

Full Council

16 April 2026

Shipton Gorge and Loders Community Governance Review – final recommendations For Decision

Cabinet Member:

Cllr N Ireland, Leader of the Council, Climate, Performance and Safeguarding

Local Councillor(s):

Cllr Neil Eysenck and Cllr Sally Holland

Senior Leadership Team:

J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report author and job title:

Jacqui Andrews, Service Manager, Democratic and Electoral Services

Email: jacqui.andrews@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority:

Part 4, Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Local Government Act 1972

Report status: Public

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 A community governance review looks at the governance arrangements of parishes in the area under review – in this case Shipton Gorge Parish and Loders Parish – and seeks to ensure that these are reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area.
- 1.2 In undertaking a 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”), the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972 (“the 1972 Act”), and have regard to the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in accordance with section 100(4) of the 2007 Act. The council will also give due consideration to the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government published in 2008.
- 1.3 The report seeks a resolution agreeing final recommendations in respect of parish boundaries for Shipton Gorge and Loders that will be subject to a reorganisation order with changes taking effect on 1 April 2027.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To agree final recommendations in respect of parish boundaries for the parishes of Shipton Gorge and Loders as shown in Appendices A, B and C.

3. Reason for the recommendation(s)

- 3.1 To ensure that community governance arrangements within the area under review are reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area, and comply with statutory guidance.

4. What is a community governance review

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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 that manner in which the Council consults with its residents is not prescribed.

5. Why is the council undertaking a review?

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 At its meeting on 14 July 2022, Dorset Council agreed to change the parish boundary between these parishes following no comments from either parish council or any local residents, 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 align (are coterminous).
- 5.3 The area of Loders parish that was moved into Shipton Gorge parish as a result of the previous community governance review contains 14 properties with 29 electors registered as at 1 December 2025.
- 5.4 Local residents have since raised concerns about the changes to the parish boundaries as they do not believe the current arrangements reflect community identity. The petition to Dorset Council seeking a further review was signed by

22 registered electors and asks that the boundary be returned to its previous line prior to the change that took effect in 2024.

6. Consultation undertaken

- 6.1 A public consultation exercise in respect of draft recommendations agreed by Full Council on 10 February 2026 was undertaken between 23 February and 27 March 2026. This included an online consultation survey, direct communication with the petition organiser and the affected parish councils, local ward members, the DAPTC, the member of Parliament and 77 residents of Shipton Gorge and Loders parishes who have signed up for direct e-newsletter communications from the council.
- 6.2 There were 21 responses received during the public consultation period. There were 20 respondents (95.24%) who were in favour of the draft recommendations whilst 1 respondent (4.76%) disagreed with the proposals as they felt the A35 was a more obvious boundary.

7. Working Group recommendations

- 7.1 A cross-party working group considered the petition and the responses received to the public consultation on draft recommendations, together with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England Guidance on community governance reviews.
- 7.2 The cross party task and finish group formed by resolution of Full Council to develop recommendations considered all responses received. As the majority of respondents supported the draft recommendation, the task and finish group propose these as their final recommendations which, if supported by Full Council, will form a reorganisation giving effect to the changes. The task and finish group's final recommendations are supported by the local ward members. The proposed final recommendations of the task and finish group are set out at Appendix A with the proposed new boundary being shown by a black dashed line. At Appendices B and C the western and eastern line of the boundary between the parishes is shown in closer detail.
- 7.4 Any decision made will not affect Dorset Council's ward boundaries. If Full Council's final recommendations is to make a change to the parish boundary, the LGBCE will be notified so that they can take this into account as part of the electoral review process.

8. Legal considerations

- 8.1 The Community Governance Review was undertaken under Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and a reorganisation order will be drafted giving effect to the changes agreed by Full Council from 1 April 2027. Election dates and the councillors' term of office will remain unchanged with the next scheduled elections taking place in May 2029.

9. Financial implications

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

10. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

- 10.1 There are no natural environment, climate and ecology implications associated with this report.

11. Well-being and health implications

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

12. Other implications

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

13. Risk implications

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

14. Equalities

- 14.1 Consideration to any equalities impact has been given and the report is attached to Appendix 2 of the [23 October 2025 Full Council](#) report on the community governance review.

15. Appendices

- 15.1 Appendix A – Final recommendations for public consultation.
Appendices B and C – Final recommendations in close up for the eastern and western ends of the boundary between Loders and Shipton Gorge.

16. Background papers

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

17. Report sign-off

- 17.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Corporate Director Finance and Commercial (Acting Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder.





