

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL – TUESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2025



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| Title of Report | COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – TERMS OF REFERENCE | |
| Presented by | Councillor Nick Rushton Infrastructure Portfolio Holder | |
| Background Papers | Guidance on community governance reviews Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 Report and Motion to Council – 20 June 2023 | Public Report: Yes |
| Financial Implications | There are no financial implications at this stage of the review. The work during the first stage of the review will be carried out within the existing resources. | |
| | Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes | |
| Legal Implications | Should the Terms of Reference for the review not be agreed and published, then the Council will not be able to commence the review and have it completed in time for the 2027 elections. | |
| | Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes | |
| Staffing and Corporate Implications | There are no staffing or corporate implications at this time. | |
| | Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes | |
| Purpose of Report | To seek Council approval of the terms of reference for the Community Governance Review (CGR). | |
| Recommendations | THAT: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW BE APPROVED FOR PUBLICATION AND CONSULTATION; 2. AUTHORITY BE DELEGATED TO THE MONITORING OFFICER, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CHAIR OF THE ELECTORAL REVIEW WORKING PARTY, TO MAKE ANY CHANGES TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOLLOWING THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AND CONSIDERATION BY THE WORKING PARTY. | |

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At its meeting on 20 June 2023, Council agreed to carry out a Community Governance Review (CGR), in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, to consider the most suitable way of representing people living in the unparished areas of the district.
- 1.2 Government guidance states that it is good practice to conduct a full CGR at least every 10 to 15 years. As it is unclear as to when the last CGR was carried out for North West Leicestershire, Council agreed to review the current arrangements, along with the possibility of creating town/parish councils for the unparished areas of the district to ensure that the electoral arrangements of parishes (the warding arrangements and the allocations of councillors) are appropriate, equitable and understood by their electorate.
- 1.3 It was agreed that no such review would commence until the completion on the Local Government Boundary Commission of England's (LGBCE) electoral review of North West Leicestershire, but was to be started no later than November 2025. However, since then the Government's Devolution White Paper was issued with wide ranging implications for local government and its reorganisation. Following this, the Council was advised that the recommendations of the LGBCE would not be implemented.

2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND TIMETABLE

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the review are attached at appendix A of this report.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the principal council is required to draw up ToR for a CGR. As a minimum the ToR must specify the area under review and be published. There is no legal requirement to consult on the ToR, nor is there further direction in legislation as to what it should contain. Government guidance states "the government expects ToR to set out clearly the matters on which the community governance review is to focus".
- 2.3 At the beginning of the year, officers emailed all the Town and Parish Councils within the district advising them that the Council would be carrying out the review and giving them the opportunity to request any specific areas that they would like to be included as part of the review.
- 2.4 Following the contact a request was received from Ashby Town Council requesting the following areas be reviewed:
 - the warding arrangements of the parish, due to ongoing development.
 - the boundary between the parishes of Ashby de la Zouch and Packington.
 - both the number of Town Councillors and their distribution among the current seven wards and any new wards, should they be recommended, of the parish.
 - name of the parish of Ashby de la Zouch to include Blackfordby.
- 2.5 A request was also received from Ibstock Parish Council, that residents be consulted on the boundary of the Parish, with particular reference to the ward of Ellistown & Battram.
- 2.6 Due to a significant time period since the last CGR, the Terms of Reference for the review includes all of the Parish and Town Councils, especially those that adjoin the areas that are under specific review. It may become apparent through the review that minor boundary changes may be required should anomalies come to light. Should any anomaly come to light during the initial consultation period, proposals to rectify will be consulted upon at the draft recommendation stage.

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 In coming to its recommendations in the review, the Council will need to take account of the views of local people. The Act 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 and to take the representations that are received into account by judging them against the criteria in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 3.2 A full communications plan is being drafted inviting initial submissions and seeking views on the draft proposals.
- 3.3 Efforts will also be made to identify any other person or body who feels they may have an interest in the review and write to them inviting them to submit their views at both stages of consultation. This will include but not limited to:
- Ward Members
 - Parish Councillors
 - Tenants and Residents' Associations
 - Village Groups and Societies
 - Schools and Colleges
- 3.4 As required by Section 93 (8) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the District Council will notify Leicestershire County Council that a review is to be undertaken, provide them with a copy of the Terms of Reference for the review and will consult them on the matters under review.
- 3.5 All decisions taken in the review and the reasons for taking those decisions will be published and officers will work towards the Government's view that "Community Governance Reviews should be conducted transparently so that local people and other local stakeholders who may have an interest are made aware of the outcome of the decisions taken on them and the reasons behind these decisions".
- 3.6 In accordance with the Act, representations received in connection with the review will be taken into account, and steps will be taken to notify consultees of the outcome of the review by publishing them on the Council's website at www.nwleics.gov.uk, through general press releases, and placing key documents on public deposit at the Council Offices. Officers will communicate the final outcome of the review to the areas concerned by the review.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE INCLUDING FUTURE DECISIONS

- 4.1 The proposed timetable for the CGR is set out within the attached Terms of Reference.
- 4.2 Subject to approval, the Terms of Reference will be published on 5 November 2025 and the initial consultation will commence on 15 December 2025 and run for eight weeks. During this time the Working Party will meet to consider any matters that start to arise and draft recommendations.
- 4.3 The timetable proposes that a report be submitted to the Council meeting on 12 May 2026 setting out the results of the initial consultation stage and seeking approval to consult on any draft proposals for the creation of parish councils for the unparished areas of the district and amendments to the electoral arrangements for any of the existing town and parish councils.
- 4.4 The CGR should ideally be completed within 12 months of the publication of the Terms of Reference, and therefore the timetable also indicates that a report setting out any final

recommendations arising from the CGR would come back to full Council for consideration and approval in November 2026.

- 4.5 If approved by Council, the creation of the new civil parishes and associated Parish Councils for the unparished areas of the District and amendments to parish council boundaries and electoral arrangements to any of the existing town and parish councils would come into force at the next full parish council elections in May 2027.

| Policies and other considerations, as appropriate | |
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| Council Priorities: | Planning and regeneration Communities and housing Clean, green and Zero Carbon A well-run council |
| Policy Considerations: | Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. |
| Safeguarding: | The Council is required to publish all consultation responses that are received, but only names will be published. |
| Equalities/Diversity: | The consultation process will be accessible to all residents and stakeholders in the affected areas. |
| Customer Impact: | Generally, the provision of services closer to the client population will have positive impacts upon those in the local area, as those services are more dynamically tailored to their needs and those of the local area. |
| Economic and Social Impact: | None at this time. |
| Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon: | Consultation methods will be carefully considered to avoid paper consultation where possible, although this will still be available to those who require it. |
| Consultation/Community Engagement: | Consultations will be undertaken as part of all stages of the CGR process. |
| Risks: | Should a decision to commence the review not be taken, then the community governance arrangements for North West Leicestershire will remain as they are. |
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