reviewing the comments received and other evidence in preparing the proposals.

10. Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – Report on the Community Governance Review 2017/8

11. Background papers

- 11.1 Report to Cabinet on 5th April 2017 initiating the Community Governance Review
- 11.2 Government / Local Government Boundary Commission – Guidance on Community Governance Reviews, March 2010

If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

Officer Contact: A.C. Frosdick **Date:** 30th April 2018