



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Boundary Review Committee

Thursday 5 September 2024

6.00 pm

Council Chamber, Third Floor,
Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Democratic Services: Millie Wallace 01952 381542

Media Enquiries: Corporate Communications 01952 382406

Committee Members: Councillors N A M England (Chair), R A Overton (Vice-Chair),
K T Blundell, E M Callear, P Davis, G C W Latham-Reynolds and
G Thomas
Co-optees

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	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 July 2024.	
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	To receive an update report on the Community Governance Review.	

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Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

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BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

**Minutes of a meeting of the Boundary Review Committee held on Friday
19 July 2024 at 6.00 pm in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater
One, Telford, TF3 4JG**

Present: Councillors N A M England (Chair), R A Overton (Vice-Chair), E M Callear, P Davis and G Thomas

In Attendance: A Lowe (Director: Policy & Governance), M Wallace (Member Support Officer) and R Phillips (Service Delivery Manager, Legal & Democracy)

Apologies: Councillor K T Blundell, L D Carter and G C W Latham-Reynolds

BRC18 Declarations of Interest

None.

BRC19 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

BRC20 Terms of Reference - Boundary Review Committee

The Service Delivery Manager: Legal & Democracy presented the 2024/2025 municipal year Terms of Reference to the Members of the Boundary Review Committee. This was an annual report that outlined the remit of the Committee and their focus on election Boundary changes, the governance structures of Parish and Town Councils as well as reviewing the Polling Places and stations. Members had no further comments to the Terms of Reference as outlined in Appendix A of the report. Following the update Members voted on the recommendation.

RESOLVED – that the Terms of Reference set out at Appendix A had been reviewed and agreed for the 2024/2025 municipal year.

BRC21 Community Governance Review - Draft Recommendations

The Director: Policy & Governance presented the draft recommendations of the Community Governance Review (CGR) following the consultation period. The report outlined that the CGR followed the Committees initial call for proposals from across the Borough, the work had been undertaken by officers



to draft proposals for the future organisation of Town and Parishes across the Borough. The proposals reflected feedback provided from the submissions made to the CGR process and the objectives of the review when it was published, including consideration of the factors set out within the report. Members were asked to confirm the final version of the draft proposals that would be published within the final consultation of the CGR, before the Committee makes their final decision later on in the year. Members were informed that a revised timetable was included within the report that detailed that the review must be completed by 6 September 2024. Since publication of the timetable, there has been feedback from Parish and Town Councils. A representation from Church Aston Parish council has stated concerns that they were not included in the CGR consultation however having looked back it was proposed to merge within another parish but the proposal fell away. A letter was also received from Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC) also expressing worries regarding the timetable. It was proposed that due to these concerns, that the deadline to receive public consultations from 16 August 2024 are extended to 4 September 2024 to allow further submissions.

Members commented on the report expressing concerns of the engagement in the consultation. It was proposed that there are no changes to the current Community Governance Review and a future consultation should take place to enable another review and opportunity for those to respond. Following the discussions, Members voted on the recommendations.

RESOLVED – that:

- **The draft proposals for the Community Governance Review and the proposed reorganisation of the Town and Parish Councils across the Borough, be noted;**
- **The proposals (including any amendments put forward and agreed by the Committee) to be put out to a final consultation commencing forthwith, be finalised; and**
- **The revised final timetable for the conclusion of the Community Governance Review, be agreed.**

The meeting ended at 6.18 pm

Chairman:

Date: Thursday 5 September 2024



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Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Boundary Review Committee

Thursday 5 September 2024

Community Governance Review

Conclusion of Review

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Zona Hannington - Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Services & Governance
Lead Director:	Anthea Lowe - Director: Policy & Governance
Service Area:	Policy & Governance
Report Author:	Anthea Lowe – Director: Policy & Governance
Officer Contact Details:	Tel: 01952 383219 Email: anthea.lowe@telford.gov.uk
Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Report considered by:	Boundary Review Committee – 5 September 2023

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that the Boundary Review Committee:

- 1.1 Notes the summary of responses received in relation to the final proposals decided upon by the Boundary Review Committee and published on 22 July 2024;
- 1.2 Concludes the Community Governance Review in accordance with the proposals set out in paragraph 4.5 of this report; and
- 1.3 Delegates authority to the Director: Policy & Governance to publish the final outcome of the Community Governance Review as agreed by the Committee.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 The purpose of this report is to update the the Boundary Review Committee on the consultation responses received during the second consultation period (which closed on 4 September 2024,) and to seek agreement to conclude the Community Governance Review after considering those responses.

3.0 Background

3.1 Members of the Committee will be aware that, at its meeting of 7 September 2023, it was agreed that the Council should commence a Community Governance Review, seeking views on the electoral arrangement of the Town and Parish Councils across the Borough. The initial consultation, which ran from publication of the Community Governance Review and Terms of Reference on 7 September 2023, came to an end on Monday 18 December 2023. A copy of the consultation document is attached at **Appendix A** to this report. During the first round of consultation, the Council received 79 submissions in total which were varied in content from ‘no changes’ to ‘have three Town/Parish Councils covering the entire Borough’.

3.2 As set out in the consultation document published in September 2023, initial proposals were presented to the Committee on 19 July 2024 to enable Members to consider whether or not to commence the second round of consultation based upon those proposals. At that meeting, Members decided that, due to the range of interest in the initial proposals, it would be helpful to propose no changes to the current electoral arrangements for Town and Parish Councils and to commence the second phase of consultation on that basis.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

4.1 At the time of writing, the second round of consultation has seen 11 submissions received.

4.2 The below table sets out the breakdown of submissions categorised by who made them:

Type	Submissions
Resident	3
Parish/Town Councils	7
Elected member	1

4.3 The below table sets out the breakdown of submissions based on the Town/Parish Council areas the consultation response relate to:

Parish	Submissions
Chetwynd Aston & Woodcote	1
Church Aston	1

Donnington & Muxton	2
Hollinswood & Randlay	1
Lilleshall	1
Little Wenlock	1
Newport	1
Priorslee	1
Stirchley & Brookside	1
Waters Upton	1

4.4 At the time of writing, the consultation period is still open and any update on the above will be tabled at the meeting.

4.5 As is to be expected, the contents of the submissions received to date vary and these are summarised in **Appendix B**. Based upon the proposals received to date, it is still considered appropriate to conclude the Community Governance Review on the basis that no changes be made to the current electoral arrangements. In the event that any further representations are received prior to the meeting that result in a change to the proposals, this will be drawn to Members' attention at the meeting.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 There is a legal requirement for a Community Governance Review to be completed within 12 months of what it was commenced. This means that it must be concluded by 6 September 2024. In terms of alternative options, it is open to the Committee to make alternative proposals to those contained in this report.

6.0 Key Risks

6.1 The law requires a Community Governance Review to be undertaken and completed in a period not exceeding 12 months. This report will so officers will ensure that sufficient resources are provided to ensure that the Community Governance Review is conducted efficiently within that period.

6.2 There is potential for any changes arising out of the Community Governance Review to cause confusion for voters if there are significant changes to Town/Parish Council boundaries and wards which, in turn, could lead to disenfranchisement of voters. This can be mitigated against by ensuring that appropriate communication takes place with any voters affected by any changes.

7.0 Council Priorities

7.1 The recommendations in this report, align with the following Council priorities:

- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live; and

- A community-focussed, innovative council, providing efficient, effective and quality services.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 The costs associated with the Community Governance Review have been met from existing resources and budgets.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

9.1 The relevant legislation which sets out the Council's powers in relation to Community Governance Reviews is the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Together, this legislation enables the Council to undertake a Community Governance Review, including considering the most appropriate boundaries for Town and Parish Councils and the way in which Town and Parish Councils are organised across the Borough, for example by considering the way in which parishes are grouped together.

9.2 The legislation sets out the process for conducting and giving effect to recommendations made in a Community Governance Review, noting that the process includes provisions for stakeholder and public consultation. As set out within the body of the report, any Community Governance Review must be concluded within a period of 12 months.

10.0 Ward Implications

10.1 In the event that the Committee agrees to make no changes as a result of this Community Governance Review, there will be no ward implications.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

11.1 There are no health, social and economic implications arising from this report. It may be that such implications are identified as part of the review of consultation responses

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 As part of the Community Governance Review, stakeholders and the public have had the opportunity to participate in two distinct consultation exercises. The first consultation stage commenced on 7 September 2023 with the publication of the consultation document attached at Appendix A which set out those matters that can be considered as part of a review, as follows:-

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes and the creation of town councils;
- The electoral arrangements for parishes (for instance, the ordinary year of election, a council's geographical size, the number of councillors to be elected to the council and parish warding);
- Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes;

Community Governance Review – Conclusion of Review

- Other types of local arrangements, including parish meetings.

12.2 Upon commencement of the consultation, the consultation document was provided to all Town and Parish Councils in the Borough, SALC, the two MPs in post at the time, Borough councillors, Telford College and the universities within the Borough and community groups as well as being posted on our website. Details were also circulated through social media.

12.3 In respect of the second consultation, this commenced on Monday 22 July 2024 and runs until Wednesday 4 September 2024.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 There are no direct Climate Change and Environmental Implications arising from this report.

14.0 Background Papers

- 1 [Agenda Pack, Boundary Review Committee – 20 July 2023](#)
- 2 [Agenda Pack, Boundary Review Committee – 7 September 2023](#)
- 3 [Agenda Pack, Boundary Review Committee – 16 November 2023](#)
- 4 [Agenda Pack, Boundary Review Committee – 8 February 2024](#)
- 5 [Agenda Pack, Boundary Review Committee – 19 July 2024](#)

15.0 Appendices

- A Consultation Document – September 2023
- B Summary of submissions received during second round of consultation

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	28/08/2024	28/08/2024	RP
Finance	28/08/2024	28/08/2024	MLB

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Community Governance Reviews (CGR) Information Pack

September 2023

Community Governance Reviews

What is included in this pack?

1. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)
2. Outline Process
3. Outline Timetable

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Electorate Projections

Appendix 2: Current Town & Parish Maps

Additional Information?

Further information can be accessed electronically here:

- [Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission Guidance for Community Governance Reviews](#)
- [Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007](#)
- [National Association of Local Councils](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Community Governance Review?

A Community Governance Review is a legal process where the council will consult with those living in the area, and other interested parties, on the most suitable ways of representing the people in the parishes identified in the review. This means making sure that those living in the area, and other interested groups, have a say in how their local communities are represented.

What the review can and can't change

The review can consider one or more of the following options:

- creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes
- the naming of parishes and the style of new parishes and the creation of town councils
- the electoral arrangements for parishes (for instance, the ordinary year of election; a council's geographical size; the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding)
- grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes
- other types of local arrangements, including parish meetings

The review cannot:

- change the amount of money that a parish council raises through your council tax (known as 'precept').

Who carries out the review?

Telford & Wrekin Council is legally responsible for carrying out this Community Governance Review ("the Review"). Formal decisions as to the Terms of Reference for the Review and the recommendations arising from the Review will be made by Boundary Review Committee.

Why we are having a review?

The Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government published in 2008 recommends that principal councils should undertake a Review of its area every 10-15 years. A Community Governance Review offers an opportunity to put in place strong, clearly defined boundaries, tied to firm ground features, and remove any parish boundaries anomalies that may exist. It can also consider the most appropriate community identity and effective electoral administration.

What the review will focus on

A Community Governance Review is required to take into account:

- the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish

The council is required to ensure that community governance within the area under review will:

- be reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- be effective and convenient.

Any other factors, such as council tax precept levels, cannot be considered.

How the review will be carried out and how you can make representations

Before making any recommendations or publishing final proposals, the council must consult local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body (including a local authority) which appears to the council to have an interest in the Review.

The council will therefore:

- publish a Notice and Terms of Reference;
- send a copy of the Notice and these Terms of Reference to all parish clerks and to Shropshire Association of Local Councils;
- send a copy of the Notice and these Terms of Reference to all local Members of Parliament;
- inform local groups and interested parties such as local businesses, local residents' associations, local public and voluntary organisations; and
- canvass Borough Councillors.

The council recognises that the development of strong, sustainable communities depends on residents' active participation in decision making in respect of the governance arrangements of parish councils. The Council is therefore committed to engaging effectively with the diverse communities it serves and to enabling local people to participate meaningfully in the creation of effective community governance arrangements.

How to make a representation

You can complete an online survey on the Telford and Wrekin Council website here: [LINK TO BE INSERTED ONCE LIVE.]

Email: your name, address, and submission to reviews@telford.gov.uk

Write: If you wish to submit a written representation regarding this review, please address it to:

Community Governance Review
Electoral Services
Darby House
Telford & Wrekin Council
Lawn Central
Telford
TF3 4JA

A paper version of the survey is available upon request and free of charge.

Additional Information:

What is a Town or Parish council?

A town or parish council is an elected body made up of local people representing the interests of their community. They are the most local branch of local government, closest to the electorate. They can provide views about planning applications which affect the Parish, alert the Borough Council to any problems which may arise or works which need to be undertaken and in some cases, provide a number of services, such as looking after cemeteries, providing benches, tending to parks, managing car parks and street lighting.

Is the creation of new parish/town councils the only option in areas which don't currently have one?

No. A review can also explore whether alternative forms of local governance would be more suitable for an area including:

- area committees
- neighbourhood management programmes
- tenant management organisations
- area or community forums
- residents and tenants associations
- community associations.

Is there a difference between a town and parish council?

No, they both have the same statutory powers and can provide the same services. The only differences are that a town council has decided that it should be known as a town council instead of a parish council, and a town council usually has a Mayor. Parish Councils have a Chairperson.

How are town and parish councils funded?

Town and parish councils are funded through a sum of money called a 'precept' – this is a separate charge which is added to, and collected along with, your existing Council Tax. The town or parish council will decide what it will need for the coming year and that depends on what services and facilities are needed by the local community. Telford & Wrekin Council does not have any power to set the precept for Town and Parish Councils. Additionally, the Review does not allow Telford & Wrekin Council to consider the precept when making recommendations.

Town and parish councils can also apply for grants and loans. As the precept will depend on the size of the town or parish council, the services it provides and the number of properties across which it is spread, it is not possible to say how much a precept would be for an area which does not currently have a town or parish council.

Are town or parish councillors paid an allowance?

Town and Parish councillors can be paid an allowance for undertaking their duties, however that is a decision for each Town and Parish Council. Allowances are not something the Community Governance Review can take in to account.

Outline of Process:

the main steps that take place during a Community Governance Review are listed in the boxes below. Please note this is included for quick reference and is not formal guidance.

Trigger for a review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A valid community petition; or ▪ A principal authority's own decision.
Decision to hold a review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A principal authority takes a formal decision; ▪ Which can be to review all or a part of its area; ▪ Though it must have valid grounds for refusal if there has been a petition.
Terms of reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A principal authority must draw up and publish terms; ▪ Stating the matters and the geographic area to be covered; ▪ Notifying other local authorities which have an interest.
Undertaking a review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A principal authority must consult electors in affected area(s); ▪ It should consult other bodies with an interest, including any affected local councils; ▪ It must then consider any representations received.
Making recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bearing in mind representations, the criteria and other factors; ▪ Including alternative forms of governance in the area e.g. residents associations, neighbourhood forums; ▪ The principal authority formally recommends an outcome from the review; ▪ It must publish its recommendations and the reasons for them, informing those with an interest.
Implementing a review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A principal authority makes a Reorganisation Order to put into effect any changes; ▪ Which must include a detailed map of the boundaries; ▪ It publishes the Order and map for public inspection; ▪ It must inform specified bodies e.g. Ordnance Survey; ▪ It should include in the Order any agreed incidental issues e.g. the transfer of assets.
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An Order is often written to come into force the following April; ▪ Typically a new local council is then elected at the next ordinary election year. Until that time, any by-elections are carried out under the old arrangements.

Outline Timetable:

Report to BRC proposing a CGR	20 July 2023
BRC meets to agree Terms of Reference and Consultation	1 st week of September 2023
Publication of Terms of Reference and Review Commences	1 st week of September 2023
Initial Consultation – Invite initial submissions	From publication of Terms of Reference to 20 November 2023
BRC considers initial submissions and drafts recommendations	April 2024
Draft recommendations published	22 May 2024
Final round of public consultation	22 May 2024 to 24 July 2024
Final recommendations by BRC	August 2024
Publish final recommendations	August 2024
Consequential Order made	Autumn 2024
Elections to Town and Parish Councils	May 2027

* Timescales are approximate and for guidance only. Individual reviews may vary. A Community Governance Review must be concluded within 12 months from when it begins.

Appendix B - Summary of responses to second round of consultation

Proposal to make no changes to current arrangements

Chetwynd Aston & Woodcote Parish

The Parish Council made a submission which set out:-

- A desire to maintain the boundaries as they were at the 2023 elections;
- That investment has been made by the Parish Council to cover the Parish as it is and residents will benefit from that investment;
- That the Station Road development should not form part of Newport Town Council with a high precept whilst residents of the development do not access many of those services funded by that precept.

Church Aston Parish

Church Aston Parish Council's representations were:-

- To agree to the "no change" proposal put forward at the last meeting of the Boundary Review Committee – this was unanimously supported;
- That they felt merging Church Aston with Lilleshall and Muxton created unnecessary upset and confusion;
- That an autonomous parish was essential for preserving community identity, effective representation and providing high-quality services to residents;
- That they would like to put forward proposals on how any future review should be undertaken.

Donnington & Muxton Parish

The Parish Council's submission which:-

- Stated that it was supportive of the proposal to make no changes to the current arrangements for the Parish;
- Set out that the proposals presented to the last meeting of the Boundary Review Committee were not in line with government guidelines; and
- Putting forward suggestions for the conduct of any future review.

A resident made a submission which:-

- Strongly agreed with the decision of the Boundary Review Committee to make no changes to the present boundaries of Town and Parish Councils for the time being;
- Set out that there is no reason to make any changes in the future;
- Raised the fact that there had only been 76 representations made in the first round of consultation which ran until 18 December 2023 but that this was probably due to a lack of awareness of the scale of changes that could be made;
- Expressed the view that consultation responses were ignored;
- Expressed concern about how much awareness there was of the CGR;
- Stated that financial impacts of any changes must be considered;
- Raised the fact that budget setting for 2027 will need to take place by January 2027 at the latest;
- Raised questions on how the merging / dissolution of Town / Parish Councils is dealt with e.g the splitting of assets and reserves etc;
- Suggested a need to consider the impact of changes on Neighbourhood Development Plans; and
- Set out expectations for consultation in any future CGR.

Hollinswood & Randlay Parish

The Parish Council made a submission which:-

- Supported the Committee's recommendation to make no change to the present Parish & Town Council boundaries for the time being;
- Expressed the view that more information could have been shared with Town and Parish Councils; and
- Raised suggestions for how a future consultation should be conducted.

Lilleshall Parish

The Parish Council submitted representations which raised a number of points, summarised as follows:-

- The Council unanimously agreed to support the proposal of no change to the existing arrangements;
- Raising concerns that they felt there had been a lack of consultation;
- That the original proposal was not supported and merging with Church Aston and Muxton would lead to upset and confusion;
- Maintaining autonomy is crucial for the community's identity, effective representation and providing high quality services to residents;
- Setting out that merging with others would erode Lilleshall's unique historical and cultural identity and lead to a loss of local character;
- Merging with other Councils would dilute representation for residents and impact the sense of community in Lilleshall;

- A merger would result in increased bureaucracy and administrative complexity;
- Raising issues around the financial implications for the Parish and how resources would be allocated; and
- Making suggestions on how any future review should be conducted.

Little Wenlock Parish

The Parish Council made a submission which:-

- Welcomed the proposal of the Boundary Review Committee to maintain the status quo;
- Highlighted the distinct identity of the village of Little Wenlock and surrounding hamlets;
- Repeated a request for seven councillors and hope that this is accommodated in any future review; and
- Stated that any changes need to take into account the strong sense held by rural communities of belonging in their parish.

Newport Town

An individual made representations summarised as follows:-

That 800 Novaportians signed a petition in 2016 for the boundary to be moved to the A518 to bring it in line with the “voting boundary”;

That there are a number of dwellings being built in the area of Hutchison Way which are being advertised as being in Newport when they are not – although they should be;

The residents of those properties, and some previously built, have the advantages of living in Newport but do not contribute to the precept, for example, attending Newport schools, attending events in Newport, using the library – all services which are paid for by Newport residents; and

That there should be a cohesive Newport community that is not divided by an invisible line.

Priorslee Parish

An individual made a submission which covered a number of areas:-

- Priorslee;

- Muxton;
- Worckwardine Wood & Trench;
- Oakengates

In essence, this submission set out the following:-

- That the Borough has done a good job, overall, in the initial proposals presented to the Boundary Review Committee;
- That the area of Redhill in which they live has no affinity with Muxton or Priorslee but should form part of a revised “Central Parish” (with a different name);
- That polling districts TPs, TSG, TSP, TSE and TSW should be merged with WMM, WMH, WDG, WDE, WDO and part of TWR to form a new “Central Parish” with the remainder of TWR and TWW joining Oakengates Town Council;
- That both Muxton and Priorslee parishes should be represented by their own Parish Councils with Lilleshall merging with Church Aston and Chetwynd Aston.

Stirchley & Brookside Parish

A Parish Councillor submitted a response, summarised below:-

- Thanking the Committee for proposing no changes to the current boundaries;
- Setting out that the initial proposal put before the committee did not consider the impact on communities and setting out that the process had been unfair; and
- Setting out that it is not acceptable to change any boundaries.

Waters Upton Parish

The Parish Council made contact to confirm that it supported the proposal for there to be no changes.

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