

REPORT TO: Civic Affairs Committee

9 December 2016

LEAD OFFICER: Sustainable Communities and Partnerships Manager

Community Governance Review – Cambourne Parish Council

Purpose

1. To consider a request from Cambourne Parish Council to increase the council size from 13 to 19 parish councillors.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Committee:
 - (a) agrees the request from Cambourne Parish Council for a Community Governance Review to increase the number of parish councillors from 13 to 19; and
 - (b) agrees, with or without amendments, the draft terms of reference (Appendix A); and
 - (c) agrees for staff to agree a timetable in consultation with Cambourne Parish Council.

Background

3. A request has been received from Cambourne Parish Council that the number of councillors on the Parish Council be increased from 13 to 19.
4. 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.
5. Section 95 of the 2007 Act provides, among other things, that when considering the number of councillors to be elected for the parish as a whole, the authority must have regard to the number of electors for the parish, and any change in that number likely to occur in the next five years.
6. The Community Governance Review process, once commenced must be concluded within 12 months of the publication of the terms of reference.

Considerations

7. The current electorate for Cambourne is 6,962 (September 2016) and the existing number of parish councillors is 13.

8. 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.
9. The Council must have regard to the following factors when considering the number of councillors to be elected for a parish:
 - the number of local government electors for the parish;
 - any change in that number which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts.
10. The table below shows the number of parish councillors seats compared to the size of electorate for parishes in the district with councillor numbers equal to or greater than that of Cambourne:

Parish	Electorate (Sept 2016)	Council Size
<i>Cambourne</i>	6962	13
Sawston	5633	19
Histon & Impington [grouped] ¹	6938	19 (11 + 8)
Cottenham	4792	15
Melbourn	3719	15
Girton	3582	15
Waterbeach	3572	15
Linton	3545	15
Great Shelford	3529	15
Milton	3420	15
Willingham	3206	15
Bar Hill	3204	13
Fulbourn	3944	15
Gamlingay	2996	15
Papworth	2744	13

11. A further Community Governance Review impacting Cambourne Parish Council is intended should the planning application on the land West of Cambourne be approved by Planning Committee. Most of this development is situated in the parish of Caxton, with a small strip of land in the parish of Elsworth. All three parishes are aware of the planned Community Governance Review and the proposal to move this land into the parish of Cambourne. The Cambourne West development includes 2,350 dwellings.
12. In its request to the Council, Cambourne Parish Council states that
 - (a) the existing number of parish councillors for Cambourne was set in 2004 based upon 3,300 dwellings (original masterplan). Permission for a further 950 homes was approved in 2011.
 - (b) the number of parish councillors in Cambourne is already low for the size of electorate / population.

¹ Histon & Impington are grouped together as one parish, but treated as separate for election purposes.

- (c) being a new community, everything in Cambourne is happening at once and the volume of workload for Parish Councillors will grow with new and ongoing development. There are a number of specific projects planned that will require Parish Councillor involvement.

Options

- 13. The Committee could agree or disagree to commence a Community Governance Review of the parish of Cambourne to increase the number of parish councillors from 13 to 19.
- 14. Should the Committee agree to commence a Community Governance Review of the parish of Cambourne, they will need to:
 - (a) agree, with or without amendments, the draft terms of reference (Appendix A); and
 - (b) agree for staff to agree a timetable in consultation with Cambourne Parish Council or set a timetable.

Implications

- 15. 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: -

Legal

- 16. The draft terms of reference for a Community Governance Review of the parish of Cambourne 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

- 17. Staff time will be required to carry out the review, however, this is likely to be minimal given the nature of the review. The time will be spent consulting interested parties, taking account of any representations received and reporting back to the Committee.

Equality and Diversity

- 18. The Council will work with Cambourne Parish Council to identify and consult with interested parties.

Consultation responses

- 19. Cambourne Parish Council has been consulted, via the Chairman and Clerk, regarding the draft Terms of Reference. The Parish Council will be discussing the proposed increase to its Council size on 6 December 2016.

Effect on Strategic Aims

20. Appropriate community governance arrangements will help the Council to sustain existing successful, vibrant villages; helping to achieve our vision to deliver superb quality of life for our residents, and remain the best place to live, work, and study in the country.

Report Author: Gemma Barron – Sustainable Communities and Partnerships Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713340