



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Council 12 July 2022

Wards affected: All wards

Community Governance Review – draft recommendations

Report of the Chief Executive

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To present the draft recommendations of the Community Governance Review Working Group.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The recommendations contained in paragraphs 3.6.1 to 3.6.7 be published for consultation for a period of eight weeks from 13 July to 7 September 2022.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 In accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, each local authority is required to periodically undertake a community governance review of its local authority area. This is an exercise where the parish electoral arrangements across the whole area are reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate and relevant.
- 3.2 The council is undertaking a review at this time because a period of ten years has elapsed since the last review in 2012. This is in line with government guidance that it is good practice to conduct a review every 10-15 years.
- 3.3 Furthermore, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has requested an electoral review of the ward boundaries which is provisionally scheduled to commence in 2026. They advise that a community governance review is undertaken prior to an electoral review.

- 3.4 Council approved the terms of reference for the review at its meeting on 22 February 2022. There was then a period of public consultation from 23 February to 18 May 2022.
- 3.5 Consultation was undertaken in a variety of ways. These are outlined in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5 of appendix A.
- 3.6 The responses have been collated (and are attached at appendix B) and analysed by the Community Governance Review Working Group (analysis attached at appendix A). The working group makes the following recommendations for change (only those with recommendations for change are noted here – analysis of all parishes is included in appendix A in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.25 including more detail on the recommendations below):
- 3.6.1 Bagworth & Thornton

Whilst there were some responses that suggested the two settlements should be split into two separate parishes, each parish would be small in terms of number of seats and, given the fact that all ten vacancies on the parish council since 2015 have been uncontested, there is little evidence that each village could sustain its own parish council.

Representation of electors per councillor could, however, be more equal. To make the representation of electors per councillor more equal, Bagworth ward should increase from four to five seats and Thornton ward should decrease from 4 to 3 seats, thus retaining the same number of councillors overall.

Recommendation

The parish council remains as a single body. The number of overall number of seats remains the same with Bagworth ward increasing from four to five seats and Thornton ward decreasing from four to three seats.

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Bagworth	4	327
Thornton	4	234

Recommended representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Bagworth	5	278
Thornton	3	283

Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change in terms of the number of councillors representing each parish ward would:

- Help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community
- Help to secure more effective and convenient governance of the area.

3.6.2 Groby

Further to the suggestion from respondents that Field Head should become part of Markfield Parish, this would not only align better with borough ward boundaries but would improve governance, community cohesion, and would better reflect identities of residents in the area.

Recommendation

The boundary be redrawn between Groby and Markfield parishes to result in Field Head becoming part of Markfield Parish. The number of councillors for Groby Parish Council be set at 13 with no warding.

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Groby	13	418
Field Head	3	154

Recommended representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Groby	13	418

Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change by taking Field Head ward out of Groby parish and reducing the number of overall seats by three to 13 with no warding would:

- Help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community
- Help to secure more effective and convenient governance of the area.

3.6.3 Markfield

Further to suggestions from respondents that Field Head be moved within the parish boundary of Markfield, a change to the boundary would improve governance and community cohesion and would better reflect identities of residents within the area.

An increase of one seat (according to NALC's guidelines) is supported. Moving the parish boundary to incorporate Field Head within Markfield Parish does not affect this recommendation, however Field Head has historically been represented by three seats (whilst part of Groby parish) which would lead to inequity in the elector-to-councillor ratio if part of Markfield Parish Council. Therefore, on the basis of Field Head becoming part of Markfield parish, the representation for Field Head ward should be reduced to one councillor.

Recommendation

The boundary be redrawn to incorporate Field Head ward within Markfield parish. The number of councillors for Markfield Parish Council be set at 12 with 11 for Markfield ward and one for Field Head ward.

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Markfield	10	401

Recommended representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Markfield	11	365
Field Head	1	463

Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change by incorporating Field Head ward into Markfield parish and increasing the overall number of parish councillors to 12 with 11 for Markfield ward and one for Field Head ward would:

- Help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community
- Help to secure more effective and convenient governance of the area.

3.6.4 Peckleton

Further to the suggestion of respondents that three smaller parishes for the three villages be created, whilst each village has an electorate above the minimum advised by NALC guidance, each would be small and, as parish wards, none have received sufficient nominations to achieve an electoral contest in the last ten years, which demonstrates potential difficulties in each sustaining its own quorate parish council.

Stapleton is now the largest of the three villages and Peckleton the smallest so the name is not reflective of the area. The name should be amended to “Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton & Stapleton Parish”.

Recommendation

The name of the parish be amended to “Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton & Stapleton Parish” with the name of the parish council also amended to the same.

Reason

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change by amending the name of the parish to “Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton & Stapleton Parish” would:

- Help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community
- Help to secure more effective and convenient governance of the area.

3.6.5 Stoke Golding

The suggestion of respondents that there should be an increase in the number of councillors to reflect the 8.79% increase in the electorate over the last five years is acknowledged, supported by NALC’s guidance that the appropriate number of councillors for a parish council the size of Stoke Golding is eight.

Recommendation

The number of councillors on Stoke Golding Parish Council be increased from seven to eight councillors.

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Stoke Golding	7	266

Recommended representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Stoke Golding	8	232

Reasons

Based on the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change to increase the number of councillors from seven to eight would:

- Help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community

- Help to secure more effective and convenient governance of the area.

3.6.6 Sutton Cheney

In considering the views of the majority of respondents that the parish council no longer reflects the identities of all residents within the parish and Dadlington should have its own parish council, it is important to note that none of the wards within Sutton Cheney parish have received sufficient nominations to achieve an electoral contest in the last ten years and whilst Dadlington ward has produced the required number of nominations on three occasions in the last ten years, Shenton and Sutton Cheney wards has consistently produced fewer than required for the number of seats. Therefore, Shenton and Sutton Cheney as a parish would not be sustainable, and neither is there sufficient evidence that Dadlington would be sustainable as a separate parish council.

With regard to the view that Dadlington is now the largest settlement within the parish and the name should therefore reflect this, the name of the parish should be changed to “Dadlington & Sutton Cheney Parish”.

In order to create equity in terms of elector-to-councillor ratio, the number of seats for Dadlington ward should be increased from three to four, thereby increasing the overall total for the parish council to eight seats.

Recommendation

The name of Sutton Cheney Parish be amended to “Dadlington & Sutton Cheney Parish” with the name of the parish council also amended to the same. The number of councillors for Dadlington ward be increased from three to four.

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Dadlington	3	79
Shenton	2	43
Sutton	2	56

Recommended representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Dadlington	4	59
Shenton	2	43
Sutton	2	56

Reasons

Based on the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change to amend the name of the parish and to increase the number of councillors representing Dadlington ward from three to four would:

- Help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community
- Help to secure more effective and convenient governance of the area.

3.6.7 Witherley

In considering the suggestion in the majority of responses that two separate parish councils be created – one for Witherley and another for the remaining hamlets of Fenny Drayton, Atterton and Ratcliffe Culey, it is noted that Witherley ward has produced the required number of nominations to achieve an electoral contest twice in the last ten years, with the other wards not having achieved a contest at all during that time. It is therefore unlikely that neither Witherley nor the hamlets would be able to sustain a parish council.

It is acknowledged that the name of the parish does not reflect the settlements within the parish. The name should be amended to “Witherley & Fenny Drayton Parish”.

Whilst some respondents felt the hamlets were underrepresented on the parish council, in terms of elector-to-councillor ratio Witherley is actually underrepresented. The number of seats in Witherley ward should therefore be increased from four to five, thereby increasing the overall number of seats on the parish council to 12.

Recommendation

The name of Witherley Parish be amended to “Witherley & Fenny Drayton Parish” with the name of the parish council also amended to the same. The number of councillors for Witherley ward be increased from four to five.

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Fenny Drayton	4	111
Atterton	1	33
Ratcliffe	2	75
Witherley	4	144

Recommended representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Fenny Drayton	4	111
Atterton	1	33
Ratcliffe	2	75
Witherley	5	115

Reasons

Based on the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change to amend the name of the parish and to increase the number of councillors representing Witherley ward from four to five would:

- Help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community
- Help to secure more effective and convenient governance of the area.

3.7 Public consultation on these draft recommendations will take place from 13 July to 7 September 2022. Consultation will take place in accordance with the terms of reference for the review.

4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

4.1 To be taken in public session.

5. Financial implications (AW)

5.1 None directly from this report.

6. Legal implications (MR)

6.1 Set out in the report.

7. Corporate Plan implications

7.1 The community governance review supports all objectives within the corporate plan by ensuring community governance is appropriate.

8. Consultation

8.1 Consultation with stakeholders listed in the terms of reference took place between 23 February and 18 May 2022. A further consultation period will take place on the recommendations agreed by Council.

9. Risk implications

9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) risks

Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Electorate dissatisfaction with revised arrangements	Maximise public awareness of the consultation and give due consideration to all responses received	Chief Executive
Non-compliance with government policy	Council to be mindful of government guidelines and policy	Monitoring Officer
Potential for judicial review	Council to ensure that decision making processes are following and decisions are supported by clear reasons	Democratic Services Manager

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 10.1 This review invites communities to input into the governance arrangements that affect them.
- 10.2 The review may impact parish councils but this will be minimised where changes to current arrangements are imposed and parish councils will be supported through any changes.
- 10.3 The consultation process will be accessible to all residents.
- 10.4 An equality impact assessment will be undertaken when the final proposals are drafted.

11. Climate implications

- 11.1 Consultation has taken place online where possible to reduce paper usage.
- 11.2 The recommendations within this report will not have direct climate implications.

12. Corporate implications

12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

Background papers: Report to Council, 22 February 2022

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