

## **Community Governance Review 2025 Proposals**

I wish to make clear my strong objection to the Community Governance Review (CGR) recommendation to break up the Donnington & Muxton Parish to form a separate Muxton Parish. My reasons are as follows:

### **It is change for change sake**

It is a fact of business life that if you set up a Team to examine an organization the result will be recommendations to change what currently exists. How else can the Team demonstrate the value of their time spent on the exercise? If the recommendation was 'leave well alone' the sponsor will think they are getting poor value for the money and time invested. Reading the proposals resulting from the CGR seems perfectly to be an example of this.

### **CGR Recommendation for a new Muxton parish has no benefits to residents**

The recommendation of concern to me is the proposal to split Muxton away from its sister community in Donnington to form a new parish for Muxton alone. I can see no benefit at all for residents in either Muxton or Donnington by doing this. However, it is very clear that the precept for a new Muxton Parish will be significantly higher than we currently pay.

### **CGR Terms of Reference ignore financial impact of any recommended changes**

What staggered me, in reading the Information Pack, is that the CGR Team were not required to consider any financial impact on residents of changes to the present parish arrangements. Incredibly, the *Terms of Reference* include considering what the name of the parish should be but not what the consequential costs might be of any change to the parish.

To add insult to injury, the Information Pack includes the statement that the CGR cannot make changes to the precept. Conveniently, it doesn't explain that CGR proposals might well indirectly increase the precept. I'm sure it wasn't intended deliberately to mislead the public but that is the end result.

### **Donnington & Muxton Parish Council is Gold Standard**

The old adage '*if it ain't broke, don't fix it*' is absolutely appropriate in the case of our parish. The permanent staff do an excellent job of managing the parish and the councillors ably represent their residents. The Parish Council has a history of such support for Muxton.

Thirty years ago it was central to the success of the residents of Muxton and Lilleshall in stopping plans to opencast mine for coal and clay in a field between the two communities.

A more recent example is the strong support to residents from the Parish Council in persuading the Strategic Planning Team to remove from the draft Local Plan some sections of the allocated development land along Wellington Road.

It is no surprise that Donnington & Muxton Parish Council was awarded the Gold standard in the Local Council Award Scheme.

Leaving Muxton and Donnington Parish Council to carry on their good work together does not stop St Georges combining with Red Hill to form an enlarged parish. The new parish can continue to use the existing council offices and staff in St Georges so there are no additional precept costs in this arrangement; it's a win-win.