



**Report To:** Civic Affairs Committee

9 December 2016

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

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## **Community Governance Review of the Parish of Haslingfield: response to the second phase of consultation**

### **Purpose**

1. To consider the submissions received during the second phase of public consultation for the Community Governance Review of Haslingfield Parish.
2. Taking account of the submissions received, to consider options and agree a recommendation to Council to conclude the community governance review of the parish of Haslingfield.
3. This is not a key decision.

### **Recommendations**

4. It is recommended that the Civic Affairs Committee considers the options set out at paragraphs 31 and 32, and in line with legislation, makes a recommendation to Council.

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

5. The Community Governance Review process, once commenced must be concluded within 12 months of the publication of the terms of reference. The committee recommendation must be made to Full Council with adequate time for a reorganisation order to be made if required.

### **Background**

6. 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.
7. Section 93 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 and seek sound and demonstrable evidence of such identities and linkage.

8. The guidance states that when considering parish ward boundaries 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.
9. The Principal Council is required to determine the terms of reference under which a community governance review is to be undertaken. The terms of reference must clearly specify the area under review and must be published. The guidance states that “Ultimately, the recommendations made in a community governance review ought to bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services”.
10. When making its decision to progress a Community Governance Review, the Committee considered the forecast housing trajectory for the South Cambridgeshire part of the Trumpington Meadows development, as well as the electorate forecast, and the scheduled ordinary elections.
11. Informal consultation with Haslingfield Parish Council, Granchester Parish Council and Trumpington Residents’ Association took place prior to commencement of the formal review process.
12. Following a discussion at Civic Affairs Committee on 9 July 2015 draft terms of reference for a Community Governance Review of the parish of Haslingfield were prepared and agreed on 8 November 2015. The terms of reference set out the matters on which a Community Governance Review will focus.
13. The formal publication of these terms of reference, 15 February 2016, marked the start of the Community Governance Review (given in Appendix A). It is a legal requirement that the review must be completed within twelve months. The Terms of Reference include a timeline for the review, which is shown below.

Timetable for the Community Governance Review for Haslingfield Parish	
Publication of the Terms of Reference	15 Feb 2016
Local briefings and meetings	Feb / March 2016
Stage One: Submissions invited	From 15 March to 13 June 2016
Stage Two: Submissions considered and recommendations prepared	Draft recommendations published 15 August 2016
Stage Three: Consultation on draft recommendations	Consultation closes 14 November 2016
Final recommendation to Civic Affairs committee	December 2016

14. A formal consultation was conducted between 15 March 2016 and 13 June 2016 following a round of briefings to the Southern Fringe Community Forum, Trumpington Meadows Residents Association, the Trumpington Meadows Management Committee and to the parish councils of Haslingfield, Hauxton and Grantchester, inviting proposals for suitable governance arrangements for the evolving circumstances of Haslingfield Parish.
15. The options considered by the Civic Affairs committee included three permutations of a new civil parish and a “no change” option. These options, A-D are appended in map form (see Appendix B)
16. The Civic Affairs committee agreed the following option would go forward as their recommendation, (see Option A, Appendix B for map form):

The new parish (green area) to be comprised of that land currently within Haslingfield Parish which is bounded by the River Cam to the west, with Lingey Fen (pink area) transferred to Grantchester Parish, and extending south of the M11, bounded by the River Cam as far south as Hauxton Mill, with the new boundary formed along the current boundary between the parishes of Haslingfield and Harston.

The rescaled parish of Haslingfield would retain its current complement of parish councillors, which the parish council finds satisfactory at present (the alteration of parish boundaries does not require the re-election of incumbent councillors, outside the normal electoral cycle).

The newly created parish to have a similar scale of representation as other parishes within the district, which would suggest a figure of nine councillors.

Haslingfield Parish holds no assets and offers no services in those areas considered either for (a) transfer to Grantchester Parish Council or (b) forming the new parish within this option.

### **Considerations**

17. During the course of the consultation a further round of briefings was undertaken, with presentations given to meetings of the Trumpington Residents’ Association and the Trumpington Meadows Residents’ Group (newly established over the course of summer 2016). Occupants of those Trumpington Meadows properties within South Cambridgeshire known (by the district council) to be occupied received copies of the consultation submission form along with an invitation to attend these briefings. The proposal was also presented to the meeting of Haslingfield Parish Council for further discussion (10 October 2016).
18. The Trumpington Residents’ Association were supportive of the proposal in its current form (which reflected their initial consultation submission) and whilst longer term they would wish to see a city/district boundary review and Trumpington Meadows taken within the city, they agree with the Civic Affairs committee that the arrangement proposed would be of benefit to new residents of Trumpington Meadows. This view is expressed in their submission, see Appendix C.

19. In contrast, the Trumpington Meadows Residents' Group expressed a view that a principal authority boundary review should be the first priority, with no desire for change to the current governance arrangement till that point, see Appendix C. There was no enthusiasm to create a new governance structure which would later need to be dismantled.
20. There was further support for a principal authority boundary review expressed by individual residents of Trumpington Meadows (see Appendix D), with only qualified support for a new civil parish as an interim measure, with some feeling that this should be limited to the creation of a parish meeting.
21. Strong disapproval of the current recommendation was expressed by residents of Hauxton Parish (by 27 Hauxton residents, accounting for over 60% of the responses received from individuals) and by the parish council; they contest that land south of the M11 should be transferred to Hauxton Parish and not form part of the new civil parish. This view is supported by Harston Parish Council (see Appendix C for submission).

Thus, an alternative proposal which would see the new parish (green area) to be comprised of land currently within Haslingfield Parish north of the M11, minus Lingey Fen (pink area, transferred to Grantchester Parish) with land south of the M11 and east of the Cam (yellow area) transferred to Hauxton Parish Council garnered strong support. This corresponds to Option B, see Appendix B.

22. Grantchester Parish Council still supports transfer of Lingey Fen to their parish, but makes no comment on other aspects of the proposal.
23. The Civic Affairs committee did not make a recommendation on the name of the proposed new civil parish; instead they invited suggestions through the second phase of consultation. This resulted in the following names being put forward:
  - Trumpington Meadows
  - Byron Meadows
  - Trumpington Meadows South
  - Trumpington South
  - West Trumpington
  - Byron's Park
24. One respondent suggested the alternative style of community council, suggesting this would be "more suitable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century", but other responses which supported the creation of a new civil parish were satisfied with the style, "parish council".
25. Where comments were received regarding the number of councillors, there was support for the figure of nine, as per the proposal.
26. When the governance review was instigated it was predicted that the number of electors on the register within the Trumpington Meadows development would be in excess of 151 at the close of the review. This is the minimum number of electors required in order for a parish council to be created – fewer than this then a parish meeting must be created to represent the new civil parish. Build out rates and occupations have not occurred at the rate predicted and there are currently 52 occupations and 57 electors registered to vote. This means that creation of a parish council is not currently possible and a parish meeting must instead be established, should a new civil parish be created.

## **Consequential Amendments and District Electoral Review**

27. The full electoral review of the district's warding arrangements has recently concluded ([final recommendations](#) were published 18 October 2016), with implementation of new district ward boundaries at all out elections in May 2018 to result.
28. The Committee will be aware that the Council only has the power to amend parish boundaries. District ward boundaries will not automatically be affected by changes made by Community Governance Reviews. Should district ward boundaries need to be changed after a Community Governance Review the Council would have to apply to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to make consequential amendments. However, the final recommendation sees Hauxton, Haslingfield and Grantchester parishes included within the Harston and Comberton Ward.
29. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has also recently concluded a review of electoral divisions for the County Council, with the [draft order](#) laid before Parliament (26 October 2016). Should county division boundaries need to be changed the Council would have to apply to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to make consequential amendments.
30. The proposal upon which the Civic Affairs committee has consulted if recommended to Council, would result in an anomaly as Lingey Fen, set to transfer to Grantchester parish council, would not fall within the redrawn Barton division as does the rest of Grantchester Parish. It must be noted that there are no electors, nor are there likely to be any, on the land in question.

## **Options**

31. The Committee could:
  - (a) agree to recommend to Council their current proposal, documenting reasons, with a parish meeting to be established.
  - (b) agree a variation to boundaries of the current proposal, documenting reasons, with a parish meeting to be established,
  - (c) agree a "no change" option, documenting reasons; it should be noted that the Community Governance Review must continue to proceed to conclusion.
32. If appropriate (depending on the preferred Option in relation to paragraph 31), the Committee could:
  - (a) Agree to recommend to Council the name of the new parish, from the alternatives proposed (paragraph 23).

## **Implications**

33. 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***

34. The establishment of a new civil parish would have cost implications. Should a new parish be created, a projected budget for the parish would be estimated and from this a precept for the new civil parish set. (This would be made on the basis of the

activities likely to be undertaken by the new parish meeting. However, this is a separate process to the decision to be made here.) This review has been scheduled such that it completes in time for elections to coincide with other polls (the County Council's 2017 election).

### ***Legal***

35. The draft terms of reference for a Community Governance Review of the parish of Haslingfield 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***

36. The Community Governance Review of the parish of Haslingfield is being carried out within existing resources.

### **Consultation responses**

37. All parties that made submissions to the consultation have been made aware of this report. The consultation responses received are included in Appendices C and D.

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

### **ENGAGEMENT and WELLBEING**

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

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