

Dear Town and Parish Clerks

Introduction

Further to the discussion at Full Council on 15 July 2021, and the decision taken under delegated powers by the Corporate Director Legal and Democratic Services, the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review (CGR) were published on 22 July 2021. A copy of the Terms of Reference document can be found at <http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/community-governance-review%20>. The Consultation survey can also be found on the CGR pages of our website but this will not be available until 5 August 2021 when the consultation goes live. We can provide paper copies of the survey on request but our preferred way to receive the responses is online using the SNAP survey.

As a reminder, the areas that CGRs cover are:

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes (grouping or de-grouping parishes)
- Increasing or decreasing the number of Councillors
- Creating ward boundaries or changing existing Warding arrangements
- Changes to Parish names
- Correcting minor boundary anomalies.
- Changing a parish council into a parish meeting

The Process

The responsibility of undertaking CGRs falls to the principal council (Dorset Council in this case) and can be triggered in a number of ways including a request from a parish, a community petition or, as in this case, at the principal council's volition. As a principal council, we are required to undertake a review of governance arrangements of all parishes every 10-15 years and Full Council on 15 July agreed that now was the appropriate time to carry out a council-wide review.

The legislation that covers CGRs requires any Review to be completed within 12 months of Dorset Council publishing its Terms of Reference which will be 5 August 2021, although any changes to governance arrangements agreed as part of the Review cannot take effect until the next scheduled elections in May 2024.

The process that Dorset Council will follow will be:

- Publication of Terms of reference that sets out what will be covered – in this case it will be a review of all parishes that sit within the Dorset Council area (5 August 2021).
- Public consultation for 12 weeks seeking proposals/initial submissions (5 August to 28 October 2021).
- Consideration of consultation responses and preparation of draft recommendations (to be agreed by Full Council - December 2021).
- Public consultation on draft recommendations (20 December 2021 – 28 February 2022).
- Consideration of further responses and then publication of final recommendations. (to be agreed by Full Council – April 2022)

Considerations

When preparing any submissions, we will recommend that the parishes take into account the considerations that Dorset Council will need to apply that are set out in the Local Government Boundary Commission for England Guidance that has been provided to all Parish Councils (a link to the Guidance can be found [here](#)). That is:

- The need to secure that community governance within the area under review:
 - reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area.
 - is effective and convenient.
- The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion and the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.
- The impact on electorate size of future development within the next 5 years.

We will be able to assist by providing street lists with elector numbers, and we have also provided figures for the 5 year projected future developments in the consultation document.

Any changes will be set out in a Reorganisation Order – the Order will include a detailed map of any boundary changes with any changes taking effect at the next scheduled elections ie May 2024.

If you have any queries in respect of the proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me or the Team through a dedicated email address of cgr@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk .

Kind regards

Jacqui

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