



Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee

Tuesday, 26 June 2018 at 6.00 pm

Room 5, Capswood, Oxford Road, Denham

A G E N D A

Item

1. Evacuation Procedure
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes (*Pages 3 - 8*)

To approve the minutes of the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee meetings held on 7 March and 16 May 2018.

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest

5. Polling District and Polling Place Review (*Pages 9 - 10*)

Appendix: Acting Returning Officer's Recommendations (Pages 11 - 14)

Appendix 1 - Proposals (Pages 15 - 20)

Appendix 2 - Submissions (Pages 21 - 22)

6. SBDC Parish Councils - Community Governance Review (*Pages 23 - 32*)

Appendix 1 - Guidance (Pages 33 - 36)

Appendix 2 - Requests Received (Pages 37 - 40)

Appendix 3 - Maps (Pages 41 - 46)

Appendix 4 - Draft Model Terms of Reference (Pages 47 - 50)

7. Exclusion of Public (if required)

The Chairman to move the following resolution (if required):

“that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.”

Note: All reports will be updated orally at the meeting if appropriate and may be supplemented by additional reports at the Chairman’s discretion.

Membership: Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee

Councillors: P Hogan (Chairman)
Dr W Matthews (Vice-Chairman)
D Anthony
J Lowen-Cooper
D Pepler
D Smith

Date of next meeting – Wednesday, 16 January 2019

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GOVERNANCE AND ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Meeting - 7 March 2018

Present: P Hogan (Chairman)
Dr W Matthews, J Lowen-Cooper and D Smith

Apologies for absence: D Anthony and D Pepler

18. MINUTES

The minutes of the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee held on 16 January 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

20. MEMBERSHIP OF PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEES

The Committee were asked to consider a report which proposed to reduce the number of Members on the Licensing and Planning Committees from 12 to 10 and reduce the quorum of the Planning Committee from 6 to 5.

Members were advised that the proposal to reduce the Membership of the Committees should be considered in the context of the overall number of Members on the Council. At present, the appointment of 12 Members to each Committee represented almost half of the 28 Members on the Council, therefore it was suggested that a lower number of Members may be more appropriate.

The Committee felt that, given the reduced workload and the reduction in the number of meetings needed by the Licensing Committee in recent years, the proposal to reduce the Membership of the Committee to 10 whilst maintaining the quorum at 3 Members should be endorsed. It was noted that the proposal was supported by the Licensing Committee Chairman.

In reference to the use of substitute Members, it was clarified that substitutes should attend for the entire duration of a meeting and should receive the same training as ordinary Committee Members. Members were advised that training sessions for both Planning and Licensing Committee Members had taken place as required following changes to appointments.

A concern was raised that lowering the quorum of the Planning Committee to 5 Members could lead to issues when declarations of interest were received. It was felt that reducing the quorum would have a negative effect on the public perception of the Committee, as it could lead to fewer Members debating and determining the outcomes of applications.

RECOMMENDED that the Council's Constitution be amended to reflect the following changes:

1. That the Licensing Committee comprises of 10 Members (reduced from 12) and that the quorum for a meeting be 3 Members (remains the same).
2. That the Planning Committee comprises of 10 Members (reduced from 12) and that the quorum for a meeting be 6 Members (remains the same).

21. JOINT WORKING - APPOINTMENT OF A JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO THE WORK OF THE CHILTERN AND SOUTH BUCKS JOINT COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report on the proposal to establish a joint committee which would discharge overview and scrutiny functions in relation to the work of the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee. Members noted that the proposed new committee would not affect the work of the existing Overview and Scrutiny Committees at either Council but would instead focus solely on scrutinising the functions delegated to the Joint Committee.

It was proposed that the new Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be made up of 5 Members from each Council, with two co-Chairmen elected at the first meeting in each municipal year. The Committee would have a quorum of 4 with a minimum of 2 Members from each Council. Appointments to the Committee would be made by the Leaders of each Council subject to the application of political balance rules, and the Committee would report back to each individual Full Council.

Members felt that establishing a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be beneficial as it would enable greater scrutiny of the work of the Joint Committee to be carried out between the Councils.

RECOMMENDED that the following be agreed:

1. That pursuant to section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Councils agree to appoint a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee with authority to discharge the Councils' overview and scrutiny functions in relation to the functions delegated to the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee as set out in the terms of reference at Appendix 1 to the report.
2. That the rules of procedure for the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee be agreed as set out in Appendix 2.
3. That the Councils' constitutions and respective Cabinet Procedure, Access to Information and Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules be amended to reflect the new Joint Committee.
4. That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the necessary amendments to the IAA to reflect the above decisions in consultation with the Chief Executive and Leaders.

22. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

In accordance with the agreed constitutional review work programme, Members undertook a review of Part F - Partnerships and Part H - Decision Structure of the Council's Constitution and considered the inclusion of a new Part I - Glossary of Terms.

With reference to Part F – Partnerships, the Committee felt that, as the Terms of Reference for the Chiltern and South Bucks Strategic partnership were outdated, these should not be included in the Council's Constitution. It was recommended that the Terms of Reference should be reviewed and updated to ensure that they were fit for purpose.

Similarly, Members felt that the Assurance and Accountability Framework for the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership should not be included in the Constitution due to it being outdated. It was suggested that a link to the framework could be included on the Council's website once it had been updated.

The Committee noted that Part H – Decision Structure had been updated to include newly established committees. Members felt that an arrow should be added to the chart to show the link between Cabinet and Council decisions more clearly.

In reference to Part I – Glossary of Terms, the following amendments were made:

- Political Assistant – change reference from Chiltern District Council to South Bucks District Council.
- Overview and Scrutiny – should read "decisions made by the Cabinet and Joint Committees".
- Scrutiny – second paragraph referring to scrutiny committees should be moved to the Overview and Scrutiny section.
- A definition of the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee should be included.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Terms of Reference for the Chiltern and South Bucks Strategic Partnership and the Assurance and Accountability Framework for the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership be removed from the Constitution.
2. Part H – Decision Structure and Part I – Glossary of Terms be agreed subject to the amendments set out in the minute above.

The meeting terminated at 6.55 pm

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GOVERNANCE AND ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Meeting - 16 May 2018

Present:

D Anthony, P Hogan, Dr W Matthews, D Pepler and D Smith

Apologies for absence: J Lowen-Cooper

23. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor Pepler, seconded by Councillor Smith and

RESOLVED that Councillor Patrick Hogan be declared Chairman of the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee for 2018/19.

24. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor Hogan, seconded by Councillor Pepler and

RESOLVED that Councillor Dr Wendy Matthews be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee.

The meeting terminated at 7.16 pm

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SUBJECT	Polling District and Polling Place Review
REPORT OF	Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee Chairman - Councillor Patrick Hogan
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Head of Legal & Democratic Services, Joanna Swift
REPORT AUTHOR	Mat Bloxham, 01494 732143, mbloxham@chiltern.gov.uk
WARD/S AFFECTED	Iver Village and Richings Park

1. Purpose of Report

A voluntary review of polling district and polling places commenced on 19 July 2017 following comments received at the UK Parliamentary Election held on 8 June 2017. This report sets out the recommendations of the Acting Returning Officer following the review.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To recommend to Full Council to re-designate St Andrews United Reform Church as the polling place for polling district 'SIR- Iver Richings Park'.

2. Reasons for Recommendations

Following the recent review of polling district and polling places the above recommendation aims to ensure that suitable locations are in place for polling purposes.

3. Content of Report

The Council is required by the Electoral and Administration Act 2013 to next review the UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places in its area between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020. Local authorities can also carry out a review of all or some polling districts and polling places at other times.

In response to comments received at the UK Parliamentary election that was held on 8 June 2017 it was considered appropriate carry out a review so that proposed changes can take effect in time for future elections.

The Review commenced on 19 July 2017 and the attached report, issued by the Acting Returning Officer (ARO), sets out his recommendations as well as the representations received during the public consultation. The public and interested parties could submit comments and submissions relating to the Acting Returning Officer's recommendations up until 8 June 2018.

Members are asked to consider the recommendation in the attached report, and recommend that this be agreed by Full Council on 17 July 2018.

4. Consultation

The Notice of Review of Polling Districts and Places was published on 19 July 2017 which invited public comments and submissions by 13 March 2018.

Publication of ARO's report for proposed and existing polling places took place on 18 May 2018 and a further opportunity to comment was provided until 8 June 2018.

5. Options

The Committee can decide whether to agree the proposed re-designation as set out in the attach report.

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7.2 Legal

The Review has been carried out in accordance with the Electoral and Administration Act 2013 and Representation of the People Act 1983.

8. Links to Council Policy Objectives

The recommendation in the report supports the delivery of the Council's aims and objectives.

9. Next Steps

Subject to agreement by the Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee and Full Council the required changes will be made to re-designate the polling place referred to in the report.

Background Papers:	None other than those referred to in the report.
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SOUTH BUCKS District Council

Polling District and Place Review 2017/18

Summary

Pursuant of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, the District Council is required to undertake a review of parliamentary polling districts and places. Electors within the District, or within the parliamentary constituency, may make a representation concerning any views regarding the existing structure of polling districts, polling places and access to polling stations.

The Review commenced on 19 July 2017 and this report, issued by the Acting Returning Officer sets out his recommendations as well as the representations received during the public consultation. The public and interested parties are welcome to submit further comments and submissions relating to the Acting Returning Officer's recommendations set out in this report by 8 June 2018. The Acting Returning Officer's provisional decisions and recommendations will be presented to the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee on 26 June 2018. The Review will conclude with the Committee making final recommendations at Council on 17 July 2018.

The full timetable is as follows:

Polling District and Place Review 2017-18 Timetable	
Proceedings	Time and Date
Publication of Notice of Review of Polling Districts and Places	19 July 2017
Deadline for receiving public comments and submissions	13 March 2018
Publication of ARO's report for proposed and existing polling places	18 May 2018
Deadline for receiving public comments and submissions relating to the ARO's report	8 June 2018
ARO's provisional decisions presented to the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee	26 June 2018
The Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee makes recommendations to Council concerning the outcome of the Review	17 July 2018

The remit of the Review

The Council is required by the Electoral and Administration Act 2013 to next review the UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places in its area between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020. Local authorities can also carry out a review of all or some polling districts and polling places at other times. In light of the UK Parliamentary election that was held on 8 June 2017 it is considered timely to carry out a review now so that any proposed changes can take effect for future elections. There is an obligation for the Council to ensure that polling stations are suitable and for all electors.

The requirements are that:

1. Electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances, and
2. As far as is reasonable and practicable, that polling places are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled, and when designating a polling place, have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

Recommendations

The Acting Returning Officer's recommendations to the Electoral and Governance Arrangements Committee in June 2018 are as follows:

- 1) To re-designate St Andrews United Reform Church as the polling place for polling district 'SIR- Iver Richings Park'

The Acting Returning Officer's proposals and considerations are summarised in *Appendix 1*.

The comments and submissions from the consultation period are summarised in *Appendix 2*.

Definition of Terms

- A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a parliamentary constituency or ward into smaller parts.
- A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be located.
- A polling station is the area within the polling place where voting takes place.

If you have any questions or comments please contact the Elections Office:

Electoral Services (SBDC)

PO Box 886

Amersham

HP6 9HS

Or

elections@southbucks.gov.uk

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South Bucks District Polling District and Place Review 2017-18

Polling District:	SIR – Iver Richings Park
Polling Place St Leonards Church Hall, St Leonards Walk, Richings Park SL0 9DD	The ARO comments: Polling District: No change Polling Place: St Andrews United Reform Church, 25 North Park, SL0 9DH
Comments on suitability	
Representations received Chair of Governors Iver Village Infant School (letter) - Request to change the polling station from St Leonards Church Hall as premise is used on a daily basis by pupils. The closure of the nursery and the impact on school attendance was highlighted.	
Consideration of alternative polling place (if appropriate) St Andrews United Reform Church is considered a suitable alternative being ½ mile from St Leonards Church. There is ample parking and disability access has been assessed to be suitable.	
<u>Recommendation</u> To re-designate polling place to St Andrews United Reform Church for polling district 'SIR'	



SIR Iver Richings Park

Polling station evaluation and photos for St Andrews United Reform Church, Iver

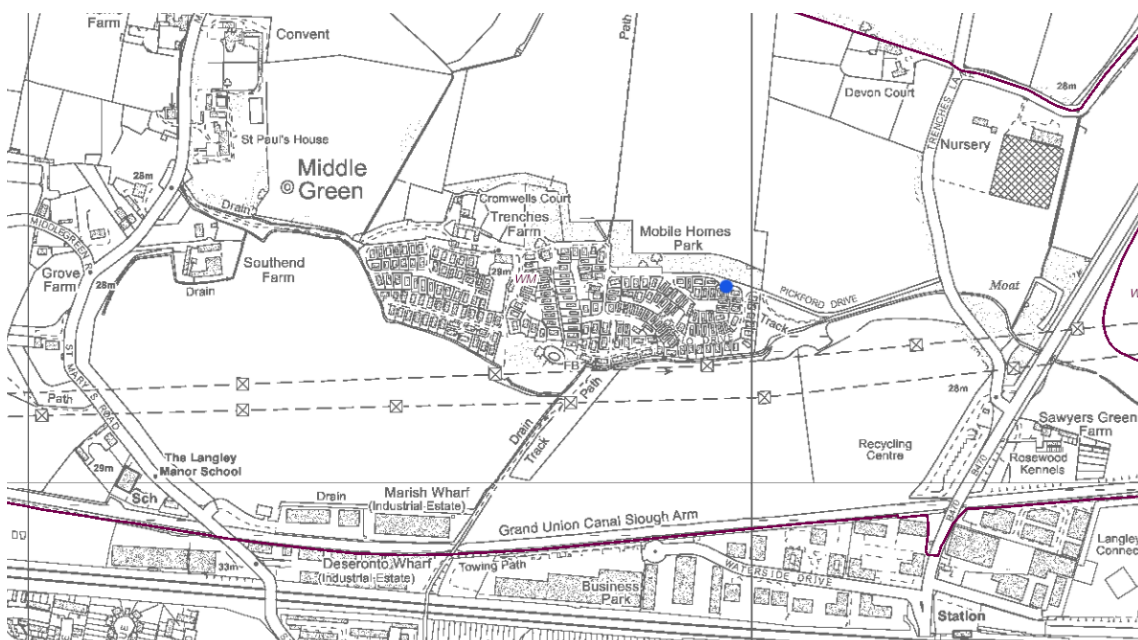
External areas access and facilities		
Check	✓	Comments
Are there good public transport links to the polling place?	✓	
Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb?	✓	
Is the building clearly identifiable?	✓	
Is additional signage required between street and entrance?	✓	
Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day?	✓	
Are there parking facilities for disabled people?	✓	
Are there parking facilities for polling staff?	✓	
Does the approach to the building have external lighting?	✓	
Does the building have level access? Yes/No. If no – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a purpose built ramp been installed? • If so, does it have a handrail? • Does the ramp have a gentle slope? Does the building require a temporary ramp or is there an alternative disabled access?	✓	
Is the entrance door wide enough for a disabled person using a motorised wheelchair?	✓	
Are the doors light enough for frail/elderly voters to open?	✓	
Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises, as required by the election rules?	✓	
Are there any external security concerns?	X	
Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?	✓	

Internal areas access and facilities		
Check	✓	Comments
Are all doors easy to open (including by wheelchair users) or do they need to be permanently locked back?	✓	
Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?	X	
Are any doormats level with the floor?	✓	
Is the floor covering non-slip (including in wet weather)?	✓	
Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?	X	
Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?	✓	
Are there toilet facilities?	✓	
Is there a kitchen that staff can use?	✓	
Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?	✓	
Is there adequate space for signage?	✓	
How many polling stations can the building accommodate?	✓	1
Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?	✓	



South Bucks District Polling District and Place Review 2017-18

Polling District:	SIT – The Orchards
Polling Place The Orchards Residential Park, Trenches Lane	The ARO comments: PD: No change PP: No change
Comments on suitability Concerns were raised by the presiding officer that there is not adequate disability access at this polling station.	
Representations received Feedback from Presiding Officer at Parliamentary Election	
Consideration of alternative polling place (if appropriate) The Orchards residential park polling station has been re-assessed following health and safety concerns. Following assessment shows polling station meets access requirements and Previously the polling station at the Orchards was re-designated to the Harvey Memorial hall, George Green Road. It was established that electors felt this was too far to travel and The Orchards better serves the needs of the community. This is despite the facilities not being ideal for Presiding Officer and Poll Clerks. Therefore we are proposing no change to The Orchards Residential Park being used as the polling place for the polling district 'SIT'	
<u>Recommendation</u> No change.	



Polling District –SIT The Orchards

Polling station evaluation and photos for The Orchards Residential Park.

External areas access and facilities		
Check	✓	Comments
Are there good public transport links to the polling place?	✓	
Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb?	✓	
Is the building clearly identifiable?	✓	
Is additional signage required between street and entrance?	✓	
Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day?	✓	
Are there parking facilities for disabled people?	✓	
Are there parking facilities for polling staff?	✓	
Does the approach to the building have external lighting?	✓	
Does the building have level access? Yes/No. If no – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a purpose built ramp been installed? • If so, does it have a handrail? • Does the ramp have a gentle slope? Does the building require a temporary ramp or is there an alternative disabled access?	✓	Ramp
Is the entrance door wide enough for a disabled person using a motorised wheelchair?	✓	
Are the doors light enough for frail/elderly voters to open?	✓	
Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises, as required by the election rules?	✓	
Are there any external security concerns?	X	
Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?	✓	

Internal areas access and facilities		
Check	✓	Comments
Are all doors easy to open (including by wheelchair users) or do they need to be permanently locked back?	✓	Adequate space
Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?	X	
Are any doormats level with the floor?	✓	
Is the floor covering non-slip (including in wet weather)?	✓	
Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?	X	
Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?	✓	
Are there toilet facilities?	✓	
Is there a kitchen that staff can use?	X	No kitchen
Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?	✓	
Is there adequate space for signage?	✓	
How many polling stations can the building accommodate?	✓	1
Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?	✓	



Appendix 2- Comments and Submissions from Public Consultation

South Bucks District Council welcomed comments and submissions from the public and interested parties relating to the polling district and place review 2017-18. The consultation period ran from 19th July 2017 to 13th March 2018, summarised below are the comments received. There were no comments and submissions received in response to the Returning Officer's consultation papers during the period 18th May 2018 to 8th June 2018.

Chair of Governors Iver Village Infant School	Recommendation to change polling station at St Leonards Hall, Richings Park as the facilities are used by Iver Village Infant School. It was commented that there is disruption to pupils and an alternative polling station should be used.
Individual	An elector from Burkes Road commented that their current polling station The Beacon Centre is not in walking distance and the Curzon Centre, Fitzwilliams Centre, St Michael's Church Hall, Hope Church or the Town Hall could be considered as alternatives.
Presiding Officer from Parliamentary election	It was reported by the Presiding Officer that the Orchards Residential Park has poor wheelchair access.

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SUBJECT	SBDC Parish Councils – Community Governance Review
REPORT OF	Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee Chairman - Councillor Patrick Hogan
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Head of Legal & Democratic Services, Joanna Swift
REPORT AUTHOR	Mat Bloxham, 01494 732143, mbloxham@chiltern.gov.uk
WARD/S AFFECTED	Denham; Stoke Poges; Farnham & Hedgerley

1 Purpose of Report

Correspondence has been received from 3 Parish Councils requesting that the electoral arrangements for those Parishes be changed. This report outlines the requests that have been received and provides guidance on how proposed changes to Parish electoral arrangements can be reviewed so that Members can consider whether or not to conduct a Community Governance Review in relation to the 3 requests received from Parish Councils.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **To note the correspondence received from 3 Parish Councils proposing changes to electoral arrangements within their respective Parish areas:**
 - a) **Denham Parish Council – Removal of Parish Wards**
 - b) **Stoke Poges Parish Council – Reduction in Council Size (number of Parish Councillors)**
 - c) **Farnham Royal Parish Council – Removal of Parish Wards**
2. **To consider whether to conduct a Community Governance Review on any of the above Parish Council areas.**
3. **Subject to recommendation 2, it is requested that authority to agree the Terms of Reference of the review be delegated to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Chairman of the Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee.**

2 Reasons for Recommendations

Members are asked to consider the requests received from Denham, Stoke Poges and Farnham Royal Parish Councils to review the electoral arrangements for those areas, and agree whether to conduct a Community Governance Review.

3 Statutory Provisions

3.1. Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (“the 2007 Act”) decisions about the creation of parishes in South Bucks District and their electoral arrangements, are devolved to the District Council. The Council has responsibility for undertaking community governance reviews and deciding whether to give effect to the recommendations made in those reviews. In making that 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.

3.2. A community governance review is a review of the whole or part of the district to consider one or more of the following:

- creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- the naming of parishes in the style of new parishes;
- the electoral arrangements for parishes (the ordinary year of election; council size; the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding), and
- grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes.

3.3. 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 review must take account of the identities and interests of the community in that area and those arrangements for community representation and engagement already in place. There is therefore a requirement for consultation with not only local people but also with local organisations and businesses during the review process.

3.4. Community governance reviews can be triggered by local people presenting a petition to the Council. The Council has a duty to carry out a review if it receives a valid petition, unless there has been a previous review in the last 2 years or a current review in already ongoing.

3.5. Otherwise, the Council has discretion to conduct a community governance review at any time. For example a review may be appropriate following a major change in the population of a community or to re-draw boundaries which have become anomalous. The guidance issued by the Secretary of State suggests that it would be good practice for Councils to consider conducting a review in their area every

10-15 years – except for areas with very low populations when less frequent reviews may be adequate.

- 3.6. The Council can decide on the terms of reference for a community governance review. But in areas where there is both a district council and a county council, district councils are required to notify the county council of their intention to undertake a review and of the terms of reference. Review must be completed within 12 months.

Requests Received from Parishes

- 3.7. At a meeting of Denham Parish Council on 13 November 2017 the Parish Council agreed to propose to South Bucks District Council that the number of Parish Wards be reduced from 3 to 1. The Parish Clerk wrote to the South Bucks District Council on 27 March 2018 to advise that this proposal had been made.
- 3.8. In light of this request Parish Clerks were asked at a Liaison meeting held on 19 April to advise if their Parish Councils were seeking to make similar requests to the Council to review electoral arrangements. An email was also sent to all Parish Clerks on 10 May requesting confirmation on this.
- 3.9. In response we have received requests from 3 Parish Councils (Denham, Stoke Poges and Farnham Royal) to review the electoral arrangements within those Parishes. The requests that have been received are included in Appendix 2.
- 3.10. Confirmation has been received from Beaconsfield, Burnham, Dorney, Fulmer, Gerrards Cross, Hedgerley, Iver, Taplow and Wexham Parish Council Clerks that they are not aware of proposals to request the Council to review electoral arrangements in their Parish at the current time.
- 3.11. The requests received to date do not constitute a Community Governance Petition or Application. As such, the Council is not required to conduct a review in response to the requests received. The Council does however have a power to conduct a review in response to a “reasonable request”. The Council also has the power, if it wishes to conduct a review, to make recommendations other than what has been requested.
- 3.12. If Members agree to conduct a review the Council must have regard to the need to ensure that community governance within the area under review:

- Reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area, and
- is effective and convenient.

Two other important considerations are:

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

3.13. The two themes contained within the requests received relate to Parish Council size (number of Councillors) and Parish ward arrangements specifically.

Council Size (Number of Councillors)

3.14. The legal minimum number of Parish Councillors for each Parish Council is 5. There is no maximum number. There is also no requirement to link electorate size with the number of Councillors; however this is often a consideration. There is no further guidance on the number of Councillors however NALC in 1988 suggested that a practical minimum number of Councillors is 7, along with the following scale to be used as a guide:

Electors	Councillors
3,500	11
4,400	12
5,400	13
6,500	14
7,700	15

3.15. Aston Business School also published research in 1992 suggesting the following as a guide:

Electors	Councillors
< 500	5-8
501 – 2,500	6-12
2,501 - 10,000	13-27

3.16. Other key considerations include: population, geography, patterns of communication, representation, and administrative workload reflected in its precept, and any likely change to population.

Warding

3.17. Parish areas and their wards are used as building blocks for principal council divisions/wards. A relevant consideration is the layout of principal Council boundaries compared to Parish ward boundaries, in particular whether a parish ward will be split by a principal Council boundary. Guidance suggests that this should be avoided. Other factors for consideration include:

- Whether the number, or distribution, of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient (*i.e. number of electors, their distribution and their convenience in voting*)
- Whether it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish could be separately represented on the Council (*more subjective; is it one parish but comprising different parts?*)

Denham Parish Council

Request Summary (full request shown in Appendix 2):

- Not fair and equal representation as large variance in electors across wards
- Three wards not required due to small area
- Single District ward for Denham (2015)
- Potential for elections in one ward and not others
- Request no reduction in Councillors due to workload

Ward	Polling Districts	Councillors	Electorate	Ratio
Denham South	SJ, SJA, SJHD	7	3042	435
Denham North	SK	7	2476	353
Denham South West	SS	1	547	547
Total		15	6,065	404

- 3.18 The total electorate for Denham Parish and the current number of 15 Parish Councillors is broadly in line with NALC/Aston Business School advice.
- 3.19 The attached map (Appendix 3) shows the current three wards for Denham Parish. As a comparison Stoke Poges and Taplow do not have any Parish Wards and have 13 and 11 Councillors respectively. The District and County Electoral Division do not run within the Parish Ward boundaries.

Stoke Poges Parish Council

3.20 Request summary: (full request shown in Appendix 2):

- 13 seats should be reduced to 9
- 4 vacant seats during the previous 3 years

Ward	Polling Districts	Councillors	Electorate	Ratio
Stoke Poges	SS	13	3905	300

3.21 The total electorate for Stoke Poges Parish and the current number of 13 Parish Councillors is broadly in line with Aston Business School advice. The NALC guide suggests that the number of Councillors is greater than the guide based on the electorate alone.

3.22 There are no Parish Wards within Stoke Poges Parish boundary as shown on the attached map. (Appendix 3)

Farnham Royal Parish Council

3.23 Request Summary: (full request shown in Appendix 2):

- Three Parish Wards should be made into a single Parish Ward
- Potential for elections in one ward and not others

Ward	Polling Districts	Councillors	Electorate	Ratio
Farnham Royal Central	SFC	3	1088	363
Farham Royal North	SFN	7	3210	459
Farnham Royal South	SFS	1	361	361
Total		11	4659	424

3.24 Although the request does not refer to a change to the number of Councillors a comparison with the total electorate and NALC/Aston Business School guides suggests that a small increase in the number of Councillors could be considered if a review were to be carried out.

3.25 The Farnham Common and Burnham Beeches County Electoral Division and Stoke Poges and Wexham Electoral Division split Farham Royal Parish into two areas. It would not be possible to remove all Parish Wards for this reason. The Parish Ward of Farham Royal South is within the Stoke Poges and Wexham Electoral Division. The attached map (Appendix 3) shows the wards within the Parish Boundary.

Review Process

3.26 The first step in the process is for the Principal Council (South Bucks District Council) to consider whether or not to conduct a review. The information provided above sets out a background for each of the 3 Parish Council areas which have requested a review. This information is intended to help Members decide if a review should be carried. If a review were to be carried out further background information would be required. Members are there asked to consider whether or not to conduct a review of any of the Parish areas.

Timetable

3.27 The only prescribed timetable requirement is that if a Council agrees to proceed with a review it must be completed within 12 months (from the date of this meeting). Two of the Parishes requesting a review have however asked that it be completed in time to take effect for the District and Parish elections scheduled for 2 May 2019. A potential timetable that meets this request is shown below for Members information only. It is also worth noting that the timetable is ambitious as it is shorter than the indicative timetable contained in guidance.

- Decision to conduct a review – 26 June 2018
- Terms of Reference Finalised – August 2018
- 1st Consultation period (6 weeks) – September to October 2018
- Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee consider 1st consultation responses & prepare / develop draft recommendations – late October 2018
- 2nd Consultation period (6 weeks) – November to December
- Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee consider 2nd consultation responses & prepare / publish final recommendations – January 2019
- Publish Reorganisation Order – February 2019
- Implementation – 1 March 2019 (before Notice of Election on 20 March 2019)

4 Consultation

4.1 If Members agree that it would be appropriate to conduct a Community Governance Review consideration should be given to the first stage of consultation. This seeks to build a general picture of views from the community. The guidance suggests that any

consultation should be reasonable and proportionate to the review. There is no specified method of consultation. It is recommended that the first stage of consultation follows the same process for advertising a casual vacancy for a Councillor. This includes publishing a Notice on the Council's website/noticeboards (if any) and asking the Parish Council to do the same. It is suggested that the first stage of consultation takes place over 6 weeks, although this is not prescribed and can be amended to take account of school or public holidays.

- 4.2 The second stage of consultation would involve setting out the draft recommendations and inviting specific comments on proposals to inform the final recommendations. The final recommendations must take into account any comments received. Similarly to the first stage of consultation there is no prescribed format, however the second consultation documents must be available to inspection at the Council offices and in the Parish area. This could include the principle Council and Parish Council websites, and documentation being made available at other public buildings.

5 Options

- 5.1 Not to carry out a Community Governance Review.
- 5.2 To request further information. Members may decide that they require further information before they can decide whether or not there are reasonable grounds to carry out a Community Governance Review. Implications on the timetable should be considered as a further report may need to be considered by the Committee, unless authority to decide whether or not to conduct a review was delegated to a Member Working Group for example.
- 5.3 If Members are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for a review to be undertaken on the electoral arrangements on one or more of the Parish Council areas the Committee may request a review to be carried out. It would be useful at this stage to receive initial comments on the proposed Terms of Reference to help these to be drafted and finalised. A model Terms of Reference is attached as Appendix 4 for information. If Members choose this option Recommendation 3 of the report requests that authority be delegated to officers in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee to finalise the Terms of Reference. This is intended to reduce the timescale of the review.

6 Corporate Implications

- 6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. A Community Governance Review involving the 3 Parish areas referred to in

this report can be carried out and met within existing budgets. However, there may be additional costs arising from more extensive consultation methods than those listed in the report. There will also be resource implications arising from the work required to carry out the review. The majority of the work will be carried out by Democratic & Electoral Services although support will also be required from other Council departments.

6.2 Legal

The Council has the relevant powers to undertake Community Governance Reviews under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The Council's Constitution delegates functions relating to community governance from Full Council to the Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee. It is recommended that if Members agree to carry out a Community Governance Review then the power to agree the final Terms of Reference of that review be delegated to the Head of Democratic & Electoral Services in consultation with the Chairman of the Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee. This would expedite the timescale of a review.

6.3 Sustainability

There are no direct implications arising from this report in relation to Crime and Disorder; Environmental Issues; ICT; Partnership; Procurement; Social Inclusion and

7 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

8 Next Steps

The Parish Councils that have made requests to review will be informed on the decision of the meeting. If a review is to be carried out the next step will be finalise the Terms of Reference of the Review and proceed to the first stage of consultation.

Background Papers:	DCLG/LGBCE Guidance LG&PIHA 2007
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Extracts from Secretary of State Statutory Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

Electoral Arrangements

152. Electoral arrangements in relation to an existing or proposed parish council are defined in the 2007 Act and are explained in detail below:

a) ordinary year of election – the year in which ordinary elections of parish councillors are to be held

b) council size – the number of councillors to be elected to the council, or (in the case of a common council) the number of councillors to be elected to the council by local electors in each parish

c) parish warding – whether the parish should be divided into wards for the purpose of electing councillors. This includes considering the number and boundaries of any such wards, the number of councillors to be elected for any such ward and the name of any such ward

Council size

153. Council size is the term used to describe the number of councillors to be elected to the whole council. The 1972 Act, as amended, specifies that each parish council must have at least five councillors; there is no maximum number. There are no rules relating to the allocation of those councillors between parish wards but each parish ward, and each parish grouped under a common parish council, must have at least one parish councillor.

154. In practice, there is a wide variation of council size between parish councils. That variation appears to be influenced by population. Research by the Aston Business School Parish and Town Councils in England (HMSO, 1992), found that the typical parish council representing less than 500 people had between five and eight councillors; those between 501 and 2,500 had six to 12 councillors; and those between 2,501 and 10,000 had nine to 16 councillors. Most parish councils with a population of between 10,001 and 20,000 had between 13 and 27 councillors, while almost all councils representing a population of over 20,000 had between 13 and 31 councillors.

155. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England ("LGBCE") has no reason to believe that this pattern of council size to population has altered significantly since the research was conducted. Although not an exact match, it broadly reflects the council size range set out in the National Association of Local Councils Circular 1126; the Circular suggested that the minimum number of councillors for any parish should be seven and the maximum 25.

156. In considering the issue of council size, the LGBCE is of the view that each area should be considered on its own merits, having regard to its population, geography and the pattern

of communities. Nevertheless, having regard to the current powers of parish councils, it should consider the broad pattern of existing council sizes. This pattern appears to have stood the test of time and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to have provided for effective and convenient local government.

157. Principal councils should also bear in mind that the conduct of parish council business does not usually require a large body of councillors. In addition, historically many parish councils, particularly smaller ones, have found difficulty in attracting sufficient candidates to stand for election. This has led to uncontested elections and/or a need to co-opt members in order to fill vacancies. However, a parish council's budget and planned or actual level of service provision may also be important factors in reaching conclusions on council size.

Parish warding

158. Parish warding should be considered as part of a community governance review. Parish warding is the division of a parish into wards for the purpose of electing councillors. This includes the number and boundaries of any wards, the number of councillors to be elected for any ward and the names of wards.

159. In considering whether or not a parish should be divided into wards, the 2007 Act requires that consideration be given to whether:

- a) the number, or distribution of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
- b) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented

160. Accordingly, principal councils should consider not only the size of the electorate in the area but also the distribution of communities within it. The warding of parishes in largely rural areas that are based predominantly on a single centrally-located village may not be justified. Conversely, warding may be appropriate where the parish encompasses a number of villages with separate identities, a village with a large rural hinterland or where, on the edges of towns, there has been some urban overspill into the parish. However, each case should be considered on its merits, and on the basis of the information and evidence provided during the course of the review.

161. There is likely to be a stronger case for the warding of urban parishes, unless they have particularly low electorates or are based on a particular locality. In urban areas community identity tends to focus on a locality, whether this be a housing estate, a shopping centre or community facilities. Each locality is likely to have its own sense of identity. Again, principal councils should consider each case on its merits having regard to information and evidence generated during the review. (See also under Chapter 3, paragraphs 54 to 60).

The number and boundaries of parish wards

162. In reaching conclusions on the boundaries between parish wards the principal council should take account of community identity and interests in the area, and consider whether any particular ties or linkages might be broken by the drawing of particular ward boundaries. Principal councils should seek views on such matters during the course of a review. They will, however, be mindful that proposals which are intended to reflect community identity and local linkages should be justified in terms of sound and demonstrable evidence of those identities and linkages.

163. The principal council should also consider the desirability of parish warding in circumstances where the parish is divided by district or London borough ward and/or county division boundaries. It should be mindful of the provisions of Schedule 2 (electoral change in England: considerations on review) to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 in relation to reviews of district or London borough and county council electoral arrangements. These provide that when the LGBCE is making changes to principal council electoral arrangements, no unwarded parish should be divided by a district or London borough ward or county division boundary, and that no parish ward should be split by such a boundary. While these provisions do not apply to reviews of parish electoral arrangements, the LGBCE believes that, in the interests of effective and convenient local government, they are relevant considerations for principal councils to take into account when undertaking community governance reviews. For example, if a principal council chooses to establish a new parish in an area which is covered by two or more district or London borough wards or county division boundaries it may also wish to consider the merit of putting parish warding in place to reflect that ward and/or division.

164. When considering parish ward boundaries principal councils should ensure they consider the desirability of fixing boundaries which are, and will remain, easily identifiable, as well as taking into account any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

The number of councillors to be elected for parish wards

165. If a principal council decides that a parish should be warded, it should give consideration to the levels of representation between each ward. That is to say, the number of councillors to be elected from each ward and the number of electors they represent.

166. It is an important democratic principle that each person's vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimate competing factors, when it comes to the election of councillors. There is no provision in legislation that each parish councillor should represent, as nearly as may be, the same number of electors. However, the LGBCE believes it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government, either for voters or councillors, to have significant differences in levels of representation between different parish wards. Such variations could make it difficult, in workload terms, for

councillors to adequately represent the interests of residents. There is also a risk that where one or more wards of a parish are over-represented by councillors, the residents of those wards (and their councillors) could be perceived as having more influence than others on the council.

167. The LGBCE offers no specific guidelines for what might constitute significant differences in levels of representation; each case will need to be considered on its merits. Principal councils should be mindful that, for the most part, parish wards are likely to be significantly smaller than district or London borough wards. As a consequence, imbalances expressed in percentage terms may be misleading, disguising the fact that high variations between the number of electors per councillor could be caused by only a few dozen electors.

168. Where a community governance review recommends that two or more parishes should be grouped under a common parish council, then the principal council must take into account the same considerations when considering the number of councillors to be elected by each parish within the group.

Electorate forecasts

170. When considering the electoral arrangements for a parish, whether it is warded or not, the principal council must also consider any change in the number or distribution of the electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts. The most recent electoral register should be used to gain an accurate figure for the existing electorate. Planning assumptions and likely growth within the area, based on planning permissions granted, local plans or, where they are in place, local development frameworks should be used to project an accurate five year electorate forecast. This ensures that the review does not simply reflect a single moment but takes account of expected population movements in the short- to medium-term.

171. Electorate forecasts should be made available to all interested parties as early as possible in the review process, ideally before the formal commencement of the review so that they are available to all who may wish to make representations



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Proposals for Single Ward

Denham Parish Council Voted in favour of proposing to South Bucks District Council the re-organisation of the Parish Council structure to reduce the number of Parish Wards from three wards to one. This was agreed at the Full Council Meeting on 13 November 2017.

The current structure provides for the election, or co-option, of 15 councillors across 3 parish wards, Denham North (7 councillors), Denham South (7 Councillors) and Denham South West (1 Councillor).

It is difficult, under the current structure, to justify the argument for fair and equal representation because of the large variance in the number of electors across the three wards.

Equally it is difficult to justify the need for three distinctly separate wards for a relatively small, compact authority area. Each of the councillors have knowledge and interest in the whole area and are NOT solely concerned with the small area they are actually elected to represent. The electorate also do not solely approach those councillors elected for their geographic area and rather approach either the person that has some experience in the issue they are raising or approach someone that they know that they can rely on.

It also appears to members of the Parish Council rather cumbersome for the Parish to retain the three wards when the District Council, in 2015, re-organised the District Wards creating a single ward for Denham represented by three councillors. In the Parish Councils view the re-organisation of Parish wards should have been carried out at the same time.

In addition to the arguments of equality and fairness of representation, we believe that there is a strong argument that supports the proposal on financial grounds. With Denham being based on three wards, and traditionally represented by residents with no party loyalty, they are likely to get themselves nominated in the ward that they live in. This could result in a scenario where at the election one or two of the wards have insufficient candidates to fill the vacancies and the third ward has two more candidates than the number of vacancies. When the vacancy is published if both of the defeated candidates get nominated this would result in the need to hold a by-election because more candidates than the number of vacancies have been nominated. Elections are expensive and labour intensive and in this case could have been avoided.

The Parish Council would prefer not to see the number of councillors reduced, because they believe that with the amount of extra responsibilities being transferred to Town and Parish Councils the council will need to retain the current fifteen members. However, on balance, the council believes that the change to a single ward structure will be far more beneficial than the current structure even with reduced representation.

The Denham Parish Council requests that South Bucks District Council give urgent consideration to (the restructuring of the Ward Structure across the Parish to) create a Single Ward Parish and that this be introduced for the May 2019 Parish Elections.

Tracey Webb
 Denham Parish Clerk
 27 March 2018

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Stoke Poges Parish Council

Further to our discussion at the Clerks meeting on 19 April my council currently has 13 seats and for the past three plus years only 9 seats have been held. The council have felt that 9 seats is plenty for the size of our parish and I would be interested in finding our more about how to make that official please? It would be good if this could be sorted before the elections next year.

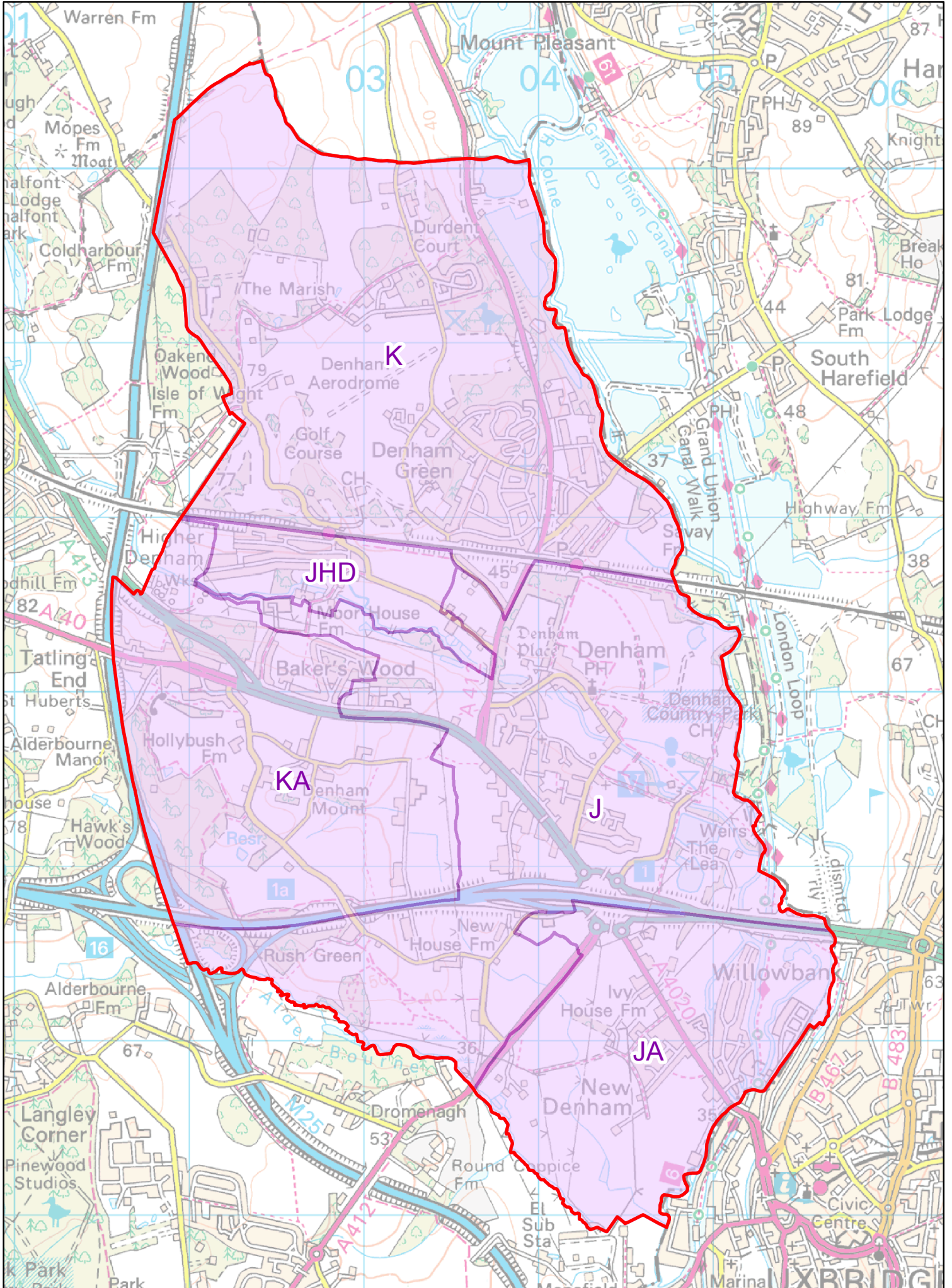
Farnham Royal Parish Council

Until something like 20 or so years ago, Farnham Royal was one Parish with 11 Parish Councillors. At that time, the whole of the Parish came within one division for the County. When the changes to the electoral divisions for the County and District occurred, our Parish was divided up. We now have the utterly ridiculous situation where we have one ward with one Councillor and two other wards with 3 and 7 members respectively. The point we have made from the outset is the Parish operates far more successfully as one unit with 11 Councillors being elected for the unit itself.

Why should we have the farcical situation that can so easily arise with the present system where we have an election at vast public expense in one part of the Parish and vacancies in another part. A complete waste of money. We have only avoided this so far by having to artificially divide the seats between councillors willing to stand. That is unfair and undemocratic but results from the absurd electoral divisions imposed on us.

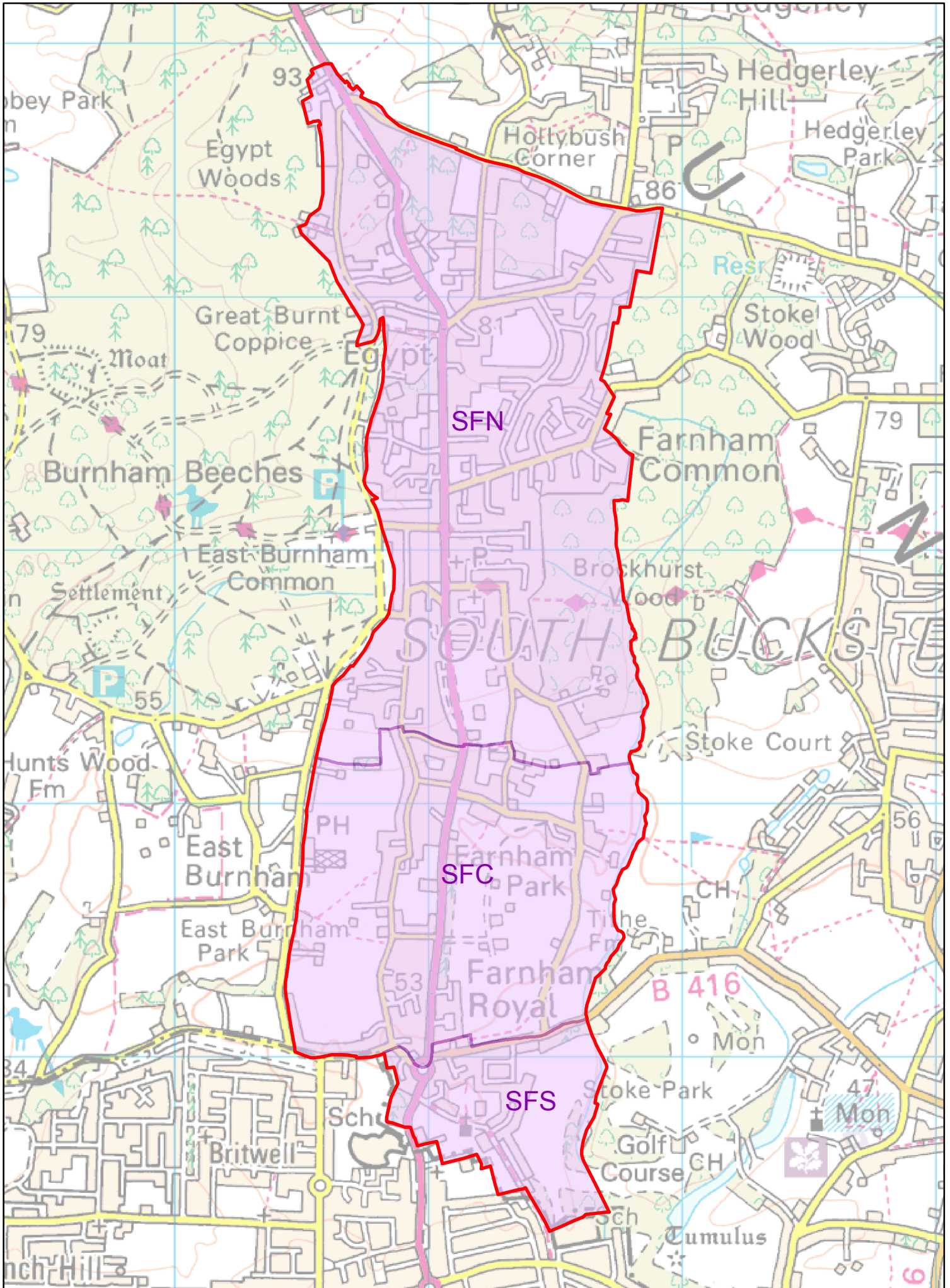
So yes we welcome the opportunity to request that there are changes so that Farnham Royal parish reverts to its original status and is comprised of only one ward and not the three artificial ones imposed upon us.

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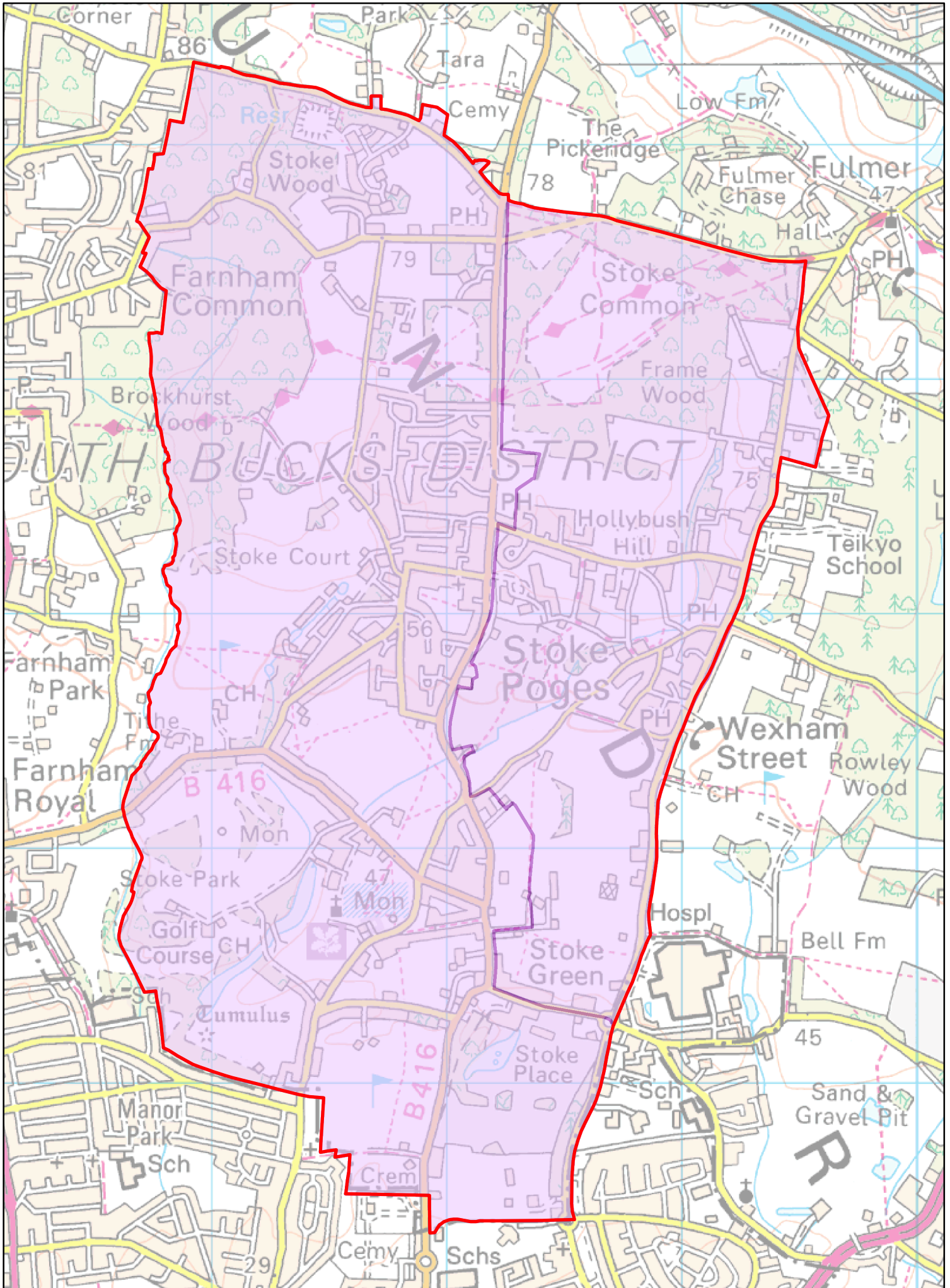
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Farnham Royal CP



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Stoke Poges CP



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Community Governance Review - DRAFT Terms of Reference

South Bucks Council has agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review encompassing the following Parish Council areas:

...

The Review will be carried out under the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972. The review shall comply with the legislative requirements, have regard for the associated statutory guidance (Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government) and will be conducted in accordance with these terms of reference.

Why is the Council Undertaking the Review?

Requests to review electoral arrangements within the above Parish Council areas were received by the Council. The Council was satisfied that there were grounds for a review to be carried.

Who carries out the Community Governance Review?

South Bucks District Council is responsible for carrying out the review. A Working Group will work with the Democratic & Electoral Services Manager to oversee the implementation of the Community Governance Review and to report back to the Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee with recommendations based on the responses to the consultation. The steering group will need to carry out the review impartially and objectively.

If the review concludes that changes should be made, and these are then approved by the Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee, then South Bucks District Council would make and publish a Reorganisation Order to put the changes into effect. The Order may cover any matters that appear to the Council to be necessary to give effect to the Order. These may include the transfer and management or custody of property, functions, rights and liabilities and the setting of a precept if a new parish were to be created.

Consultation

Before making or publicising the recommendations, the Council will take account of the views of local people. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires the Council to consult the local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body who appears to have an interest in the review.

The Council will:

- Advertise that a Community Governance Review is being undertaken;
- Publish information on the Council's website www.southbucks.gov.uk;
- Consult local government electors for the areas under review inviting responses;
- Consult other interested stakeholders and local members;
- Welcome comments from any other person or body that wishes to make representation;
- Notify Bucks County Council that a review is to be undertaken, and will provide them with a copy of the terms of reference and consult them in the matters under review;
- Take into account any representations received in connection with the review;
- Any petitions received during this review will be treated as a consultation response and the lead petition be recorded as the point of contact.

Timetable for the Review

Stage	Action	Timescale
Commencement	Terms of Reference approved	
Stage 1	Initial Consultation submissions are invited	
Stage 2	Consideration of submissions received – Draft recommendations are prepared	
Stage 3	Draft Recommendations are published – consultations on them	
Stage 4	Considerations of submissions received – Final Recommendations are prepared	
Stage 5	Final Recommendations are published – concluding the review	
Stage 6	Reorganisation Order made by the Council	

NB: the timetable is subject to alteration although the Review must be completed with twelve months of this publication of the terms of reference.

Electorate Forecasts & Existing Arrangements

The Council will use the published Register of Electors in providing the existing parish council electorate figures.

The Council will consider the electoral projections forecasted as part of the development of the Chiltern & South Bucks Joint Local Plan.

Number of Members to be Elected for Parish Wards

The review will have regard to the number of local government electors and any changes to this number which are likely to occur in the next five years. It will also consider the democratic principle that each person's vote should be of equal weight so far as possible.

The Steering Group will review the number of Councillors for each parish council, which shall not be less than five. It will give consideration to the levels of representation and make recommendations to each area on its own merits with regards to its electorate, geography and pattern of communities.

Naming of Parish and Town Wards

If required, the Council will endeavour to reflect existing local or historic place-names, and will give strong presumption in favour of names proposed by local interested parties. Notwithstanding this, in the interest of effective and convenient local government and for the avoidance of voter confusion, the Council will look for different ward names to those used for principal Council areas.

Reorganisation of Community Governance Orders

The Review will be completed when the Council adopts the Community Reorganisation Order. Copies of this order, the maps that show the effects of the order in detail, and the documents which set out the reasons for the decision that the Council has taken will be deposited at the Council's offices and published on the Council's website.

How to Submit Your Views

You can submit your views online at www.southbucks.gov.uk or in writing to:

Mat Bloxham, Democratic & Electoral Services Manager

South Bucks District Council
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UB9 4LH

Or via email elections@southbucks.gov.uk

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