

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council**Community Governance Review****Final recommendations analysis report****1. Background to the review**

- 1.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 1007 requires each authority to periodically undertake a community governance review of its local authority area. A period of ten years had elapsed since the last review which was carried out in 2012 and government guidance suggests that it is good practice to conduct a review every 10-15 years.
- 1.2 Furthermore, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England had requested an electoral review of the ward boundaries which was scheduled to commence in 2024 and they recommended that a community governance review be undertaken prior to an electoral review.
- 1.3 The authority had been approached by residents from a community who indicated that they may shortly petition for a community governance review of that area, which would require us to undertake that review on receipt of the requisite number of signatures, in addition to approaches from two parish councils who had requested a review of the number of seats on their parish councils.
- 1.4 In February 2022, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council resolved to begin a community governance review of all town/parishes within the borough area and approved the terms of reference for the review.
- 1.5 The review relates to the whole of the borough and considers changes including merging, altering or abolishing parishes, the naming of parishes and style of new parishes, the electoral arrangements for parishes, and grouping of parishes.
- 1.6 The objective of the review is to ensure that community governance is:
 - Reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area
 - Effective and convenient.
- 1.7 The review must take into account:
 - The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion
 - The size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.
- 1.8 In undertaking the review, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council has taken into account key data for each parish and ward. The range of data used is as follows:

- Electorate size and projected housing development data
- Elections data from previous elections and by-elections including the number of seats contested in recent years
- Council size given the legal minimum of five members and the National Association of Local Councils recommendation of a minimum number of seven
- The ratio of councillors to electors
- Responses to the initial consultation which took place between 23 February and 18 May 2022
- Responses to the consultation on draft recommendations which took place between 13 July and 7 September 2022.

1.9 Following a period of consultation between 23 February and 18 May 2022, the Council published its draft recommendations. Consultation then took place on the draft recommendations between 13 July and 7 September 2022. The results of the consultation were then analysed and considered by Council. This report contains the final recommendations.

2. Consultation

2.1 An initial period of open consultation took place between 23 February and 18 May 2022. The following methods of consultation were undertaken:

- Open consultation on the council's website
- Advertisement in the Borough Bulletin with a link to the consultation on the website and contact details should respondents require a paper copy
- Social media posts
- Email to borough councillors inviting them to respond to the consultation online or by email / letter
- Email to parish clerks inviting a formal response to the consultation online or by letter / email and inviting individual responses from parish councillors and offering a visit to talk about the review and receive views
- Email to a database of voluntary & community sector bodies
- Email to a database of around 700 businesses in the borough
- Email to Leicestershire County Council inviting them as a body and county councillors to respond to the review
- Email to Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils inviting them to respond
- Email to neighbourhood development groups
- Email to the MPs for Hinckley & Bosworth inviting a response
- Display at the Rural Conference
- Posters in public buildings.

2.2 Following the above, officers of the council attended a meeting of the Dadlington Steering Group to talk about the review, a meeting with Sutton Cheney parish councillors and a meeting with representatives of parish councillors arranged by the Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils.

2.3 Following analysis of the responses to the initial consultation, the draft recommendations were approved by Council on 12 July 2022. Consultation on the draft recommendations subsequently took place from 13 July to 7 September 2022. Respondents were encouraged to complete the online consultation form or equivalent paper form to ensure responses were in comparable formats and answered the questions posed. Flyers were hand delivered to residents in those areas subject to draft recommendations which gave details of how to find out more information and respond to the consultation. The consultation was also advertised on the council's social media channels. A summary of the consultation responses is appended to this report.

2.4 Whilst online and paper questionnaires were only available for those areas subject to draft recommendations, respondents had the opportunity to contact us to make comment about any other areas not subject to draft recommendations.

3. Approach taken in assessing and summarising the consultation responses

- 3.1 The consultation on the draft recommendations, which took place from 13 July to 7 September 2022, generated 266 responses, along with three petitions that are outlined in this report. The majority of these responses were in the form of completed online or paper survey forms, although a large number of emails and three petitions were also received.
- 3.2 The Community Governance Review Working Group met on 29 September to consider the responses to the consultation. They received a copy of all responses to the consultation along with data for each town or parish area.
- 3.3 Whilst all responses have been read and taken into account in developing the final recommendations, it is not practical nor relevant for the attached summary document to contain the full detail of every response, therefore some of the irrelevant comments are not included. These relate mostly to complaints regarding decision-making processes and decisions made by parish councils and complaints about the conduct of individual councillors which, by law, are not within the remit of the review. Similarly, not all points raised in the consultation can be addressed in this report, however those that were commonly raised will be detailed. It should also be noted that the borough council has no authority to alter the boundaries of the borough or borough wards, or of parishes where boundaries are shared with those outside of Hinckley & Bosworth.
- 3.4 In relation to data used, it is important to note that electorate numbers are based on 2027 projections to take account of likely housing development in the town / parish. Consideration was given to the National Association of Local Councils' guidance on the number of councillors recommended for an area of a particular size and the elector-to-councillor ratio. Elector-to-councillor ratio cannot be compared between all parishes – those that are warded must have equity within the parish, across parish wards. In warded parishes, the smallest wards must have a minimum of one councillor and, to ensure equity in the elector-to-councillor ratio across the parish, those parish wards with a larger electorate must have a proportionate number of councillors. Numbers of councillors will, therefore, often not be comparable between parishes of similar sizes.
- 3.5 Section 5 of this document lists the current town and parish arrangements in Hinckley & Bosworth. Section 6 contains an overview of the final recommendations and section 7 contains an analysis of consultation responses, data and other considerations.

4. Next steps

- 4.1 Change Orders will be made and will come into effect in May 2023.

5. Town and parish councils in Hinckley & Bosworth – current position

5.1 Bagworth and Thornton

Current representation

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

5.2 Barlestone

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Barlestone	8	293

5.3 Barwell

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Redhall	4	597
St Marys	4	632
Charnwood	4	605

5.4 Burbage

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
St Catherines	3	661
Stretton	4	733
Sketchley	4	786
Tilton	4	582
Lash Hill	5	580

5.5 Cadeby

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Cadeby	5	43

5.6 Carlton

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Carlton	5	60

5.7 Desford

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Buften	2	210
Desford	10	341

5.8 Earl Shilton

Current representation

Town ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Church	2	673
Weavers	4	641
Townlands	4	649
Westfield	4	542

5.9 Groby

Current representation

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

5.10 Higham on the Hill

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Higham-on-the-Hill	6	156

5.11 Hinckley

Hinckley is not currently parished.

5.12 Market Bosworth

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Market Bosworth	8	217

5.13 Markfield

Current representation

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

5.14 Nailstone

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Nailstone	5	101

5.15 Newbold Verdon

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Newbold Verdon	10	285

5.16 Osbaston

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Osbaston	5	43

5.17 Peckleton

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Kirkby Mallory	2	147
Peckleton	2	103
Stapleton	2	179

5.18 Ratby

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Ratby	9	440

5.19 Shackerstone

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Barton	1	283
Odstone	1	110
Congerstone	2	142
Bilstone	1	50
Shackerstone	1	150

5.20 Sheepy

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Upton	1	89
Sibson	2	67
Wellsborough	1	75
Sheepy	7	123

5.21 Stanton Under Bardon

Current representation

Parish	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Stanton-Under-Bardon	5	152

5.22 Stoke Golding

Current representation

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

5.23 Sutton Cheney

Current representation

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

5.24 Twycross

Current representation

Parish ward	Number of councillors	Electors per councillor (2027 projection)
Gopsall	2	121
Orton	2	93
Twycross	3	111

5.25 Witherley

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

6. Overview of final recommendations

6.1 Major changes (abolition, new parishes, grouping, boundary changes)

6.1.1 None.

6.2 Parish Council name and style

6.2.1 Peckleton Parish Council to change to Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton and Stapleton Parish Council.

6.2.2 Sutton Cheney Parish Council to change to Dadlington and Sutton Cheney Parish Council.

6.3 Parish name

6.3.1 Peckleton parish to change to Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton and Stapleton parish.

6.3.2 Sutton Cheney parish to change to Dadlington and Sutton Cheney parish.

6.4 Warding arrangements

6.4.1 None.

6.5 Seats

6.5.1 Bagworth & Thornton Parish Council:

Bagworth parish ward to increase from four to five seats.

Thornton parish ward to decrease from four to three seats.

6.5.2 Stoke Golding:

Stoke Golding Parish Council to increase from seven to eight seats.

6.5.3 Sutton Cheney

Dadlington parish ward to increase from three to four seats.

7. Analysis of consultation responses, data and other considerations

7.1 Bagworth and Thornton

7.1.1 Initial consultation

Four responses from individual residents were received, three of which suggested Bagworth and Thornton had become quite distinct settlements and it was no longer appropriate for them to be represented by a single parish council. The parish council did not submit a response.

The difference between the two settlements is acknowledged, however if they were split into two parishes each 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.

7.1.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

To make the representation of electors per councillor more equal, increase the number of councillors representing Bagworth ward from four to five seats and decrease the number representing Thornton ward from four to three seats, thus retaining the same number of councillors overall.

7.1.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Residents of Bagworth ward generally supported the recommendation and those from Thornton ward were split (based on only two responses). The parish council, parish councillors and a resident from an unknown area were against the recommendation. Overall, 45.5% of respondents were in support and 45.5% were against the recommendation.

Those supporting the proposed change felt that it would make representation more equal and was fairer because Bagworth was bigger. Those against felt there was no need for change.

7.1.4 Assessment of responses to consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst the parish council is not in support, overall there is an exact split of those for and those against the proposal. In order to achieve fair and democratic decision-making which reflects the population of the two villages, the proposed change should be made.

7.1.5 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Bagworth and Thornton Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Bagworth and Thornton (no change)
Warding arrangements:	Bagworth, Thornton (no change)

Seats: 8 overall (no change)
Bagworth ward: increase from four to five
Thornton ward: decrease from four to three

Current representation

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

New representation

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

7.1.6 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.

7.2 Barlestone

7.2.1 Initial consultation

Two responses were received and were largely satisfied with the arrangements. Any negative comments related to the actions of individuals rather than the electoral arrangements. The parish council did not submit a response to the initial consultation.

One response suggested that Barlestone should merge with Osbaston, given the geographical links, however Osbaston Parish Council was satisfied with its arrangements and there was no evidence to suggest change was necessary.

7.2.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.2.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.2.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Barlestone Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Barlestone (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	8 (no change)

7.2.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.3 Barwell

7.3.1 Initial consultation

Four responses were received with a mixed interest in change, although reasons given mostly related to matters that were not within the remit of this review.

Barwell Parish Council expressed an interest in more seats on the parish council which was also suggested by the borough councillor for Barwell. Only one resident suggested an increase in seats but the reasoning for this request was not sufficient to be considered. Whilst NALC guidance suggests an electorate of Barwell's size could sustain 14 seats (an overall increase of 2), the number of councillors would not be able to be applied equally to the parish wards and would negatively affect the equity of the elector-to-councillor ratio. Barwell is evenly represented with an average elector to councillor ratio of 611:1

7.3.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.3.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.3.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Barwell Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Barwell (no change)
Warding arrangements:	Charnwood, Redhall, St Marys (no change)
Seats:	12 (no change)

7.3.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.4 Burbage

7.4.1 Initial consultation

Nine responses were received and were mostly positive or neutral. Any dissatisfaction expressed related to matters not within the remit of this review. The parish council did not request any changes.

Whilst NALC guidance suggests an electorate of Burbage's size could sustain 18 seats (an overall decrease of 2), there were no suggestions that the current number of councillors is inappropriate and therefore no evidence to support change.

7.4.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.4.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.4.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Burbage Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Burbage (no change)
Warding arrangements:	St Catherines, Stretton, Sketchley, Tilton, Lash Hill (no change)
Seats:	20 (no change)

7.4.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.5 Cadeby

7.5.1 Initial consultation

One response was received (from the parish council) which was satisfied with maintaining the status quo.

Cadeby Parish Council has five councillors which is the legal minimum yet also has the lowest elector-to-councillor ratio in the borough. Cadeby has not received sufficient nominations to achieve an electoral contest in the last ten years. It would therefore be inappropriate to increase the number of councillors to NALC's recommended minimum of seven.

7.5.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.5.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.5.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Cadeby Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Cadeby (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	5 (no change)

7.5.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.6 Carlton

7.6.1 Initial consultation

One response was received, from Carlton Parish Council. The response requested a change to the boundary between Carlton and Market Bosworth (see the map enclosed with their response).

The changes requested by Carlton Parish Council would require a move to the boundaries around Friezeland Farm, land adjacent to the two southern-most cottages on Westfields Lane, the canal towpath, Park View Farm and the carriageway of Barton Road.

Market Bosworth Parish Council, which would be affected by these boundary changes, did not support the requested changes.

Whilst a change in boundary would prevent it bisecting some plots along the border and Carlton Parish Council may feel this would improve governance in the area, the matter is a regular occurrence throughout the country and not a cause for concern. Given that no other consultation responses were received from the area and that Market Bosworth Parish Council do not support the request, a change is not appropriate.

7.6.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.6.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.6.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Carlton Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Carlton (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	5 (no change)

7.6.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.7 Desford

7.7.1 Initial consultation

Four responses were received, mostly positive or neutral. Dissatisfaction expressed was in matters not within the remit of this review.

Whilst NALC guidance suggests the parish council could sustain 11 seats, which would be a decrease of one seat, there was no suggestion that the current representation is ineffective and therefore no evidence for change.

7.7.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.7.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.7.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Desford Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Desford (no change)
Warding arrangements:	Buften, Desford (no change)
Seats:	12 (no change)

7.7.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.8 Earl Shilton

7.8.1 Initial consultation

Four responses were received with mostly positive or neutral views. Two of the responses expressed an interest in having more seats on the town council and, whilst an electorate of Earl Shilton's size could sustain 15 seats (an increase of 1), applying this to the four parish wards proportionately would negatively affect the equity in the elector-to-councillor ratio.

7.8.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.8.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.8.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Earl Shilton Town Council (no change)
Parish name:	Earl Shilton (no change)
Warding arrangements:	Church, Townlands, Weavers, Westfield (no change)
Seats:	14 (no change)

7.8.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.9 Groby

7.9.1 Initial consultation

Four responses were received, three of which expressed an interest in a change to Groby parish's border. Some of these suggested changes would require a change to the external border of the borough which cannot be considered as part of this review. However several responses suggested that Field Head ward would be more suitable as part of Markfield parish. Groby Parish Council also suggested this change.

7.9.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

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

7.9.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Due to many residents in Groby and Markfield parishes having completed consultation forms for both parishes despite being directed to complete the relevant form, the results from the consultation were summarised and analysed together and broken down into parishes / parish wards to identify the impact of the proposal on the individual depending on where they live.

Groby Parish Council, 69% of residents of Field Head parish ward (Groby parish) and 100% of residents from an unspecified area were not in support of the proposal to amend the boundary. Markfield Parish Council, the two Groby parish councillors who responded, 58% of respondents from Groby parish ward and 55% of respondents from Markfield parish were in support of the proposal to amend the boundary. The county councillor for the area was against the proposal. Overall, responses were not in support of the proposal to amend the boundary.

A petition with 111 signatures (equal to 24% of the electorate) of Field Head residents was received which supported the proposal to amend the boundary.

Comments in support of change included the view that Field Head residents identified as Markfield residents rather than Groby and that it was closer to Markfield than Groby. Comments against the recommendation included Field Head being traditionally part of Groby parish and that there would be fewer councillors representing Field Head if it became part of Markfield parish.

In relation to the number of seats on Groby Parish Council following the amendment to the boundary, there were 81 responses with 62% against the proposal, including Groby Parish Council. There was a comment that the loss of three councillors as a result of the boundary change seemed

disproportionate and that there was no need for three councillors for Field Head.

Comments were also made on the relevance of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and the position of Field Head should it move from Groby to Markfield parish.

Some respondents questioned the reason for not amending boundaries with neighbouring parishes outside of Hinckley and Bosworth.

There were comments made about decisions on the review being made without surveying residents, taking residents' views into account and the need for a parish poll.

7.9.4 Assessment of responses to consultation on draft recommendations

The overall response of 57% against the proposal to amend the boundary shows a lack of appetite for change, and the evidence that residents from Field Head are generally not in favour of the proposed change shows their feeling of identity with Groby parish. There were conflicting views about whether Field Head residents used facilities in Markfield or Groby.

Given the view that the boundary change is not to be pursued, the recommendation to set the number of councillors on Groby Parish Council to 13 is not required. No consultation took place on the representation for Field Head ward should it remain part of Groby parish, however it is acknowledged that Field Head ward was over-represented in terms of the elector-to-councillor ratio.

Whilst an important point, the position of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is not a relevant consideration in the community governance review.

Boundaries outside of Hinckley and Bosworth are not able to be considered in this review.

In response to comments about residents not being consulted, there was a public consultation which was advertised in several places including the Borough Bulletin which invited comments. Draft recommendations were based on the comments received and subsequently consultation has taken place on the draft recommendations. Community governance reviews are a statutory process and there is no provision for a parish poll as part of this process.

7.9.5 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Groby Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Groby (no change)
Warding arrangements:	Groby, Field Head (no change)
Seats:	16 (no change)

7.9.6 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.10 Higham on the Hill

7.10.1 Initial consultation

No responses were received. Whilst NALC guidance suggests a minimum number of seven seats, there is no disproportionality in elector-to-councillor ratios and no drive for change amongst residents.

7.10.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.10.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.10.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Higham on the Hill Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Higham on the Hill (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	6 (no change)

7.10.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.11 Hinckley

7.11.1 Initial consultation

Seven responses were received, with none expressing a particular interest in becoming a parished area.

7.11.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.11.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.11.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	N/A
Parish name:	N/A
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	N/A

7.11.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.12 Market Bosworth

7.12.1 Initial consultation

Four responses were received, including a response from the parish council which had requested an increase in the number of seats. The data shows that the electorate of Market Bosworth has decreased over the last five years despite a small increase in the number of properties so an increase in seats is not appropriate. This is further supported by the fact that there has been sufficient nominations to achieve an electoral contest only once in the last ten years.

7.12.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.12.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.12.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Market Bosworth Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Market Bosworth (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	8 (no change)

7.12.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.13 Markfield

7.13.1 Initial consultation

Four responses were received, two of which, including the parish council, suggested that the border of Markfield parish should be extended to include land adjacent to the A50 (which may include Field Head), although part of this land fell outside of the borough boundary and was therefore not within the remit of this review. Whilst Markfield Parish Council had not specifically suggested that Field Head be moved within the parish boundary of Markfield, it was felt that change was important to the residents of Field Head (as suggested by Groby Parish Council) and that this would improve governance and community cohesion and would better reflect identities of the residents within the area.

In relation to the size of Markfield Parish Council, the number of seats on the parish council be increased by one in accordance with NALC's guidance. Including Field Head within Markfield Parish did not affect this recommendation, however Field Head is currently 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. On the basis of Field Head becoming part of Markfield parish, the representation for Field Head ward should be reduced to one councillor.

7.13.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

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.

7.13.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Due to many residents in Markfield and Groby parishes having completed consultation forms for both parishes despite being directed to complete the relevant form, the results from the consultation were summarised and analysed together and broken down into parishes / parish wards to identify the impact of the proposal on the individual depending on where they live.

There were a large number of responses to this consultation question (121 unique respondents). Groby Parish Council, 69% of residents of Field Head parish ward (Groby parish) and 100% of residents from an unspecified area were not in support of the proposal to amend the boundary. Markfield Parish Council, the two Groby parish councillors who responded, 58% of residents of Groby parish ward and 55% of residents of Markfield parish were in support of the proposal to amend the boundary. The county councillor for the area was against the proposal. Overall, responses were not in support of the proposal to amend the boundary.

A petition with 111 signatures (equal to 24% of the electorate) of Field Head residents was received which supported the proposal to amend the boundary.

Comments in support of change included the view that Field Head residents identified as Markfield residents rather than Groby and that it was closer to Markfield than Groby. Comments against the recommendation included Field Head being traditionally part of Groby parish and that there would be fewer councillors representing Field Head if it became part of Markfield parish.

In response to the consultation on the increase in seats for Markfield Parish Council, the parish council itself, the county councillor and a majority of respondents from Markfield supported the proposal. Those supporting the change felt that the change would improve equity in the elector-to-councillor ratio and that Markfield would be well served by an additional councillor. Comments against the proposal were mainly concerned with the number representing Field Head parish ward, which was considered in a separate question. Residents of Groby responded to this question despite it not being part of the consultation for Groby residents and were strongly against the proposal, but this response is not relevant as it does not impact those residents.

In relation to the proposal to reduce the number of seats for Field Head parish ward should it become part of Markfield parish, the majority of respondents were not in support of the proposal. There was a misconception that this would result in Field Head being underrepresented. Those in support acknowledged that the area is small and one councillor is proportionate.

Comments were also made on the relevance of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and the position of Field Head should it move from Groby to Markfield parish.

Some respondents questioned the reason for not amending boundaries with neighbouring parishes outside of Hinckley and Bosworth. The need for warding the proposed new Markfield parish was also queried.

There were comments made about decisions on the review being made without surveying residents, taking residents' views into account and the need for a parish poll.

7.13.4 Assessment of responses to consultation on draft recommendations

The overall response of 57% against the proposal to amend the boundary shows a lack of appetite for change, and the evidence that residents from Field Head are generally not in favour of the proposed change, shows their feeling of identity with Groby parish.

Given the lack of appetite for change across all draft recommendations, community cohesion would be better supported by making no changes at this time. There is a general indication that governance of the area is effective in its current form.

In light of the lack of desire to amend the boundary, there is less need to equalise the elector-to-councillor ratio so the number of seats on Markfield Parish Council should remain at 10.

Whilst an important point, the position of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is not a relevant consideration in the community governance review.

Boundaries outside of Hinckley and Bosworth are not able to be considered in this review. In relation to warding, should Field Head move to Markfield, legislation would require it to be warded.

In response to comments about residents not being consulted, there was a public consultation which was advertised in several places including the Borough Bulletin which invited comments. Draft recommendations were based on the comments received and subsequently consultation has taken place on the draft recommendations. Community governance reviews are a statutory process and there is no provision for a parish poll as part of this process.

7.13.5 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Markfield Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Markfield (no change)
Warding arrangements:	None (no change)
Seats:	10 (no change)

7.13.6 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.14 Nailstone

7.14.1 Initial consultation

No responses were received. Whilst NALC guidance suggests a minimum number of seven seats, there is no disproportionality in elector-to-councillor ratios and the parish council has received sufficient nominations to achieve an electoral contest only twice in the last ten years.

7.14.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.14.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.14.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Nailstone Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Nailstone (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	5 (no change)

7.14.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.15 Newbold Verdon

7.15.1 Initial consultation

Four responses were received, none of them suggested a change in governance arrangements. Whilst NALC guidance suggests a minimum number of seven seats, there is no disproportionality in elector-to-councillor ratios and the parish council has received sufficient nominations to achieve an electoral contest only twice in the last ten years.

7.15.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.15.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.15.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Newbold Verdon Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Newbold Verdon (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	10 (no change)

7.15.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.16 Osbaston

7.16.2 Initial consultation

Two responses were received with no request for change. Whilst NALC guidance suggests a minimum number of seven seats, there is no disproportionality in elector-to-councillor ratios and the parish council has not received sufficient nominations to achieve an electoral contest in the last ten years.

7.16.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.16.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.16.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Osbaston Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Osbaston (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	5 (no change)

7.16.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.17 Peckleton

7.17.1 Initial consultation

Four responses were received, two of which suggested splitting the parish into three separate parishes along ward lines. Other suggestions included increasing the number of councillors and changing the name to reflect the other settlements within the parish.

In response to the suggestion of creating three smaller parishes, 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 (with Kirkby Mallory having received no nominations in the 2019 elections), which demonstrates potential difficulties in each sustaining their own quorate parish council.

It is, however, acknowledged that Stapleton is now the largest of the three villages and Peckleton the smallest so the name is not reflective of the makeup of the area. The name should be amended to "Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton and Stapleton Parish".

7.17.2 Draft recommendation following initial consultation

The name of the parish be amended to "Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton and Stapleton Parish" with the name of the parish council also amended to the same.

7.17.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst only seven responses were received, all were in support of the proposal to amend the name of the parish as they felt it was more representative of the area. The parish council did not respond.

7.17.4 Assessment of responses to consultation on draft recommendations

There is clear support from residents who feel the change will better reflect their identity.

7.17.5 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton and Stapleton Parish Council
Parish name:	Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton and Stapleton
Warding arrangements:	Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton, Stapleton (no change)
Seats:	6 (no change)

7.17.6 Reasons

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 and 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.

7.18 Ratby

7.18.1 Initial consultation

No responses were received. Whilst NALC guidance suggests an electorate the size of Ratby's could sustain 11 seats (an increase of two), there has been no request for change.

7.18.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.18.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.18.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Ratby Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Ratby (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	9 (no change)

7.18.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.19 Shackerstone

7.19.1 Initial consultation

One response was received which supported no change. Whilst NALC guidance suggests a minimum number of seven seats, there has been no request for change and there is no evidence that change is required.

7.19.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.19.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.19.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Shackerstone Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Shackerstone (no change)
Warding arrangements:	Barton, Odstone, Congerstone, Bilstone, Shackerstone (no change)
Seats:	6 (no change)

7.19.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.20 Sheepy

7.20.1 Initial consultation

No responses were received. Whilst NALC guidance suggests seven seats would be an appropriate size for Sheepy parish (an overall decrease of four seats), a reduction would negatively impact the equity of the elector-to-councillor ratio between the five wards (which must all be represented by a minimum of one councillor). Sheepy ward is considerably larger than the other villages and hamlets in the parish and the seats allocated reflect this.

7.20.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.20.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.20.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Sheepy Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Sheepy (no change)
Warding arrangements:	Upton, Sibson, Wellsborough, Sheepy (no change)
Seats:	11 (no change)

7.20.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.21 Stanton Under Bardon

7.21.1 Initial consultation

Four responses were received, with any dissatisfaction being directed at matters not relevant to the review. Whilst NALC guidance suggests a minimum number of seven seats, the current size of five councillors is appropriate given the size of the electorate.

7.21.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.21.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.21.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Stanton-Under-Bardon Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Stanton-Under-Bardon (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	5 (no change)

7.21.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.22 Stoke Golding

7.22.1 Initial consultation

Three responses were received, all (including Stoke Golding Parish Council) suggesting there should be an increase in the number of councillors to reflect the 8.79% increase in the electorate over the last five years. An increase from seven to eight councillors would follow NALC's guidance.

7.22.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

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

7.22.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Six responses were received, with 83% in support and 17% not answering the question. Stoke Golding Parish Council expressed support for the proposal. Those in support commented that the increase in councillors reflected the planned growth in the area.

7.22.4 Assessment of responses to consultation on draft recommendations

Responses from the parish council and residents were in support of the recommendation, and an increase in the number of councillors was necessary in order to retain a suitable elector-to-councillor ratio given the level of development in the parish and that planned for the next five years.

7.22.5 Final recommendations

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Stoke Golding Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Stoke Golding (no change)
Warding arrangements:	N/A
Seats:	8 – an increase of one councillor

Current representation

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

New representation

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

7.22.6 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.

7.23 Sutton Cheney

7.23.1 Initial consultation

25 responses to the initial consultation were received, the majority from residents of Dadlington ward, generally expressing dissatisfaction with the current governance arrangements. Whilst the dissatisfaction seems to stem from experiences surrounding the Neighbourhood Development Plan, actions and decisions of the parish council, which is not within the remit of this review, there were suggestions that the current arrangements do not reflect identities of the residents in Dadlington as Shenton and Sutton Cheney are estate-owned and partially estate-owned respectively. The view was also expressed that Dadlington is now the largest settlement within the parish, therefore the name of the parish is not appropriate. It was also felt that Dadlington was underrepresented on Sutton Cheney Parish Council.

A submission from “the Steering Group for a Dadlington Parish Council” argued strongly that there should be a separate parish council for Dadlington and cited receipt of 150 responses in favour of this (from an electorate of 225) in an informal poll of residents.

Sutton Cheney Parish Council requested no change to the parish boundaries but indicated that they would accept a change in name to reflect the size of Dadlington.

In considering the responses to the initial consultation, it was noted that none of the wards within Sutton Cheney parish had received sufficient nominations to achieve an electoral contest in the last ten years and whilst Dadlington ward had produced the required number of nominations on three occasions in the last ten years, Shenton and Sutton Cheney wards had consistently produced fewer than required for the number of seats. It was therefore felt that 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.

The most appropriate change to improve representation, better reflect identities within the area and ensure effective governance of the parish as a whole is to recommend a change in name to “Dadlington & Sutton Cheney Parish” and to increase the number of seats in Dadlington ward from three to four which would create the best equity in terms of elector-to-councillor ratio, thereby increasing the overall total for the parish to eight seats.

7.23.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

The name of the parish be amended to “Dadlington and Sutton Cheney Parish” with the name of the parish council amended to “Dadlington and Sutton Cheney Parish Council”. The number of seats for Dadlington ward be increased from three to four.

7.23.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

There were slightly more respondents (45%) against a change in name than those in support (32%). Many had submitted alternative proposals requesting a parish council for Dadlington and had therefore either not responded to the question about the name, or were likely to have naturally opposed it in favour of their alternative option. Sutton Cheney Parish Council supported the recommended name change. Reasons from those in favour of the change included the importance of Dadlington appearing in the name of the parish due to it being the largest village, making Dadlington more involved and bringing the communities together. Reasons for opposing the proposed change included the name not including Shenton, being clumsy and not satisfying the call for a separate parish council.

In terms of the recommended increase in the number of councillors for Dadlington parish ward, again there were a large number of respondents who did not give a view on the matter and, whilst the majority therefore appeared to be against the recommendation (61%), this could not be relied on as a true opinion due to the general opposition to any proposal in favour of the alternative suggested by many. Those in support of the proposal agreed that, as the largest settlement in the parish, Dadlington should have an additional councillor and it would improve the representation and involvement of Dadlington in the parish council. The parish council was not in support of the recommendation.

Some respondents expressed the view that an increase in the number of councillors for Dadlington parish ward would result in difficulties in decision-making due to it resulting in four representatives of Dadlington and four representing the combined Shenton and Sutton Cheney parish wards. Concern was also expressed that the chair would have to use their casting vote. Others felt that the increase would be unfair and undemocratic and one response suggested that an increase of one councillor was insufficient.

Other issues raised include the attitude of parish councillors, conflict within the parish council, discord arising from creation of the neighbourhood development plan, funding for the parish council.

Whilst respondents had been directed to the online or paper forms to ensure that responses to the specific questions were received, many residents had sent emails which only talked about a separate parish council for Dadlington and did not answer the questions posed. This made analysis based on response rates difficult.

Respondents again put forward an alternative proposal that two new parish councils be created – one for Dadlington and one for Shenton and Sutton Cheney. 36 of the 66 responses included this request and a petition with 130 signatures was received in the same vein from residents of Dadlington, along with a petition of 89 signatures from residents of Shenton and Sutton Cheney. The Steering Group for Dadlington submitted a detailed response. There was, however, some confusion among respondents about whether Dadlington,

Shenton and Sutton Cheney were already part of a single parish council as some were under the impression that they were currently served by separate parish councils.

Comments received in support of forming two separate parish councils included the local informal poll held by the Steering Group for Dadlington which demonstrated 150 electors were in support, the different identities of the villages, the “toxic” environment of the current parish council, the fact that Dadlington councillors are currently outvoted on the parish council and the size of the parish council being large enough to sustain a parish council.

Seven of the 66 respondents explicitly opposed the alternative proposal, stating it was a waste of public money, the reasoning wasn't valid, the current parish council is successful and the push for a separate parish council was coming from one small group of residents.

The borough ward councillor, whilst previously not expressing an opinion, suggested that given the petitions signed by large numbers of residents calling for separation, he felt he should support the alternative proposal.

7.23.4 Assessment of responses to consultation on draft recommendations

Given the difficulty of relying on the response rates because so many had not answered the questions and only proposed an alternative, it is important to consider the objectives of the review, specifically the identity of the parish. As Dadlington is the largest settlement in the parish, it is important for the identities of those living there that the name of the parish reflects this. Retaining the name of Sutton Cheney in the title of the parish council acknowledges the historic name of the parish council.

With regard to the recommended increase in the number of councillors for Dadlington parish ward, Dadlington is currently underrepresented in terms of elector-to-councillor ratio and requires an additional councillor to properly represent its residents and to create equity in representation across the parish council.

In response to the concern expressed by some residents that an increase in the number of councillors for Dadlington parish ward to four would equal the total number for Shenton and Sutton Cheney and would therefore result in difficulties in decision-making, this is not an accurate perception as Shenton and Sutton Cheney are separately represented and whether the councillors representing the two wards vote in the same way is a democratic matter and not one for this review. In relation to the concern that the chair would have to use their casting vote, this is a legal and democratic right.

Issues such as attitude of parish councillors, conflict within the parish council, discord arising from creation of the neighbourhood development plan and funding for the parish council are not matters that can be considered as part of the community governance review.

In relation to the alternative proposal that two separate parish councils be created – one for Dadlington and one for Shenton and Sutton Cheney, there remains no evidence that a village the size of Dadlington could sustain its own parish council. The submission by the Steering Group for Dadlington, whilst admirable, is a little naïve and shows a lack of understanding of how a parish council must operate. The submission includes cost-saving suggestions such as reducing the number of meetings per year, employing a parish clerk for only a few hours a week, and using volunteers to undertake maintenance. There is no demonstration of an understanding of the legal obligations of parish councils which may require meetings more frequently, the large remit and specialised knowledge of a parish clerk which would require a set amount of hours, and issues with using volunteers to undertake manual work such as insurance and liability.

In response to comments that there are parishes smaller in electorate size than that requested for Dadlington, it was noted that these other parishes were already in existence and if they were being considered for creation of a parish council at this time, the recommendation would be to not do so as they had proven to be difficult to sustain.

7.23.5 Final recommendations

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Dadlington and Sutton Cheney Parish Council
Parish name:	Dadlington and Sutton Cheney
Warding arrangements:	Dadlington, Shenton, Sutton (no change)
Seats:	8 – an increase of one councillor (for Dadlington parish ward)

Current representation

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

New representation

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

7.23.6 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.

7.24 Twycross

7.24.1 Initial consultation

One response was received which did not comment on the current governance arrangements. Whilst NALC guidance suggests a minimum number of seven seats, the current size of six councillors is appropriate given the size of the electorate and this number allowed for equity in electorate distribution. In addition, Twycross had not received sufficient nominations to achieve an electoral contest in the last ten years.

7.24.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

No change was recommended.

7.24.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

Whilst no specific consultation was issued, no comments were received on the general contact form.

7.24.4 Final recommendation

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Twycross Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Twycross (no change)
Warding arrangements:	Gopsall, Orton, Twycross (no change)
Seats:	7 (no change)

7.21.5 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

7.25 Witherley

7.25.1 Initial consultation

35 responses were received, 33 of which felt that a change to governance arrangements was necessary, however the majority of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with issues such as parish council decision making, planning matters and the actions of individual parish councillors, largely stemming from events surrounding the Neighbourhood Development Plan, which were not matters that could be considered as part of this review.

The most common suggestion in the responses was the creation of two separate parish councils – one for Witherley and another for the remaining hamlets of Fenny Drayton, Atterton and Ratcliffe Culey. Where separation was not suggested, respondents requested a change of name to reflect the hamlets and changing the number of parish councillors for the area to allow fairer representation for all parish wards as many felt the hamlets were underrepresented.

Whilst NALC guidance suggests an appropriate number of councillors for an electorate the size of Witherley Parish is seven seats (which would be a reduction in four overall), a reduction to this size would negatively impact the equity of the elector-to-councillor ratio between the four wards, which must be represented by a minimum of one councillor each.

Whilst responses from residents of Fenny Drayton and Ratcliffe Culey were overwhelmingly in favour of a change to electoral arrangements, as a proportion of the electorate of the parish and even of the hamlets alone, the number does not represent a majority by any means.

In considering the suggestion of creating two separate parish councils, it should be noted that Witherley ward had 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. There is a risk that neither Witherley nor the hamlets would be able to sustain a parish council for those reasons.

There may be a need for change both in the name of the parish in order to better reflect the settlements within the parish, and in representation on the parish council. The name “Witherley & Fenny Drayton Parish”, with the parish council name being amended in the same vein, would best reflect the two largest settlements in the parish. In order to achieve equity in the elector-to-councillor ratio, the number of seats in Witherley ward should be increased from four to five, thereby increasing the overall number of seats for the parish to 12.

7.25.2 Draft recommendations following initial consultation

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, thereby increasing the overall number of seats for the parish to 12.

7.25.3 Feedback from consultation on draft recommendations

With regard to the proposed change of name, whilst the parish council and 60% of respondents from Witherley parish ward were in support, overall 80% of respondents were against the change. Many of the comments, however, focussed on the separation of the hamlets from Witherley to create a new parish council and it is likely that many respondents automatically objected to the proposals in the consultation in favour of their alternative proposal. Comments supporting the change in name included Witherley and Fenny Drayton being the largest settlements. Those opposing included the absence of need for change, the cost to change the name, Witherley having amenities used by all settlements within the parish and the need for all hamlets to be included in the name.

The proposal to increase the number of seats for Witherley parish ward received overall support of only 17% of respondents, with Witherley Parish Council and 60% of respondents living in Witherley parish ward in support, all respondents from Fenny Drayton and a large majority from Ratcliffe parish ward being against the proposal. Again, many comments focussed on the separation of the hamlets from Witherley and may have automatically objected to the proposals in the consultation in favour of their alternative proposal. Those in support of a change in seats for Witherley cited the fact that it is the largest village and that representation would be improved. Those against the proposed change felt that Witherley would be overrepresented, those representing Witherley would be too dominant on the parish council, there should be an equal number for each ward, and that an increase in councillors hadn't been requested in the initial consultation responses.

Other comments were received in relation to national policy and legislation, perceived failings of local democracy, the neighbourhood development plan, behaviour of individual parish councillors and traffic issues.

11 of the 54 responses suggested an alternative proposal that the current Witherley parish is split into two parishes – one for Witherley and one for Atterton, Fenny Drayton and Ratcliffe Culey. The reasons given were that responses at the initial consultation stage requested it, the identities of Witherley and the hamlets are different, the residents of the hamlets do not feel they are heard by the current parish council, dissatisfaction with the conduct of the parish council, and the combined electorate of the hamlets being sufficient to meet the minimum for a parish. Comparisons were made with existing parishes of a similar size.

7.25.4 Assessment of responses to consultation on draft recommendations

Although the intention of the proposed name change was to better reflect the identity of residents of Fenny Drayton which was the largest of the parish

wards after Witherley, the overwhelming objection shows the strength of feeling in the matter.

In relation to the proposal to increase the number of seats for Witherley parish ward, the comments demonstrated a misconception that Witherley ward would be overrepresented as a result when in fact the reason for the recommendation had been to introduce greater equity as Witherley ward is underrepresented on the parish council. There were also comments about the large number of parish councillors stating that other parishes with an electorate of a similar size had fewer seats. The reason for this is that the smallest parish wards (ie the hamlets) are required to have a minimum of one councillor and to ensure equity in the elector-to-councillor ratio this results in the parish wards with a larger electorate having more councillors than other similar sized non-warded parishes. The overwhelming objection to the proposal is, however, acknowledged.

In response to the suggested alternative proposal contained in some responses that the current parish is split into two parishes – one for Witherley and one for Atterton, Fenny Drayton and Ratcliffe Culey, no specific proposal has been put forward by residents and there is no evidence that an area the size of either Witherley or the hamlets could sustain its own parish council. In response to comments that there are parishes smaller in electorate size than that requested for the hamlets, the parishes mentioned were already in existence and, if they were being considered for creation as a parish council at this time, the suggestion would not be supported as they have proven to be difficult to sustain.

With regard to comments about matters including national policy and legislation, the neighbourhood development plan and traffic issues, these are not valid considerations for the community governance review. Many responses to the consultation focussed on decision making of the existing parish council and the behaviour of individual councillors. It must be strongly reiterated that perceived failings of a parish council are not within the remit of the community governance review.

7.25.5 Final recommendations

Major changes:	None
Parish Council name and style:	Witherley Parish Council (no change)
Parish name:	Witherley (no change)
Warding arrangements:	Atterton, Fenny Drayton, Ratcliffe, Witherley (no change)
Seats:	11 (no change)

7.25.6 Reasons

Based upon the evidence currently available, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, on balance, considers that a community governance change would NOT:

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

8. Effective date

8.1 Changes will take effect from the next scheduled local elections on 4 May 2023.

9. Adoption

9.1 Adopted by Council on 1 November 2022.