

SUBJECT:	<i>Community Governance Review</i>
RELEVANT MEMBER	<i>Councillor Patrick Hogan, Chairman of the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee</i>
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	<i>Joanna Swift, Head of Legal & Democratic Services</i>
REPORT AUTHOR	<i>Mat Bloxham, 01494 732143, mat.bloxham@chilternandsouthbucks.gov.uk</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED	<i>Denham; Farnham and Hedgerley; Stoke Poges;</i>

1. Purpose of Report

The Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee agreed at the meeting held on 26 June 2018 to conduct a Community Governance Review on the governance arrangements for Denham, Farnham Royal and Stoke Poges Parish Councils. This followed requests received from those Parish Councils. The Committee agreed its final recommendations on the community governance review at the meeting held on 16 January which had regard to the responses received during both stages of public consultation, relevant legislation and guidance. Full Council is therefore asked to consider and agree the Committee's final recommendations detailed below.

RECOMMENDATION

To agree the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee's final recommendations on the Community Governance Review:

- a) Denham Parish Council – Removal of all Parish Wards (as shown on map - Appendix 3)**
- b) Stoke Poges Parish Council – Reduce the size of the Council from 13 to 11 Parish Councillors**
- c) Farnham Royal Parish Council – Remove 1 Parish Ward (by combining Farnham Royal South with Farnham Royal Central) to create a total of 2 Parish Wards called Farnham Royal North and Farnham Royal South (as shown on map - Appendix 3).**

2. Reasons for Recommendations

The purpose of a community governance review is to secure an arrangement which will bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and will result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.

The final recommendations contained in this report take into account the identities and interests of the community in the area and those arrangements for community representation and engagement already in place. The final recommendations also take into account representations received during the first and second stages of consultation with local people and local organisations. They have been made in accordance with legislation and have regard to relevant guidance by ensuring that they:

- Reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area, and
- Are effective and convenient.

Two other important considerations taken into account are:

- Community cohesion, and
- The size, population, and boundaries of the local community or parish

3. Content of Report

Background

- 3.1. The Council received requests from Denham, Stoke Poges and Farnham Royal Parish Councils requesting changes to the governance arrangements for those Parish Councils. After considering the requests received, the Committee agreed on 26 June 2018 to conduct a Community Governance Review.

Consultation

- 3.2. To inform the review the Council conducted the first public consultation from 3 September to 12 October 2018 which invited local electors and other interested parties to submit their views and comments on the existing community governance arrangements, and/or propose changes.
- 3.3. As set out in the Terms of Reference, the consultation consisted of the following:
- a) Review documents available to inspect at South Bucks District Council offices
 - b) Asking Parish Councils, for the areas under review, to advertise the review on their noticeboards and website
 - c) Consulting electors, for the areas under review, by inviting responses to the consultation via notices, website, and social media
 - d) Consulting other interested stakeholders, including the Parish Council and local Members, for the areas under review

- e) Welcoming comments from any other person or body that wishes to make representations
- f) Notifying Bucks County Council that a review is to be undertaken, and providing them with a copy of the terms of reference and consulting them in the matters under review
- g) Treating any petitions received during this review as a consultation response (none were received)

3.4. The Committee considered the responses received on 29 October 2018, and agreed the draft recommendations for the second stage of consultation, set out below. The report, attaching the full responses to the first consultation; legislation and guidance, the Committee considered when agreeing the draft recommendations, is attached at Appendix 2.

- a) *Denham Parish Council – Removal of all Parish Wards*
- b) *Stoke Poges Parish Council – Reduce the size of the Council from 13 to 11 Parish Councillors*
- c) *Farnham Royal Parish Council – Remove 1 Parish Ward (by combining Farnham Royal South with Farnham Royal Central) to create a total of 2 Parish Wards*

Representations

3.5. The second stage of consultation was carried out from 5 November to 14 December 2018. A total of 6 representations were received (Appendix 1).

4 representations were received which supported the draft recommendation for Denham Parish Council.

2 representations were received which supported the draft recommendation for Stoke Poges Parish Council.

No representations were received during the second stage of consultation relating to the draft recommendation for Farnham Royal Parish Council.

4. Options

All the representations received from the second stage of consultation support the Committee's draft recommendations. The Committee agreed at the meeting held on 16 January that the Committee's draft recommendations remain unchanged, and that these be recommended for agreement at Full Council on 27 February 2019.

The proposed changes to Farnham Royal Parish Council involve the amalgamation of the ward Farnham Royal South with the ward Farnham Royal Central. The ward Farnham Royal North will remain unchanged. It is proposed that the new larger southern ward be called "Farnham Royal South" to distinguish it from "Farnham Royal North".

Full Council may choose not to agree the Committee's final recommendations, but in doing so should specify reasons.

5. Corporate Implications

Financial

There are no direct financial implications to the Council arising from the recommendations of this report.

Legal

The Council has the power to carry out a Community Governance Review under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. In reaching its decision, the Council must take account of the views of local people and also have regard to statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Community

The recommendations from this review must take into account the views of local people. The responses received during the second stage of consultation are attached in full at Appendix 1.

6. Links to Council Policy Objectives

This report relates to theme 5 of the Chiltern and South Bucks Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan: Cohesive and Strong Communities: strong, confident and active communities

7. Next Steps

Subject to Full Council agreeing the recommendations a Community Governance Reorganisation Order will be made setting out the changes to Denham, Stoke Poges and Farnham Royal Parish Councils' governance arrangements. The Order will set an implementation date for when the changes take effect. This is likely to be 1 March 2019. The Council will publish the decision on recommendations and reasons for the decision and inform relevant organisations and interested persons.

For the avoidance of doubt the proposed final recommendations relate to Parish Councils governance arrangements which are not directly affected by the Secretary of State's announcement on 1 November 2018 that there will be a single new District Unitary Council for the whole of the current administrative area of Buckinghamshire County Council.

Background Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governance & Electoral Arrangement Committee - 26 June 2018 Report Minutes• Governance & Electoral Arrangement Committee - 29 October 2018 Report Minutes <p>DCLG/LGBCE Guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-governancereviews</p> <p>LG&PIHA 2007: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/28/contents</p>
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