



**Report To:** Civic Affairs Committee

12 January 2016

**Lead Officer:** Sustainable Communities and Partnerships Manager

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## Parish Boundary between Willingham and Over

### Purpose

1. To inform the Committee of a letter received from a resident requesting that the Council amends the parish boundary between Willingham and Over, and to seek a decision on how to move forward.
2. This is not a key decision.

### Recommendations

3. No officer recommendation is made.
4. The Committee could decide to:
  - (a) **Accept the proposal** and ask officers to schedule a Community Governance Review for the area, timings subject to officer capacity
  - (b) **Refuse the proposal**

### Background

5. A letter from a resident of Over parish has been received by the Council asking for the parish boundary between Willingham and Over to be changed. The letter can be viewed at Appendix 1. The resident has also supplied a map of the existing boundary and two separate proposals for where a new boundary could run.
6. The resident lays out several arguments for reconsidering the boundary, including:
  - (a) Distance to village centre – the resident's business property is significantly closer to the Willingham village centre than the Over village centre
  - (b) Support and attitude from the relevant Parish Councils
  - (c) Support for proposals from neighbour properties
7. In addition, the resident has also supplied a list of people and businesses that support his proposal – for clarity these have not been verified. He has also supplied a copy of a letter from Willingham Parish Council sent to this Council in 2011 requesting consideration of the boundary at that time.
8. Since the letter was received by the Council, several letters of support have also been received. These are also appended to the report. One of these letters indicates that the proposal is still supported by Willingham Parish Council.
9. An email has been received from Over Parish Council indicating that they are not supportive of any change to the parish boundary.

### Considerations

10. In response to the letter from Willingham Parish Council in 2011, this matter was considered by the Council's Electoral Arrangements Committee on 21 November, 2011. Minutes from that meeting can be viewed here:

<http://moderngov/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=412&Year=2011>

At that time, the Electoral Arrangements Committee declined the request of the Parish Council to initiate a Community Governance Review to look at the Boundary.

11. If the Committee were to look favourably upon this request, it would require a full Community Governance Review to be undertaken. This would have to be scheduled into the workload of relevant offices as this piece of work has been unplanned.
12. The Council is not obliged to grant this request, but it should consider the interests of the area and local community identities.
13. The resident has also indicated that he is pursuing signatures in order to submit a Community Governance Petition. Legislation requires that a petitioner gets signatures from 7.5% of the electorate of the "area" (in this case, the parishes of Willingham and Over). This is something in the region of 400 names. Should the resident achieve the necessary number of signatures, then the Council will be obliged to carry out the review.
14. As with all of the CGRs that the Council may or may not start over the coming year, there is a potential for conflict with the ongoing review of the Council's electoral arrangements. Depending on the outcome of that review, it might be necessary to pursue re-alignment of ward boundaries in the affected area.

### **Options**

15. The options are listed in paragraphs 4 and 5.

### **Implications**

16. 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***

17. The Council will have to bear the cost of running a CGR.

#### ***Legal***

18. When started, CGRs must be completed within a year.

#### ***Staffing***

19. Should a CGR be initiated there will be considerable cost in staffing time. Any CGR will need to be programmed in to fit with future work commitments.

### **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.

Guidance on CGRs:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-governance-reviews-guidance>

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