

Committee: Audit and Standards Committee

Date:
28 November 2023

Title: Interim Community Governance Review 2023
– Results from consultation

Report Author: Phil Hardy, Electoral Services Manager

Summary

1. The Interim Community Governance Review of four parish council boundaries commenced in October 2023 and this report incorporates the feedback on the proposals from the consultation and recommends support for the changes.

Recommendation

2. To approve the recommendations as set out in Section 6, and as shown in the Appendices.

Financial Implications

3. There are no financial implications other than officer time.

Background Papers

4. All papers referred to by the author in the preparation of this report are already published and are widely available.

Impact

5.

Communication/Consultation	Consultation with statutory consultees, the public and all parish and town councils within the district will take place.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	Any alterations to parish boundaries may have an impact on ward boundaries.
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

6. The Councils referred to in the body of this report requested the revised boundary change to accommodate large scale housing development and are fully supportive of the proposed realignment of their boundaries.

6.1 Saffron Walden Town Council/Sewards End Parish Council Boundary Realignment

The full parish Community Governance Review in 2021/22 left this area open to be further reviewed should a housing development referred to as north Shire Hill, be given planning permission. That has subsequently happened, and both the Town and the Parish Council have jointly agreed that this area should be recommended for transfer from the Sewards End Parish to come under Saffron Walden Town Council's boundary.

It is recommended that the Council support the proposal as shown in Appendix 1.

6.2 Great and Little Chesterford Parish Councils Boundary Realignment

Great and Little Chesterford parish councils jointly put forward a proposal for the boundary between the two parishes to be further reviewed and realigned based on a subsequent housing development site that falls in Little Chesterford and the proposal moves the boundary so this housing site would come under Great Chesterford parish.

It is recommended that the Council support the proposal and the "revised boundary" put forward from comments received (see 6.3 below) and as shown at Appendix 2.

6.3 Consultation and next steps

Comments received:

Saffron Walden Town Council and Sewards End Parish Council

Communication was received from both Saffron Walden Town Council and Sewards End Parish Council for this Council to support the realigned boundary, as shown at Appendix 1.

No other comments were received.

Great and Little Chesterford Parish Councils

A proposal has come forward during the consultation period from a Great Chesterford resident to tweak the proposed boundary between Great and Little Chesterford as shown at Appendix 2, thus leaving the whole of the flood plain and access to the river within Great Chesterford.

Subsequently, a further communication has been received from the Parish Clerk of Great Chesterford saying the following:

I can confirm that both Great and Little Chesterford Parish Councils support the suggestion to include the piece of land behind the new development including the flood plain and up to the river in the land transferred to Great Chesterford along with the land for development.

Consequential changes

The properties built on the Swards End development site would subsequently come under the Saffron Walden Shire Ward, and the Saffron Walden County Council Electoral Division. This site currently comes under the Ashdon Ward and the Thaxted Electoral Division. There are no existing properties affected by the change.

Both the Chesterfords come under the same district ward – Littlebury, Chesterford and Wenden Lofts and the Saffron Walden electoral division. There are also no existing properties affected by the change.

It is not proposed to change the level of representation for any of the councils concerned, as this was considered as part of the 2021/22 review.

The next step would be for this Council to make a legal Order and the changes would come in to affect from the date stated in the Order.

The Local Government Boundary Commission will carry out the necessary Consequential Order to realign the district ward and county electoral division boundaries.

Risk Analysis

7.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
2 That identities and interests of the local community in the area are not reflected, and that community governance is not effective or convenient	2	2	To conduct a review to realign the parish boundaries are in the interests of the local community

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.