

**Eden District Council
Council**

12 July 2018

**Community Governance Review for Eden District – Final
recommendations**

Portfolio:	Resources
Report from:	Deputy Chief Executive
Wards:	All Wards
OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To enable consideration be given to the recommendations of the Community Governance Working Group following the conclusion of the second stage of consultation.

2 Recommendation

1. It is recommended that approval be given to the following changes to the governance arrangements of certain parishes within Eden District as follows:

- a) Barton Parish Council be re-named 'Barton and Pooley Bridge Parish Council';
- b) the administrative area of Hutton Parish Council be increased to include the Motherby Parish Ward of Greystoke Parish Council with the expanded Hutton Parish Council to remain wholly unwarded;
- c) the number of Parish Councillors for Hutton Parish Council be increased from eight to nine;
- d) the number of Parish Councillors for Greystoke Parish Council be reduced from nine to eight with the arrangements for the remaining Parish Wards of Greystoke, Johnby and Blencowe staying unchanged;
- e) the current Ousby Parish Council be dissolved;
- f) a new unwarded Parish Council be created using the current boundary of Ousby (Ousby) Ward, called 'Ousby Parish Council', with the number of parish councillors being five;
- g) a new unwarded Parish Council be created using the boundary of Ousby (Melmerby) Ward, called 'Melmerby Parish Council', with the number of parish councillors being five;
- h) Thrimby Parish Meeting be merged with Little Strickland Parish Meeting; and
- i) the number of councillors for Penrith Town Council be reduced from nineteen to fifteen.

2. The Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to make all necessary orders to effect the above changes.

3 Report Details

- 3.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gives full responsibility for Community Governance Reviews to principal councils in England. At the full Council meeting on 7 September 2017, it was resolved that a full Community Governance Review should be undertaken and further, a six member working group should be established to advise the Deputy Chief Executive on recommendations to be made as part of the Community Governance Review.
- 3.2 The first Working Group meeting was held on 2 October 2017, with the Chairman of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Board being elected as Chairman of the Working Group. The Working Group established that all Town, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings should be contacted as part of the first consultation as well as all electors within the parishes being encouraged to comment as well. An electronic survey would be set up on a commonly used survey builder, with paper copies being available at libraries and through Member services. Written submissions would also be considered.
- 3.3 The public consultation period began Thursday 16 November 2017, and ran through until Friday 22 December 2017, the results of which were considered by the Working Group at a meeting on 15 January 2018. Their recommendations were included in a report which was considered by full Council on 15 February 2018. Members approved that
“the Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to commence a second stage of consultation with the following parishes:
 - a) Barton Parish Council with regard to increasing the number of Councillors within Barton Parish and changing the name of the council to ‘Pooley Bridge Parish Council’;
 - b) Brougham Parish Council and Temple Sowerby Parish Council with regard to merging the two Parish Councils;
 - c) Castle Sowerby Parish Council with regard to exploring the viability of retaining the parish council but separating the parish boundary into 2 wards;
 - d) Crackenthorpe Parish Meeting and Long Marton Parish Council with regard to merging the two parishes, with Crackenthorpe becoming a 1 member ward within Long Marton Parish Council;
 - e) Dacre Parish Council with regard to reducing the number of councillors within Dacre Parish;
 - f) Helbeck Parish Meeting and Brough Parish Council with regard to merging the two parishes;
 - g) Hutton Parish Council and Greystoke Parish Council with regard to Motherby village being placed wholly within Hutton Parish, and ensuring that the parish boundaries are coterminous with the District Ward boundaries
 - h) Kirkby Thore Parish Council, Newbiggin Parish Meeting and Temple Sowerby Parish Council with regard to exploring boundary changes requested by Kirkby Thore Parish Council;

- i) Murton Parish Meeting with regard to exploring whether the Parish Meeting should have the name 'Hilton' included in the parish name;
- j) Ousby Parish Council with regard to splitting the Parish into two separate Parish Councils, 'Ousby Parish Council' and 'Melmerby Parish Council';
- k) Thrimby Parish Meeting, Little Strickland Parish Meeting and Great Strickland Parish Council with regard to either Thrimby merging with Little Strickland Parish Meeting or both Thrimby and Little Strickland merging with Great Strickland Parish Council; and
- l) Penrith Town Council with regarding to reducing the number of councillors within the Town Council from 19 to 15.

3.4 A second stage of consultation commenced on 1 March 2018, concluding on 31 May 2018. Officers visited all the parish councils potentially affected by the proposed changes to discuss the proposals with the parish councils. A series of public meetings at Crackenthorpe, Motherby, Little Strickland, Ousby and Melmerby were also set up to enable discussions with residents of villages affected.

3.5 Upon the conclusion of the second stage of consultation, the Working Group met on 25 June 2018 in order to discuss the findings of the consultation. Because of the number of apologies that had been received, the Chairman of the Working Group agreed to allow substitutions to ensure that as wide a view of Members as possible was obtained. Councillor Nicolson and Councillor Raine attended the meeting in this capacity. During the meeting, each recommendation that the Council approved in February was discussed individually. Paragraphs 3.6 to 3.17 of this report set out the activities and discussions that took place as part of the second stage of consultation.

3.6 **Barton Parish Council**

3.6.1 Barton Parish Council was informed that the initial requested boundary change could not be pursued as it would require a change to district ward boundaries. This is something that can only be undertaken as part of an Electoral Review.

3.6.2 Currently Barton Parish Council has five parish councillors. Further to the initial visit to Barton Parish Council, the clerk responded to the consultation, requesting that while they no longer wished to change the number of councillors, they still requested that the parish council name be changed to 'Barton and Pooley Bridge Parish Council'. The Working Group agreed the name change was an easy way to identify the areas covered by the parish, and that an increase in the number of the Councillors could put extra pressure on the parish council to recruit extra members.

3.6.3 The Working Group recommended that Barton Parish Council be re-named 'Barton and Pooley Bridge Parish Council';

3.7 **Brougham Parish Council / Temple Sowerby Parish Council**

3.7.1 During the second consultation period, officers separately attended meetings of Temple Sowerby Parish Council and Brougham Parish Council. During the meeting with Brougham Parish Council it emerged that their initial consultation response had been misinterpreted, and they were in fact willing to merge if another Parish Council was seeking to do so, rather than actively seeking a

merger with another Parish Council. District Council officers subsequently received consultation responses from both parish councils, both of whom were against pursuing a merger. Temple Sowerby Parish Council were concerned that Brougham had very little in common with Temple Sowerby, given the geographical distance between them, and that residents would be paying a large increase in their precept for receipt of very few services.

3.7.2 Brougham Parish Council has an electorate of 230, and the precept for 2018-2019 is £3.26 per household for a Band D property. Temple Sowerby has an electorate of 326, and the precept for 2018-2019 is £43.17 for a Band D property. Any merger would mean Brougham's precept would increase significantly. Brougham Parish Council has five parish councillors as has , Temple Sowerby Parish Council.

3.7.3 Members of the Working Group discussed the proposal in depth, concluding that the two parishes were geographically and culturally two separate entities, with very little common ground between them. The recommendation from the Working Group was to not pursue a merger between the two parish councils.

3.8 Castle Sowerby Parish Council

3.8.1 An officer attended a meeting of Castle Sowerby Parish Council. The initial suggestion to create 2 wards within the parish was from a member of the public, not the Parish Council itself. The Parish Council appeared to not wish to pursue the recommendation and it submitted no response during the second consultation period. The Working Group felt that there was no established case for warding arrangements for Castle Sowerby.

3.9 Crackenthorpe Parish Meeting / Long Marton Parish Council

3.9.1 Officers visited both Long Marton Parish Council and attended a public meeting for the residents of Crackenthorpe. During these meetings it emerged that the initial consultation responses had been misinterpreted. Crackenthorpe had indicated that they were prepared to merge with another parish council/meeting in an attempt to avoid simply being swallowed up by another parish. However, the general feeling was that they were happy functioning as they were.

3.9.2 Crackenthorpe Parish Meeting has an electorate of 87, and do not currently pay a precept. Long Marton Parish Council is split into three wards, Brampton (electorate 152), Knock (electorate 103) and Long Marton (350), making a total electorate of 605. Currently the precept for a Band D property is £13.99. Long Marton has seven parish councillor seats, two for Brampton ward, two for Knock ward and three for Long Marton Ward. The proposal that was consulted upon as part of the second stage consultation would have meant that there would be one parish councillor for Crackenthorpe ward within an enlarged Long Marton Parish Council.

3.9.3 Members of the Working Group considered the second stage consultation responses. These were wholeheartedly against the merging of the two parishes. The Group noted that Crackenthorpe is a functioning parish meeting and recommended that no change should be made to its status.

3.10 Dacre Parish Council

- 3.10.1 During the consultation period, Dacre Parish Council was informed that the initial requested boundary change could not be pursued during this review as it would require a change to district ward boundaries. This is something that can only be undertaken as part of an Electoral Review.
- 3.10.2 Dacre Parish Council currently has eleven parish councillor seats. An officer visited Dacre Parish Council, and encouraged the Parish Council to discuss how many councillors the Parish Council would be required in future. No further consultation response was received from Dacre Parish Council. .
- 3.10.3 Members considered the information available, and recommended that given the lack of response, there should be no change to the number of parish council seats for Dacre.

3.11 Helbeck Parish Meeting/Brough Parish Council

- 3.11.1 Members considered the responses that had been received from both Helbeck Parish Meeting and from Brough Parish Council. Council had approved consideration of a merger of the parishes at its meeting of 15 February 2018 due to concerns over the long term viability of Helbeck Parish meeting.
- 3.11.2 Helbeck Parish Meeting has an electorate of 5, and currently does not pay a precept. Brough Parish Council has an electorate of 612, with seven parish council seats, and currently a Band D property pays a precept of £55.19.
- 3.11.3 Officers attended a meeting of Brough Parish Council on 14 May 2018. The Parish Council did not support a merger and it was fed back that Helbeck Parish Meeting also did not support a merger.
- 3.11.4 The Working Group considered the consultation responses, and the feedback from the officers who attended the meeting at Brough. The Working Group considered that although Helbeck was a small parish meeting, and there were concerns about its long term viability, it was currently functioning well, and had good communication with Brough Parish Council. The Working Group felt that there was no strong case and no public support for a merger between the two parishes and the Group recommended that a merger should not be pursued.

3.12 Hutton Parish Council / Greystoke Parish Council

- 3.12.1 Officers had attended Hutton Parish Council, Greystoke Parish Council, and a public meeting to which residents of Motherby had been invited. A number of consultation responses had also been received which were generally in support of moving Motherby into Hutton Parish Council as were the views expressed in the public meetings. .
- 3.12.2 Hutton Parish Council currently has an electorate of 285, with eight parish council seats (unwarded). The precept for a Band D property is £11.85. Greystoke Parish Council has an electorate of 627, split into four wards. Greystoke ward has an electorate 455 and has six parish councillors. Johnby ward has electorate of 65 with one parish councillor. Little Blencowe ward has an electorate 43, with one parish councillor. Motherby ward has electorate of 64 with one parish councillor. The current precept for a Band D property in Greystoke is £25.88.

3.12.3 The Working Group considered the consultation responses, and the results of the meeting with Motherby residents, and the weight of response from the residents of Motherby and the support of both of the parish councils, for Motherby to be moved being moved from Greystoke Parish Council to wholly be within Hutton Parish Council boundaries. The Working Group recommended that this proposal be approved thereby ensuring the parish and ward boundaries would therefore be coterminous.

3.13 Kirkby Thore Parish Council/Temple Sowerby Parish Council/Newbiggin Parish Meeting

3.13.1 Members considered the consultation responses from Temple Sowerby Parish Council and Newbiggin Parish Meeting regarding potential minor boundary changes. Given that the residents involved do not wish any changes to occur, the Working Group agreed that their recommendation should be for no change.

3.14 Murton Parish Council

3.14.1 Members considered the report of the officer who attended Murton Parish Council meeting and the consultation response which had been received from the clerk of the Parish Council. These responses and the meeting gave no support for any change to the name of the Parish Council. The Working Group recommended that a name change should not be pursued.

3.15 Ousby Parish Council

3.15.1 The Working Group heard from the officers who had attended both Ousby Parish Council meeting, and also the two public consultation meetings that had been set up, one in Melmerby village, one in Ousby village. They noted that there had been a relatively high level of response to the consultation, with some very indepth, and well considered responses.

3.15.2 Ousby Parish Council is split into two wards. Ousby ward has an electorate of 192, and Melmerby ward has an electorate of 189. The current precept for a Band D property within Ousby Parish Council is £48.60. Both wards currently have four parish council seats each, for a total of eight seats.

3.15.3 Members considered the numerous responses to the consultation in some depth, noting that there was support for both splitting the parish council, and some support for trying work out some solution that would enable the parish council to remain as one. The Working Group felt that there was far more support for the Parish Council splitting, and regretfully agreed that the recommendation put forward for Council be split into two separate parish councils based upon the current parish ward boundaries. Each new parish council would have five parish council seats, the current minimum requirement for a parish council.

3.16 Thrimby Parish Meeting/Little Strickland Parish Meeting/Great Strickland Parish Council

3.16.1 Members received an update from the officers who attended Great Strickland Parish Council, and a public meeting which had been held in Little Strickland.

3.16.2 Great Strickland Parish Council has an electorate of 200 and is unwarded. The current precept for a Band D property in Great Strickland is £23.45. Little

Strickland Parish Council has an electorate of 51, and a band D property attracts a precept of £16.38. Thrimby has an electorate of 21, and does not have a precept. Thrimby has not met as a Parish Meeting for a number of years.

- 3.16.3 The Working Group considered all the consultation responses that had been received. It noted that Little Strickland's preference was to merge Little Strickland and Thrimby. Great Strickland did not wish to merge with Little Strickland or Thrimby. It noted that the electorate of Thrimby, while invited to take part in the consultation, had chosen not to. The Working Group recommended that Thrimby Parish Meeting be merged with Little Strickland Parish meeting.

3.17 Penrith Town Council

- 3.17.1 Officers of Eden District Council sought to attend a Penrith Town Council meeting to explain the situation regarding the Community Governance Review. However, Penrith Town Council declined the invitation, stating that there was no scope within their standing orders for such a presentation.

- 3.17.2 Penrith Town Council looked to reduce the number of councillors from 19 to 15.

- 3.17.3 Members considered the consultation response received from Penrith Town Council, and agreed to recommend a reduction to the number of Penrith Town Council seats from 19 to 15.

- 3.18 If the recommendations within this report are approved the Deputy Chief Executive will proceed with making Orders in order to effect the changes approved by members.

4 Policy Framework

- 4.1 The Council has four corporate priorities which are:

- Decent Homes for All;
- Strong Economy, Rich Environment;
- Thriving Communities; and
- Quality Council

- 4.2 This report meets the corporate priority of Thriving Communities.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Full Council was consulted on the need to undertake a full Community Governance Review in Eden District on 7 September 2017. Members requested, amongst other matters, that a six-member Working Group be set up to advise the Deputy Chief Executive on recommendations to be made.

- 5.2 A first public consultation exercise was undertaken between Thursday 16 November 2017 and Friday 22 December 2017, enabling all parishes to discuss and respond to the consultation, as well as all members of the electorate within Eden District.

- 5.3 Full Council were appraised of the result of the first stage of consultation at their meeting on 15 February 2018, and they agreed to proceed with the second stage of consultation.

- 5.4 The second stage of consultation took place between 1 March 2018 and 31 May 2018. Officers visited all of the parish councils affected by the proposals made by Council during the period between March and May 2018, and encouraged responses from the parish councils and from members of the public.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial and Resources

- 6.1.1 Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the Council's stated priorities, as set out in its Council Plan 2015-19 as agreed at Council on 17 September 2015.
- 6.1.2 There is minimal budget provision for the Review to assist with postage costs and advertisements, otherwise it is anticipated that any other costs in respect of the Review will be found within existing budgets.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 Chapter 3 of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 devolves power to District Councils to undertake Community Governance Reviews.
- 6.2.2 The Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 4(1) and (3) requires that a Parish meeting must assemble annually between 1 March and 1 June (both inclusive) and it must meet on at least one other occasion in the year.
- 6.2.3 Guidance from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England states that 'reasonable periods' of consultation' should be built into any timetable for planning a Community Governance Review. Council agreed a timetable for processing the Community Governance Review, which is still being adhered to. This report is presented in line with the scheduled timescales.

6.3 Human Resources

- 6.3.1 There has been staff resource involved in undertaking the Review. However the extra workload has not incurred any additional staffing resources.

6.4 Statutory Considerations

Consideration:	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	Equalities implications were considered in the consultation methods and information was available in alternative formats.
Health, Social Environmental and Economic Impact	The social cohesion aspects of local communities must be considered within any Review. Any impacts should be positive arising from appropriate arrangements for Parishes and Town Councils within the District and has been considered as part of the Community Governance Review.

Crime and Disorder	The proposals within this report do not have any significant implications in terms of crime and disorder.
Children and Safeguarding	The proposals within this report do not have any significant implication in terms of children and safeguarding.

6.5 Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
Community Governance Review orders are delayed until late 2018	The Review would be delayed and may lead to challenges around timescales	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage process to ensure Review can be undertaken in accordance with the project plan. 2. Ensure support provided to parishes where appropriate.

7 Other Options Considered

- 7.1 To not pursue the Community Governance review any further at this stage. This is not recommended as this would not be in accordance with Government advice, and after undertaking two stages of consultation, it is apparent that a number of parishes wish to implement change.
- 7.2 Given how much time has been given to working on the two stages of consultation, finishing the Community Governance Review is strongly recommended.

8 Reasons for the Decision/Recommendation

- 8.1 To enable consideration to be given to the recommendations of the appointed Community Governance Review Working Group, and to enable members to consider their final recommendations.

Tracking Information

Governance Check	Date Considered
Chief Finance Officer (or Deputy)	3 July 2018
Monitoring Officer (or Deputy)	2 July 2018
Relevant Assistant Director	3 July 2018

Background Papers: Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and relevant Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

Appendices: None

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