

On Mon, 20 Jul 2020 at 10:06, <clerk@foxtonparishcouncil.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Mr Francis

Foxton Parish Council would like to request a Community Governance Review with the aim of having an additional parish councillor in place in time for the 2022 parish council elections. This would raise the number of councillors from nine to ten.

The reasons for this request are set out below:

1. Foxton has had an increase in housing over the last 10 years of over 60 new properties. 15 properties have been built at Chalk Hill as a rural exception site, 15 at Moores Farm as brownfield development and 22 at Station Road due to the previous lack of the five-year housing supply. Other individual properties have been built under the Group Village planning conditions. This increase in residents naturally adds to the potential of requests to the Parish Council on many diverse matters.
2. The current workload of the Parish Council is increasing and we need to allow the workload to be spread over a larger base to ensure that councillors have the time to involve themselves in the detail of issues, rather than carrying out an overview role.
3. Over the years Government has pushed down ever-increasing responsibilities to the level of Parish Councils, therefore, increasing workload.
4. We may see an increase in the number of planning applications, depending on the five-year housing supply, which could vary at any time.
5. There is an ever-increasing number of consultations which we are expected to summarise for parishioners and respond to. These documents are regularly lengthy, all need to be read to see if they are relevant to our parish and then information disseminated to all councillors and acted on.
6. The number of emails each councillor receives is increasing all the time. These all need to be read and digested with many needing fast responses.
7. It is not unusual for two councillors to be away at any one time leaving the remaining councillors and clerk at meetings. The wider the spread of councillors from all parts of Foxton, the better it will be represented at the Parish Council level.
8. The current workload on every councillor is growing and this will only increase. Areas which will grow in the next few years include planning, state of the roads and footpaths, GCP Travel Hub, A10 crossing/bridge/tunnel/by- pass (now in the remit of the mayor's office), East-West Rail implications, S106 funding of community projects, growth of the primary school/village hall and maintenance of village amenities. (this is not an exhaustive list).
9. It must be emphasised that parish councillors give their time for free and this can impose significant pressure. Spreading the workload more evenly between more people would mean it becomes less of a burden and would help to keep all councillors motivated in the service of the community.

Foxton is fortunate to have many residents who are willing to put themselves forward for public service. When six parish councillors resigned at the last Parish Council election in 2018, six new parishioners came forward for election. Similarly, when two Parish Council vacancies occurred

earlier this year, three parishioners came forward to be considered. One subsequently dropped out, leaving two co-opted positions. We, therefore, do not foresee an issue of being able to fill an additional council position, especially with the growth in the village population.

Foxton Parish Council would like to ask for a formal review and we would like to record our willingness to work with South Cambridgeshire District Council to take this matter forward.

Best wishes

Foxton Parish Clerk