

REPORT TO: Civic Affairs Committee

26 June 2018

LEAD OFFICER: Head of Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing

Community Governance Review – Barrington Parish Council

Purpose

1. To consider a request from Barrington Parish Council to increase the council size from nine to 13 parish councillors.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Committee:
 - (a) agrees the request from Barrington Parish Council for a Community Governance Review to increase the number of parish councillors from nine to 13; and
 - (b) agrees, with or without amendments, the draft terms of reference (Appendix B); and
 - (c) agrees for staff to agree a timetable in consultation with Barrington Parish Council.

Reasons for Recommendation

3. A request has been received from Barrington Parish Council that the number of councillors on the Parish Council be increased from nine to 13. The request has been made due to the planned growth in the area.

Background

4. A request has been received from Barrington Parish Council that the number of councillors on the Parish Council be increased from nine to 13 (Appendix A).
5. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (“the 2007 Act”) provides for a Principal Council to conduct a review of the community governance arrangements for the whole or part of its area for the purpose of considering whether or not to make any changes to Parish boundaries or size, and/or the creation of new parishes; and the review of the electoral arrangements for new and/or existing parishes. Section 93 of the 2007 Act allows principal councils to decide how to undertake such a review, provided that they comply with the duties in the Act which apply to councils undertaking reviews. If, following a review, the Council decides that changes should be made to the electoral arrangements they may make an Order giving effect to the changes.
6. Section 95 of the 2007 Act provides, among other things, that when considering the number of councillors to be elected for the parish as a whole, the authority must have regard to the number of electors for the parish, and any change in that number likely to occur in the next five years.

7. Civic Affairs Committee has delegated authority to make decisions on parish numbers following a Community Governance Review.
8. The Community Governance Review process, once commenced should be concluded within 12 months of the publication of the terms of reference.

Considerations

9. The current electorate for Barrington is 851 (May 2018) and the existing number of parish councillors is 9. The electorate is forecast to increase to 1,240 by 2023/24
10. The number of parish councillors for each parish council cannot be less than five. There is no maximum number. There are no rules relating to the allocations of councillors. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has suggested that the minimum number of councillors should be seven and the maximum 25. Within the minimum and maximum limits, the following allocations are recommended by NALC:

Electors	Councillors	Electors	Councillors
Up to 900	7	10,400	17
1,400	8	11,900	18
2,000	9	13,500	19
2,700	10	15,200	20
3,500	11	17,000	21
4,400	12	18,900	22
5,400	13	20,900	23
6,500	14	23,000	24
7,700	15	over 23,000	25
9,000	16		

NALC goes on to say that this table may, however, not be appropriate in rural authorities with sparsity of population¹.

11. The Council must have regard to the following factors when considering the number of councillors to be elected for a parish:
 - the number of local government electors for the parish;

¹ How to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR), Association of Electoral Administrators, 2016, p.43, 2.72.

- any change in that number which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts.

12. The table below shows the number of parish councillor seats compared to the size of electorate for parishes in the district with councillor numbers equal to or greater than that of Barrington:

Parish	Electorate (Sept 2016)	Council Size
Barrington	851	9
Orwell	886	9
Steeple Morden	919	9
Fowlmere	970	9
Foxton	1025	9
Oakington & Westwick	1194	9
Haslingfield	1236	11
Balsham	1274	9
Caldecote	1295	9
Harston	1367	11
Whittlesford	1452	11
Duxford	1477	11
Meldreth	1505	9
Stapleford	1573	9
Orchard Park	1719	9
Comberton	1872	13
Swavesey	1901	11
Teversham Village + Foxgloves	1991	11
Hardwick	2051	9
Bassingbourn	2272	15
Over	2300	11
Longstanton	2621	11
Papworth Everard	2806	13
Gamlingay	2957	15
Bar Hill	3093	13

13. In its request to the Council, Barrington Parish Council states that
- (a) Barrington currently is a village of 469 households and is due a further 220 houses which will be developed on the site of the former Cemex cement works. With this development and the associated works within the S106 agreement, the volume and workload for Parish Councillors will grow with the new and ongoing development. There are a number of specific projects planned that will require Parish Councillor involvement.
14. Draft terms of reference for a review have been included with this report due to the time between the request being received and it being presented to the Committee. Should the Committee agree to commence a Community Governance Review, a timetable will need to be agreed with the parish council or set by the Committee. The timetable included within the draft terms of reference should be seen as indicative only.
15. There are no scheduled elections until 2022. Should the parish council wish to increase its number before this time and unscheduled election would need to be held.

Options

16. The Committee could agree or disagree to commence a Community Governance Review of the parish of Barrington to increase the number of parish councillors from nine to 13.
17. Should the Committee agree to commence a Community Governance Review of the parish of Barrington, they could:
 - (a) agree, with or without amendments, the draft terms of reference (Appendix B); and
 - (b) agree for staff to agree a timetable in consultation with Barrington Parish Council or set a timetable.

Implications

18. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Legal

19. The draft terms of reference for a Community Governance Review of the parish of Barrington has considered the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, published in 2010, which reflects Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972, 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, and the following regulations which guide, in particular, consequential matters arising from the Review: Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008 (SI2008/625). (The 2007 Act transferred powers to the principal councils which previously, under the Local Government Act 1997, had been shared with the Electoral Commission's Boundary Committee for England.)

Staffing

20. Staff time will be required to carry out the review; however, this is likely to be minimal given the nature of the review. The time will be spent consulting interested parties, taking account of any representations received and reporting back to the Committee. This can be carried out within existing resources.

Equality and Diversity

21. The Council will work with Barrington Parish Council to identify and consult with interested parties.

Effect on Strategic Aims

22. Appropriate community governance arrangements will help the Council to sustain existing successful, vibrant villages; helping to achieve our vision to deliver superb quality of life for our residents, and remain the best place to live, work, and study in the country.

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