

Full Council

20 October 2022

Community Governance Review: Parishes in the Vale of Allen group, the Winterborne Farringdon group, Chickerell and Weymouth

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

Local Councillor(s): Vale of Allen – Cllrs P Brown and R Cook
Winterborne Farringdon – Cllr R Tarr
Chickerell – Cllrs J Dunseith and J Worth
Weymouth – Cllrs P Barrow, T Ferrari, D Gray, R Hope, B Heatley, H Legg, L O’Leary, J Orrell, C Sutton, G Taylor and K Wheller

Executive Director: J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Jacqui Andrews
Title: Service Manager, Democratic and Electoral Services
Tel: 01258 484325
Email: jacqui.andrews@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

To agree Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review of the parishes forming the Vale of Allen Grouped Parish Council, (namely Crichel, Gussage All Saints, Gussage St Michael, Hinton and Witchampton), the parishes forming the Winterborne Farringdon Grouped Parish Council (namely Bincombe, Whitcombe, Winterborne Came, Winterborne Herringston and Winterborne Monkton) and also the parishes of Chickerell and Weymouth.

Recommendation:

To adopt Terms of Reference for a community governance review set out at Appendix 1.

Reason for Recommendation:

To ensure that community governance arrangements within the area under review are reflective of the identities and interests of the community in those areas.

1. Why is the Council undertaking a review?

- 1.1 A community governance review looks at the governance arrangements of parishes in the area under review and seeks to ensure that these are reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area.
- 1.2 In July 2022, Dorset Council published final recommendations following a Council-wide review of all parishes falling within the Dorset Council area. In agreeing final recommendations, Full Council agreed that the parishes within the Vale of Allen group, Chickerell, Weymouth and the parishes within the Winterborne Farringdon group be removed from the final recommendations. Substantial alternative proposals were submitted in response to draft recommendations in respect of these parishes and Full Council believed that further public consultation should be undertaken to seek residents' views on these proposals. The Community Governance Review legislation requires that any Review is concluded within 12 months of the publication of the Terms of Reference so it was not possible for further consultation to be undertaken as part of the earlier Review that concluded in July 2022. For that reason, these parishes were removed from the Review, and Full Council is being asked to agree Terms of Reference for a further Review in respect of these parishes only - no other parishes will be considered as part of this further Review, unless affected by any proposals. This enables full consultation to be undertaken with local residents and other interested parties that would be affected by any governance changes that might be agreed.
- 1.3 In undertaking the Review, Dorset Council ("the Council") will comply with the requirements of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ("the 2007 Act" and the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972, and have regard to Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in accordance with section 100(4) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in March 2010.

2. What is a Community Governance Review?

- 2.1 A Community Governance Review is a legal process whereby the Council will consult with those living in the area, and other interested parties, on the most suitable ways of representing the people in the area identified in the review. This means making sure that those living in the area, and other interested groups, have a say in how their local communities are represented.
- 2.2 Section 93 of the 2007 Act allows principal councils to decide how to undertake a Review, provided that it complies with certain duties in that

Act including details set out relating to consultation, the need to ensure any proposals reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient. The Council has to publish its recommendations but the manner in which the Council consults with its residents is not prescribed.

2.3 A Review can consider one or more of the following options:

- creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- the naming of parishes and the style of new parishes and the creation of town councils;
- the electoral arrangements for parishes (for instance, the ordinary year of election; council size; the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding);
- grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes;
- other types of local arrangements, including parish meetings

3. **Terms of Reference**

3.1 The Council is asked to agree Terms of Reference for the Review (attached at Appendix 1), that sets out the scope of the Review, and also a timetable for carrying out the Review, including dates for public consultation. The Review must be completed within 12 months of the publication of the Terms of Reference.

3.2 The Council recognises that the development of strong, sustainable communities depends on residents' active participation in decision making in respect of the governance arrangements of parish councils, and the Council is therefore committed to engaging effectively with the diverse communities it serves and to enabling local people to participate meaningfully in the creation of effective community governance arrangements where all people feel able to take an active part in influencing service delivery. The timetable set out in the Terms of Reference sets out dates for 2 periods of public consultation.

4. **Implementation**

4.1 The adoption of the Terms of Reference by Full Council will commence the Review which must be concluded within 12 months. If Full Council chooses to accept the final recommendations of the Review, concluded after public consultation, it will be necessary to prepare a Reorganisation Order and publish this together with the reasons for the changes, making maps available for public inspection. There are also various bodies that must be notified of the changes including the Local Government Boundary Committee for England.

- 4.2 Any changes to governance arrangements of the parishes will form a Reorganisation Order that will take effect on 1 April 2024 in readiness for the next scheduled parish elections in May 2024.

5. **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications to Dorset Council associated with this report.

6. **Environmental Implications**

- 6.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

7. **Well-being and Health Implications**

- 7.1 There are no well-being and health implications associated with this report.

8. **Other Implications**

- 8.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

9. **Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:
Current Risk: Low
Residual Risk: Low

10. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 10.1 A detailed Equalities Impact Assessment was prepared for the Community Governance Review that was undertaken between July 2021 and July 2022 and this is relevant to this Review. A copy of the assessment can be viewed at Appendix 2 of the Full Council report dated 15 July 2021 [here](#).

11. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference.

12. **Background Papers**

[Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007](#)
[Local Government Boundary Commission for England - Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#)