

Community Governance Review

Shipton Gorge and Loders Parish Councils

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

Terms of Reference

Published on 27 October 2025

1. Introduction

What is a Community Governance Review?

A Community Governance Review is a review of the whole or part of the Council's area to consider one or more of the following:

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

A Community Governance Review is required to take into account:

- the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

The Council is required to ensure that community governance within the area under review will:

- be reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- be effective and convenient.

If the Council is satisfied that the recommendation of a Community Governance Review would ensure that community governance within the area under review will reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area, and is effective and convenient, the Council makes a Community Governance Order.

Why is the Council carrying out this Community Governance Review?

On 7 July 2025, Dorset Council received a petition seeking a review of part of the boundary between the parishes of Shipton Gorge and Loders. Following receipt of a

petition, the council has a duty to undertake a review which must be concluded within 1 year of receipt of the petition ie 6 July 2026.

At its meeting on 14 July 2022, Dorset Council agreed to change of the parish boundary between these parishes following no adverse comments from either parish council or any local residents during the 2 x 12 week public consultation periods, and a related change to Dorset Council's ward boundaries was subsequently made by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to ensure that the parish and ward boundaries were coterminous.

Local residents have since raised concerns about the changes to the parish boundaries as they do not believe the current arrangements reflect community identity and have petitioned Dorset Council for a further review, asking that the boundary be returned to its previous line prior to the change that took effect in 2024. A map of the previous change made to the parish boundary is attached to these terms of reference.

Scope of the Review

The Review will be limited to the parishes of Shipton Gorge and Loders. The entirety of the parishes will be reviewed as changes to one small area may impact on the parishes as a whole and it is appropriate that all residents of the parishes affected have an opportunity to comment.

2. Consultation

How the Council proposes to conduct consultations during the Review?

Before making any recommendations or publishing final proposals, the Council must consult local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body (including a local authority) which appears to the Council to have an interest in the review. The Council will therefore:

- publish a Notice and these Terms of Reference on the Council's website via www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/community-governance-review and arrange for copies to be available for public inspection at County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ during normal office hours;
- send a copy of the Notice and the Terms of Reference to the parish clerks and to the Dorset Association of Town and Parish Councils;
- seek to arrange for the notice to be published by the parish clerks on parish council websites and notice boards; and
- send a copy of the Notice and the Terms of Reference to the Member of Parliament.

Before making any recommendations, the Council will take account of any representations received. The Council will publish its recommendations as soon as practicable.

3. **Timetable for the Community Governance Review**

The Council has to complete a Community Governance Review within twelve months from the day on which the Council received the petition ie by 6 July 2026. A Community Governance Review is concluded on the day on which the Council publishes the recommendations made following the Community Governance Review.

Timetable

Action	Timeline	Details
Report to Full Council	23 October 2025	Council approves the Community Governance Review Terms of Reference.
Publish Terms of Reference	27 October 2025	Publish Terms of Reference and notify stakeholders of the commencement of the Review.
Prepare draft consultation document and invite initial submissions	3 November 2025 – 5 December 2025 (4 weeks)	Initial submissions invited: • Shipton Gorge and Loders parish council • Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) • Dorset Councillors covering the area of the review. • Member of Parliament • Any local groups and interested parties such as local businesses and local public and voluntary organisations. Publish proposals on Dorset Council website.
Consider submissions	8 December 2025- 16 January 2026	Consider any submissions/representations and prepare report of draft recommendations for Full Council on 17 February 2026.
Publish draft recommendations	23 February – 27 March 2026 (4 weeks)	Publish draft recommendations for further consultation with: • all local government electors • all town and parish councils • DAPTC • Member of Parliament • local groups and interested parties.

		Publish draft recommendations on Dorset Council website.
Make final recommendations	16 April 2026 Full Council meeting	Consider any further submissions/representations and prepare final recommendations for report to Full Council.
Publish final recommendations	May 2026	Publish final recommendations and arrange for the preparation of a Reorganisation Order.

