



Community Governance Reviews (CGR) **Information Pack**

September 2023

Community Governance Reviews

What is included in this pack?

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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.