

Report to:	Council	22 July 2021
Lead Officer:	Jeff Membery	

Sawston and Babraham Parish Boundary: Community Governance Review: Final report

Executive Summary

1. The Civic Affairs Committee at its meeting of the 10 June 2021, received and considered the report on the Sawston and Babraham Community Governance Review and agreed to recommend to the Council that:
 - a. a new parish boundary between Sawston and Babraham (as proposed by Sawston Parish Council) be adopted (as presented at Appendix A).
 - b. a formal request be made to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to realign the district council ward boundary between Duxford and Sawston wards so that they remain aligned with the new parish boundary.
2. Sawston Parish Council made an application for a Community Governance Review (CGR) to consider a boundary change between the civil parishes of Sawston and Babraham. Their application included a proposed change to the boundary concerned.
3. Following agreement at Civic Affairs Committee (December 2020) Stage One of the Sawston and Babraham CGR regarding the boundary between the parishes of Babraham and Sawston was conducted between 6 January and 3 March 2021 according to the Terms of Reference provided as Appendix B.
4. Stage One of this review invited views on the proposed boundary change as well as inviting alternative boundary suggestions. The majority supported both a boundary change generally and the proposed change specifically. No reasonable alternatives to the proposed boundary change were proposed.
5. Therefore, following agreement at Civic Affairs Committee (March 2021), Stage Two considered the boundary change proposed by Sawston Parish Council only. Again, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposed boundary change.

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that:
 - a. a new parish boundary between Sawston and Babraham (as proposed by Sawston Parish Council) be adopted (as presented at Appendix A).

- b. a formal request be made to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to realign the district council ward boundary between Duxford and Sawston wards so that they remain aligned with the new parish boundary.

Reasons for Recommendations

7. Civic Affairs Committee have reviewed Stage One and Two reports and consultation results and support these recommendations.
8. Most respondents for both Stage One and Two supported the proposed boundary change.
9. No reasonable alternative boundary changes were identified by the review.
10. The proposed boundary change is consistent with LGBCE Guidance (*page 25: 83-85*):
 - a. 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.
 - b. Parish boundaries need to be, and be likely to remain, easily identifiable.
 - c. A single community would be unlikely to straddle a river where there are no crossing points, or a large area of moor land or marshland. Another example might be where a community appeared to be divided by a motorway (unless connected by walkways at each end.)
 - d. In many cases a boundary change between existing parishes, or parishes and unparished areas, rather than the creation of an entirely new parish, will be sufficient to ensure that parish arrangements reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government. For example, over time, communities may expand with new housing developments. This can often lead to existing parish boundaries becoming anomalous as new houses are built across them resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours.
 - e. A review of parish boundaries is an opportunity to put in place strong boundaries, tied to firm ground detail, and remove anomalous parish boundaries.

Details

11. Sawston Parish Council made an application to the Council for a CGR to consider a boundary change between Sawston and Babraham Parish to address potential anomalies resulting from two new developments on the Sawston/Babraham Parish Boundary. The application included a proposed boundary change.
12. The development H/1: b – North of Babraham Road (planning ref [S/3729/18/FL](#)) consists of 3.64 hectare and is entirely within the parish of Babraham whilst abutting the village of Sawston. Planning permission was granted on 28/8/2019 for 158 homes. The development H/1:c – South of Babraham Road consists of 11.64 hectare and spans the parish boundary of Sawston and Babraham; this development is at pre-application stage. The Council is anticipating an application of around 260 homes. In February 2020, Bidwell's, acting on behalf of the three landowners of this site, advised that outline planning would be submitted in 2020 with first completions expected 2021/2022. A pre-application enquiry has been received and a formal application is expected in July 2021. (Planning colleagues have advised this is still the case as of 29 June 2021).

13. Sawston Parish Council and Babraham Parish Council have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding (December 2019) setting out an agreed approach to allocation of S106 funds arising from H/1: b and H/1: c. Both parishes were supportive of the review and proposed boundary change.
14. The existing Sawston parish electorate is 5,536. The electorate is forecast to increase by 418 in the next five years due to planned developmentsⁱ.
15. The existing Babraham parish electorate is 234. The electorate is not forecast to increase in the next five years as there are no planned developments.ⁱⁱ
16. *The Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and 5 Year Housing Land Supply: April 2020* allocated planned homes against the address on the planning application and does not take into account Parish Boundaries. In this case, planned developments have been allocated to the Parish of Sawston because of the address on the planning application.

Consultation

17. Stage One of this review invited views on the proposed boundary change as well as inviting alternative boundary suggestions. 75 residents responded to the consultation; 64 (85.3%) agreed that the existing boundary should be changed and 11 (14.7%) did not. Three alternative boundary changes were proposed; 2 were broadly similar to the proposed boundary change and one was not supported by LGBCE guidance.
18. Therefore, Stage Two considered the boundary change proposed by Sawston Parish Council only. 48 residents responded to the consultation; 41 (85.42 %) agreed with the proposed boundary change and a minority of 7 (14.58 %) did not.
19. Both Stage One and Stage Two consultations invited qualitative responses which are summarised in corresponding reports to Civic Affairs Committee. (March and June 2021)
20. Rob Lewis, 0-19 Area Education Officer, Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire responded on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC). He advised that CCC support the proposed changes to the civil parish boundary and that the council's response is driven by its statutory education place planning duties.
21. Further detailed analysis on Stage One and Stage Two consultation are available as part of reports to Civic Affairs Committee. (see *Background Papers* section of this report)

Options

22. The Council could resolve to:

Option one: Adopt a new parish boundary between Sawston and Babraham (as proposed by Sawston Parish Council and as presented at Appendix B).

Option two:

Retain the existing parish boundary.

Option three:

Adopt an alternative parish boundary between Babraham and Sawston, providing reasons for the alternative.

In addition - If the Council chooses Option One or Three, that is to adopt any alterations to the parish boundary, it should also agree a formal request be made to the LG BCE to realign the district council ward boundary between Duxford and Sawston wards so that they remain aligned with the new parish boundary.

Implications

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

Legal

24. By section 82 the 2007 Act Councils have a discretionary power to undertake a Community Governance Review.

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 Community Governance Review's. 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 the DCLG in March 2010 (“the Guidance”).

Staffing

25. Staff time will be needed to implement any decisions resulting from the review and has been allocated within the Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing Team. The time will be spent on carrying out the implementation stage of the review.

Risks/Opportunities

26. There is a risk that this review will result in unaligned district and parish boundaries as we head towards all out district and parish elections in 2022. The earlier that a decision is made by Council on this review, the more chance there is of seeking the necessary realignment in time for the 2022 elections, but as this realignment is made external to the Council, no guarantee can be made on timings.

Equality and Diversity

27. The Council has worked with Sawston Parish Council, Babraham Parish Council and Pampisford Parish Council to identify and consult with interested parties. There was provision for collection of paper submissions with the opportunity to respond via post as well as online. The Sustainable Communities Team worked with a resident with visual

disabilities to take part in the review and provided specific documents to enable their response – however no response was received from them.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

A modern and caring Council

28. Appropriate community governance arrangements will help the Council to sustain existing successful, vibrant villages and establish successful and sustainable new communities. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (Section 100(4)) requires principle councils to undertake Community Governance Reviews in accordance with the guidance below.

Background Papers

[The Local Government Boundary Commission for England: Guidance on Community Governance Review: March 2010.](#)

[Sawston and Babraham Parish Boundary: Community Governance Review: Civic Affairs Committee: December 2020](#)

[Sawston and Babraham Parish Boundary: Community Governance Review: Civic Affairs Committee: March 2021](#)

[Sawston and Babraham Parish Boundary: Community Governance Review: Civic Affairs Committee: June 2021](#)

Appendices

Appendix A: Proposed Boundary (Map)

Appendix B: Terms of reference

Report Author:

Louise Lord – Development Officer, Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing

Telephone: 01954 713297 m: 07546312054

Email: louise.lord@scams.gov.uk

ⁱ The Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and 5 Year Housing Land Supply: April 2020

ⁱⁱ The Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and 5 Year Housing Land Supply: April 2020