

REPORT TO: Council

26 November 2020

LEAD OFFICER: Jeff Membery, Head of Transformation

Community Governance Review (CGR) of the parishes of Longstanton and Oakington and Westwick, prompted by the development at Northstowe; outcomes of the second round of consultation and options: recommendations to Council by Civic Affairs Committee on conclusion of the Review

Executive Summary

1. The new community at Northstowe, in the north west of the district, has been planned as a distinctive new town of 10,000 homes, with green space used to separate it from the neighbouring villages of Longstanton and Oakington.
2. The new development straddles the parishes of Longstanton and Oakington and Westwick.
3. The Civic Affairs Committee instructed officers to conduct a Community Governance Review (CGR) in response to the creation of this new community, which commenced 11 November 2019 with the publication of the Terms of Reference for the review.
4. The Council is now presented with the findings of the second round of consultation and the recommendations of Civic Affairs Committee, as the outcome of the review, and is invited to agree to these recommendations.

Key Decision

5. No.

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that Council agrees the recommendations of the Civic Affairs Committee, which were the outcome of the community governance review, for the creation of a new civil parish for Northstowe, as shown in the map entitled Option A (recommended variant) and set out in full in paragraph 13.

Reasons for Recommendations

7. The District Council is obliged to keep under review the community governance arrangements for its area, to ensure that the arrangements in place continue to allow good community engagement, good local democracy and permit the effective and convenient delivery of local services.

8. The emergent new community at Northstowe is developing its own, distinctive identity, with interests that are in some cases separate to and different from those of the established community of Longstanton, where Northstowe residents are currently represented via Longstanton Parish Council.
9. The consultation to date, as set out in the published Terms of Reference (Appendix A), invited views from the parish councils (both those immediately involved and those neighbouring) and the communities therein on the following:
 - Parish boundaries.
 - Electoral arrangements.
 - Whether to create a new parish and if so, style, name and number of Councillors.
 - Possible interim arrangements.
10. The second round of consultation coincided with a national lockdown by central government due to Coronavirus; Civic Affairs Committee extended the consultation window by a period of three months to allow face to face engagement to take place within the second round of consultation.
11. Submissions received within the second round of consultation signalled clear preferences on the part of residents and the parish councils affected as set out in paragraphs 23-56, with Homes England, master developer for Phases 2 and 3 (with Phases 3A and 3B currently the subject of outline planning applications) also putting forward a submission for consideration by the committee.
12. Civic Affairs Committee heard representations made in person by Homes England (Emily Jones), Longstanton Parish Council (Clerk, Libby White), Oakington and Westwick Parish Council (Chairman, Dr Stephen Moore) and ward members (represented by Cllr Sarah Cheung-Johnson) at their meeting 03 November 2020.
13. Civic Affairs Committee considered in detail the submissions made in the second round of consultation, the stakeholder and ward member representations and in line with legislation, guidance and the CGR Terms of Reference, agreed their recommendation to Council, as follows:
 - (a) The creation of a new civil parish for Northstowe, as shown in the map entitled Option A (recommended variant), see Appendix C.
 - (b) That the new administrative body be called “Northstowe Town Council”.
 - (c) Elections to “Northstowe Town Council” be held in 2021 with councillors serving for a single year. All councillors to stand for a full four-year term in 2022.
 - (d) “Northstowe Town Council” should have 15 councillors.
 - (e) Elections to Longstanton Parish Council and Willingham Parish Council take place in 2021 with councillors serving for a five-year term.
 - (f) Officers write to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to seek re-alignment of district and county boundaries where these are affected by any changes made by this review.
 - (g) The creation of a new polling district with boundaries to match the new parish boundary for Northstowe; amendment of existing polling district boundaries to match the new reduced size boundaries for Longstanton Civil Parish and

Oakington & Westwick Civil Parish; the creation of a new polling district for the area north of the guided busway, which is to be moved to Willingham Civil Parish.

Details

14. 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. This can be 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. The Guidance also states that in reaching conclusions on the boundaries between parish wards the principal council should take account of community identity and interests in the area and consider whether any particular ties or linkages might be broken by the drawing of particular ward boundaries. Principal councils should seek views on such matters during the course of a Community Governance Review (CGR) and seek sound and demonstrable evidence of such identities and linkage.
15. Civic Affairs Committee agreed (October 2019) to commence a CGR of the civil parishes of Longstanton and Oakington and Westwick, which commenced with the publication of the Terms of Reference 11 November 2019, see Appendix A.
16. The guidance states that when considering parish boundaries, the principal council should ensure they consider the desirability of fixing boundaries which are, and will remain, easily identifiable, as well as taking into account any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries. A review offers an opportunity to put in place strong-clearly defined boundaries, tied to firm ground features, and remove anomalous parish boundaries.
17. The guidance states that recommendations made in a CGR ought to bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.
18. Civic Affairs Committee considered the findings of the first round of consultation at its meeting 3 March 2020. It determined that of the seven options advanced under the first round of consultation, there was sufficient support evidenced for three of these options to go forward and be consulted on in the second round of consultation. These options are set out in Appendix B and illustrated in map form, Appendix C.
19. The second round of consultation, which opened 15 March 2020, was disrupted by the Covid-19 lockdown. Civic Affairs Committee agreed (2 June 2020) to extend the period of consultation by three months. The consultation therefore closed 15 September 2020.
20. The engagement programme was rescheduled to provide both an online meeting and drop-in sessions at venues covering all three communities, on different days of the week and at different times, delivered in line with Covid-19 infection control guidance.
21. The formats used for online and paper copy submission forms for the second round were redesigned to improve user-friendliness in response to first round consultation feedback.

22. There were 291 individual consultation responses received, with submissions made by Longstanton Parish Council, Oakington and Westwick Parish Council and by Homes England.
23. Of these, 175 were residents who consider themselves to be living in Northstowe, 86 from elsewhere in Longstanton Civil Parish and 24 were resident in Oakington and Westwick. 5 lived elsewhere and 1 did not provide details.
24. The responses showed a clear preference for Option A, with over 170 submissions giving support for this option; Option B was the next most popular choice with 69 submissions in favour of this option, with Option C attracting 45 supporting submissions.
25. When the submissions were analysed according to where respondents lived, of those living in Longstanton, 58% favoured either Option A or B, with 42% favouring Option C. Responses from Northstowe residents showed overwhelming support for Options A and B (64% and 34% respectively) and of Oakington and Westwick residents responding, 59% supported Option A, 18% supported Option B and 23% supported Option C.
26. Of those expressing an opinion regarding the name and style of the new arrangement for Northstowe, there were few detractors of the name "Northstowe" and a large majority (65%) felt the style "Town Council" to be the most appropriate style.
27. Not all respondents felt able to recommend the number of councillors to be elected to the new body as a third did not respond to this question. Of those who answered this question, numbers between 2 and 25 were put forward. The most popular response was 10, followed by 15 and 7. Longstanton Parish Council in their submission recommended that 11 elected members would be a suitable starting point.
28. As to when the new civil parish should take effect, of those who expressed an opinion on this (a fifth expressed no opinion), 74% felt the new governance arrangement should take effect in 2021. If Northstowe's residents' responses alone are considered, this rises to 83% of respondents. If elections were not to take place in 2021, however, 72% of those who gave an opinion felt they would support the establishment of an unelected caretaker council prior to elections in 2022.
29. Amongst respondents supporting Options A and B, 37% had no opinion on whether the new civil parish for Northstowe should be warded, but of those that did express a view, 60% said that it may be necessary to ward the new parish area.
30. With respect to Option C, of the 45 responses in support of this option, 39% had no opinion on warding, but of those who expressed a view, 69% felt that warding the remainder of Longstanton Parish Council would be necessary.

Considerations

31. The publication of the terms of reference (11 November 2019) began the review, which in ordinary times must be completed within twelve months. The extension to the second round of consultation altered the original timetable, but still allowed for completion of the review within a year from commencement.
32. A variety of views, many very detailed, were expressed by members of the public through the first round of consultation, with over 430 submissions received.

33. With regard to setting the proposed boundaries for each of the three options selected by Civic Affairs Committee to consult upon in the second round (see paragraph 17), officers endeavoured to reconcile the specific requests made by Longstanton and Oakington Parish Councils concerning the Longstanton Conservation area and the area forming the green separation between Northstowe and Oakington village, and in relation to Options A and B, for the area west of the B1050 (Northstowe extension land) with the Guidance on community governance reviews (March 2010, DCLG/LGBCE).
34. Specifically, paragraph 83 of this guidance states, "As far as boundaries between parishes are concerned, these should reflect the "no-man's land" between communities represented by areas of low population or barriers such as rivers, roads or railways. They need to be, and be likely to remain, easily identifiable. For instance, factors to consider include parks and recreation grounds which sometimes provide natural breaks between communities, but they can equally act as focal points."
35. As a result of the difficulties relating to staging standard community engagement events, no Community Governance Review specific consultation events have been held by the parish councils themselves during the second round of consultation.
36. However, both Longstanton Parish Council and Oakington and Westwick Parish Council felt confident to provide a consultation response on behalf of their residents.
37. Oakington and Westwick Parish Council stated their belief that "All three options are acceptable" noting only that they would "object to any new proposal which would extend Northstowe Parish to the South" and their willingness to engage in discussion relating to "any potential impact of the new governance arrangements on custody, of property, functions, rights and liabilities".
38. At the meeting of the Civic Affairs Committee 03 November, the chairman of Oakington and Westwick Civil Parish stated that the position of the parish council was to support the choice of Longstanton Parish Council, so favoured Option A.
39. Longstanton Parish Council provided a detailed submission as set out in Appendix D for the Committee's consideration, making clear that whilst they have a preference for Option A, they would regret both the loss of Northstowe residents and those residing north of the Guided Busway.
40. Although no formal submission was received in the second round of consultation, Willingham Parish Council had previously signalled their willingness to accept land north of the busway within revised parish boundaries for Willingham Civil Parish, stating that "It would appear a natural adjustment to bring (*the*) highlighted area (*the land north of the guided busway*) into Willingham and indeed many people already think the boundary between Willingham and Longstanton is located at the busway."
41. The second-round consultation material encouraged respondents to offer specific alterations to boundaries where they felt their preferred option (A, B or C) could be further improved through adjustments.
42. Some residents of Longstanton argued that the field boundary delineating the Northstowe extension land (the subject of outline planning application for Homes England's Phase 3B application) offers a superior parish boundary between Northstowe and Longstanton than does the Over Road.
43. This view was shared in 6 of the 86 submissions from those residents in Longstanton village and was also advanced by Longstanton Parish Council, see Appendix D and this

was reiterated by their clerk in her statement at the Committee meeting. The correspondence dated 4 August 2020 states the following, “The boundary of Northstowe 3B should NOT be with Over Road, but the field boundaries...It is the belief of Council members that this is the boundary as understood and accepted (as much as it can be) by residents when viewing planning applications over the last 13 years. At no point was it shown that the boundary would be with Over Road.”

44. Homes England supported the setting of boundaries for a new parish for Northstowe and in their submission, whilst generally aligning with Option A, identified alternative boundaries for the new parish. Specifically, they propose the parish boundary for Northstowe should closely align with the Northstowe Development Area.
45. They contended that “To ensure an integrated town, Homes England envisage a range of public assets and communal spaces to be managed and maintained collectively within Northstowe, on a town-wide basis. We feel this is integral to the identity of the town, which is distinct from neighbouring communities. Fragmenting this process could lead to disjointed and complex management arrangements, and ultimately compromise residents experience”. They continue, “In their current form neither Option A, B or C support this aspiration for Northstowe. The preferred option for Homes England is one that supports a comprehensive approach to stewardship with parish boundaries contiguous to development to maintain the town as a whole. Homes England has therefore proposed boundary amendments to Option A to include the land adjoining Oakington (“Oakington Edge”) and the Longstanton Paddocks.” This is given as an appendix to their submission, presented in full as part of Appendix D to this report (see page 16).
46. Paragraph 34 outlines in part the rationale behind the boundary proposal with respect to the Longstanton Conservation Area, which does overlap with the Northstowe Development Area and which has been mapped against Option A to clarify. Please see Appendix A. The concerns regarding future management and maintenance arrangements of land in the ownership of Homes England needs to be balanced against the requirements of the legislation and the need to demarcate the parish boundary using easily identifiable features. Arguably, Long Lane, which marks the limit of the conservation area provides an identifiable feature for the new civil parish boundary. Historically, Long Lane provided part of the parish boundary between the parishes of Long Stanton All Saints and Long Stanton St Michaels, prior to their merger to form Longstanton Civil Parish in 1953.
47. Regarding the green separation between Northstowe and Oakington and Westwick, the Parish Council for Oakington and Westwick was insistent that the green separation be held within their boundary in their first round submission, a position they reiterated in their second round consultation response, in addition to stating their willingness to engage in discussion relating to “any potential impact of the new governance arrangements on custody, of property, functions, rights and liabilities”, see Appendix D. In the representation made to the Civic Affairs Committee (03 November) by the parish council chairman, it was asserted that the green separation was important to the character of the village, had symbolic importance and should not be eroded. The parish council wished also to maintain control over an area that was important for flood control.
48. Therefore Oakington and Westwick Parish Council are aware that placing the boundary such that a portion of the green separation forming the Oakington Edge, which according to Homes England’s Landscape Strategy (part of their Phase 3A proposal, currently the subject of an outline planning application) would include a retained tree belt, land used as a multi-functional SUDS and an Urban Park, see Appendix of Homes England’s submission (Appendix D, page 15) and such issues may therefore need to be addressed.

49. The Phase 3A outline application has not yet been determined and until such time as it is, the masterplan for land use in this area cannot be considered as fixed. However, should the intended land use outlined in the Landscape Strategy as presented come forward, the Committee was mindful of the government Guidance, as given previously in paragraph 34, in setting boundaries, “factors to consider include parks and recreation grounds which sometimes provide natural breaks between communities, but they can equally act as focal points.” Thus, a boundary placed at either side of the green separation would conform to the Guidance.
50. The Homes England proposed boundary for the area west of the B1050, whilst following the tree line along the field boundary which aligns with the Northstowe Development Area (as opposed to Over Road) would not take within the new parish boundary significant parcels south of the guided busway, including the Endurance Estates and Digital Park parcels. Both of these parcels are currently the subject of planning applications; Homes England has been working with the developers of these parcels to bring forward coherent development proposals designed to fully integrate them with their Phase 3B development plans. They provided a Northstowe Development Co-ordination Statement and Guiding Principles for Land West of Station Road as part of their outline planning application for Phase 3B, prepared “to provide a framework for the co-ordinated development of the three adjoining parcels to the west of Station Road within the Northstowe new town.” This is inconsistent with the parish boundaries proposed by Homes England (Appendix D).
51. Homes England subsequently stated in their verbal submission to Civic Affairs Committee (03 November) that they would be very content for the guided busway to form the boundary of the new parish for Northstowe, in accordance with Option A.
52. Having considered the support for each option indicated by the individual submissions and on the basis of the written and verbal statements provided by Longstanton Parish Council, Oakington and Westwick Parish Council and Homes England, Civic Affairs Committee concluded (03 November) that their recommendation to Council would be for the boundary Option A, varied such that the adjacent field boundary, which serves as the perimeter of the Northstowe Extension Land, should be the parish boundary between Northstowe and Longstanton, as shown in the map entitled Option A (recommended variant), see Appendix C.
53. Regarding the name and style of the new body, as stated in paragraph 25, the second-round consultation revealed a preference for the style “Town Council” and the name, Northstowe.
54. Regarding electoral arrangements, electors resident in Northstowe number 824 as of the end of September 2020, forecast to rise to 2,190 by 2024. It is likely that the number of electors will exceed 999 by April 2021. The Committee was mindful that where the number of electors is 1,000 or more, a parish council must be created (which may be styled town council), in accordance with the legislation.
55. With respect to the number of councillors to be elected to the new body, as stated in the Terms of Reference for the Review, “the Council notes that the number of parish councillors for each parish council shall not 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 has suggested that the minimum number of councillors should be seven and the maximum 25.”
56. In determining the number of councillors, the Council will have regard to the number of local electors and the change in number over a five-year period from the day the review starts, as given in paragraph 54. Council may wish to consider the likely number of

individuals willing to step forward as candidates and the number of councillors required to enable the parish council to be quorate. If, for example, the recommendation of Longstanton Parish Council was accepted, then the council would have 11 parish councillors, with four required for the parish to be quorate. The community at Northstowe has engaged well with the Community Governance Review process and is self-organising at present, with some support from our Sustainable Communities team. The team considers it likely that at least four residents would put themselves forward as candidates for election to a new parish council, providing that a training offer was put in place to enable residents to understand what would be required of them as parish councillors and once elected, equip them with the requisite knowledge and skills to carry out the role effectively (see paragraph 70 for financial implications). The Guidance suggests “a parish council’s budget and planned or actual level of service provision may also be important factors in reaching conclusions on council size”.

57. Any new body for Northstowe will likely face heavy burdens as a statutory planning consultee, given the scale and speed of growth at Northstowe. In addition, the existing s106 agreements include provisions for the transfer of land and community buildings to an alternative body, which is of significance should management and/or ownership of these community assets be passed to the parish council. For this reason, the ward members for Longstanton and Oakington advised the number of parish councillors for the new body should be 15; this was accepted by Civic Affairs Committee and is advanced to Council as their recommendation.
58. In considering whether or not a parish should be divided into wards, the 2007 Act requires that consideration be given to whether: a) the number, or distribution of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and b) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented. Since at present there are only occupations in Phase 1 of Northstowe with Phase 2 occupations set to commence from Spring 2021, it is not apparent that either of those tests are currently met. Should it emerge that separate areas or phases of Northstowe would best be served by separate representation this could be reassessed through a future CGR. The indications through this consultation are that residents feel it may become necessary if Option A or B were selected. More than half of those selecting Option C felt that warding would be appropriate, and in this instance, there would be reason to resolve this issue now as there would already be two areas with differences sufficient to warrant separate representation.
59. Civic Affairs Committee agreed that there was no requirement for warding of the new parish for Northstowe at this time, should their recommended option be agreed by Council.
60. The schedule of ordinary elections in South Cambridgeshire means that elections to Longstanton, Willingham and Oakington & Westwick Parish Councils are next due in 2022, alongside elections for all seats on the district council. The recommendation of the review was that elections for a newly formed council should take place in May 2021, to coincide with the County Council and Combined Authority elections and aligning thereafter with the ordinary year of election from 2022. The committee took into consideration that residents who may be unfamiliar with the parish system and/or with what being a parish councillor entails might be deterred from stepping up for election to a five year term, meaning an initial one year term may be more attractive; furthermore with the rapid housing growth at Northstowe if all seats were not contested in May 2021, sufficient candidates may come forward in May 2022 to warrant an election and consolidate the democratic mandate of the new body.

61. All elections are suspended at present and are currently due to re-commence on 6 May 2021. The government have confirmed that no elections will take place in England before then. The Terms of Reference for this review indicated April 2021 as the date from which any new arrangements should commence. However, this was written pre-pandemic; should any postponement to the May 2021 election occur, the interim arrangements put in place by the Council to administer the new parish prior to election of the parish council would need to remain in place until elections could be held.
62. The Council will also wish to note that were early elections take place (in 2021) for any newly formed parish, as per the recommendation of the committee, coinciding early elections would also be necessary in any parish that undergoes substantive change to its boundary as an outcome of the review. This would involve the parishes of Willingham and Longstanton, depending on the option ultimately selected, as well as any newly created parish which may result.
63. Should early elections be required, both Willingham and Longstanton parishes have indicated a preference for 5-year terms to bring their election schedule back in line in 2026.
64. Any creation of a new parish or amendment of parish boundaries will also require amendments to polling district arrangements in the area. Such amendments will be essential in ensuring effective elections can still be run. The following alterations to polling districts would be required for each option, A (recommended variant), A, B and C:
- Option A and Option A (recommended variant): Creation of a new polling district with boundaries to match the new parish boundary for Northstowe; amendment of existing polling district boundaries to match new reduced size parish boundaries for Longstanton Civil Parish and Oakington and Westwick Civil Parish; creation of a new polling district for area north of the guided busway which is moved to Willingham Civil Parish.
- Option B: Creation of a new polling district to match new parish boundary for Northstowe; amendment of existing polling districts to match new reduced size parish boundaries for Longstanton Civil Parish and for Oakington and Westwick Civil Parish.
- Option C: Creation of a new polling district to match new parish boundary for Northstowe; amendment of existing polling district boundaries to match new reduced size parish boundaries for Longstanton Civil Parish and Oakington and Westwick Civil Parish.
- Should an alternative scheme to those listed here be approved, polling district arrangements will still need to be updated to reflect the new parish boundaries.
65. Council should note that polling district boundaries must be updated to enable elections to be run on new areas. The register of electors will be amended to reflect any changes approved by Council.
66. Should Option A, or the recommended variant thereof be agreed, such that land north of the guided busway becomes part of Willingham Civil Parish, it would become necessary for Council to recommend the LGBCE makes alterations to the boundaries of district wards and county electoral divisions to reflect the changes made at parish level. Land north of the guided busway could then be taken into the Over and Willingham Ward and the Cottenham and Willingham division respectively. These boundaries can only be updated by the LGBCE. It is unlikely that any county boundaries would be realigned before the county council elections to be held in 2021. Until this issue was resolved,

electors in this polling district would need to attend different polling stations depending on which electoral areas are being contested.

67. Regarding parliamentary constituency boundaries, land north of the guided busway, under Option A, although falling within Willingham Civil Parish, would remain in the South Cambridgeshire parliamentary constituency, rather than the South East Cambridgeshire parliamentary constituency. There is no provision to amend parliamentary constituency boundaries in any way, so the unaligned boundary would persist until new constituencies are in place (and may theoretically persist beyond then). Changes to the parliamentary constituency boundaries can only be made by the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) as part of their regular review cycle.

Options

68. Council could resolve

- (a) to agree the recommendations of the Civic Affairs Committee, which were the outcome of the community governance review, for the creation of a new civil parish for Northstowe, as shown in the map entitled Option A (recommended variant), set out at paragraph 13

or

- (b) to agree the recommendations of the Civic Affairs Committee, with variations, detailing reasons for departing from the recommendations

or

- (c) not to agree the recommendations of the Civic Affairs Committee to create a new parish for Northstowe.

Implications

69. 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: -

Financial

70. The cost for parish council elections falls to the parish. There would be a cost for elections held in a new parish were this to be agreed and therefore it would be prudent to schedule any elections to coincide with other polls. As per paragraph 57, there may also be a cost to other parishes in holding out of turn elections. However, there are s106 developer contributions to draw upon, in the event that,
- (a) Parish council elections outside of the scheduled elections cycle are needed and
 - (b) Resources are required to establish a new civil parish (including training for prospective and newly elected members).

Legal

71. By section 82 the 2007 Act Councils have a discretionary power to undertake a CGR.

Section 93 the 2007 Act states the following duties of a Council in undertaking a review:

- “(1) The principal council must comply with the duties in this section when undertaking a community governance review.
- (2) But, subject to those duties, it is for the principal council to decide how to undertake the review.
- (3) The principal council must consult the following—
- (a) the local government electors for the area under review;
 - (b) any other person or body (including a local authority) which appears to the principal council to have an interest in the review.
- (4) The principal council must have regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review—
- (a) reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area, and
 - (b) is effective and convenient.
- (5) In deciding what recommendations to make, the principal council must take into account any other arrangements (apart from those relating to parishes and their institutions)—
- (a) that have already been made, or
 - (b) that could be made,
- for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in respect of the area under review.
- (6) The principal council must take into account any representations received in connection with the review.
- (7) As soon as practicable after making any recommendations, the principal council must—
- (a) publish the recommendations; and
 - (b) take such steps as it considers sufficient to secure that persons who may be interested in the review are informed of those recommendations.
- (8) The principal council must conclude the review within the period of 12 months starting with the day on which the council receives the community governance petition or community governance application.”

These duties are reflected within the Terms of Reference agreed by Committee prior to commencement and must be considered in making a decision.

Section 100(1) of the 2007 Act empowered the Secretary of State to issue guidance as to the carrying out of CGRs. By section 100(4) of the Act, the Council is obliged to have regard to any such guidance issued.

The currently relevant Guidance was published by the DCLG in March 2010 (“the Guidance”).

Staffing

72. It will be possible to implement the outcome of the Community Governance Review, as recommended by Civic Affairs Committee, within existing resources; however, due to the requirement to engage with the public outside of normal office hours, careful management of officer time will be necessary to ensure adequate resourcing in the face of competing priorities and given the constraints imposed by social distancing measures.

Risks/Opportunities

73. Undertaking a Community Governance Review has allowed the residents at Northstowe and other residents of Longstanton and Oakington and Westwick Civil Parishes and their neighbours, to engage with local democracy and determine how they wish to be represented in future thus assisting in the formation of an emergent community identity at Northstowe. Should the recommendation be made to form a new parish be agreed, the new community at Northstowe will require further support to establish and progress the formation of an effective parish council, in order to ensure that the new body is fit for purpose.

Equality and Diversity

74. The Council worked with relevant Parish Councils to identify and consult with interested parties. Key documents were made available on the SCDC website and on deposit at the District Council offices in Cambourne. The revised approach to consultation included making available a paper submission form to every household in Longstanton, Oakington and Westwick Civil Parishes, with further copies available on request from the district council. There was provision for collection of paper submission forms and they were also accepted online and by post. The revised public engagement programme was designed to enable input from anyone who wished to give their view, being held at a variety of locations and across different times of day, whilst taking into account social distancing requirements. Therefore, we can be reasonably confident that all those wishing to express a view in the second round were given satisfactory means and opportunity.

A modern and caring Council

75. Appropriate community governance arrangements will help the Council to sustain existing successful, vibrant villages and establish successful and sustainable new communities.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

[Civic Affairs Committee 3 November 2020 Report and Minutes](#)

[Civic Affairs Committee 29 October 2019 Report and Minutes](#)

[Civic Affairs Committee 3 March 2020 Report and Minutes](#)

[Civic Affairs Committee 2 June 2020 Report, Decisions and Minutes](#)

Appendices

Appendix A: Terms of Reference for the Review

Appendix B: Round 2 Consultation Options A, B and C

Appendix C: Maps of Option A (recommended variant), A, B and C

Appendix D: Responses received from Longstanton Parish Council, Oakington and Westwick Parish Council and Homes England

Appendix E: Summary of individual submissions

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