

## **Addendum: Community Governance Reviews**

### **Further information on Community Governance Reviews**

Community governance reviews enable principal councils (i.e., Hart District Council) to assess and modify community governance in their areas. These reviews can be useful when there are changes in population or in response to specific local issues.

### **Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

The Guidance provides essential principles for local authorities to follow when conducting community governance reviews, emphasising the importance of local community input. The Guidance stresses that local community views are central to the review process.

- Parishes should reflect distinct communities with a sense of identity.
- The views of local communities and inhabitants are of central importance

### **What the review can change**

The review may consider one or more of the following options:

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- The naming of parishes and 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

### **Guidance and Criteria**

When assessing any suggestions we must consider both the:

- impact of the community governance arrangements on community cohesion
- size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish suggestion

We will also be required to ensure that community governance within the area under review would be:

- reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- effective and convenient

The Act requires specific criteria to be taken into account:

- The identities and interests of the community in an area; and
- The effective and convenient governance of the area.

Must also consider factors such as:

- What impact proposed community governance arrangements might have on community cohesion, and

- Whether the size (area), population and boundaries proposed for local governance make sense on the ground and contribute to the above criteria.

The guidance refers to people's sense of place and their historic attachment to areas.

### **Rewarding**

Must have regard to:

- The number of local government electors for the parish is high.
- Any changes to the number or distribution of local government voters are likely to occur within five years after the review begins.
- It is important to set clear and easily recognisable boundaries.
- Should consider any local connections that might be affected by establishing these boundaries.

### **Existing Parishes – retention, alteration and abolition**

A CGR must make one of the following recommendations in relation to each existing parish under review:

- The parish should not be abolished, and its area should not be altered.
- The area of the parish should be altered.
- The parish should be abolished.

The CGR must make recommendations as to whether or not the name of the parish should be changed.

The 2010 guidance states that there must be **clear, sustained and informed local support for abolition demonstrated over an eight-year period**.

In the absence of direct support from the respective parish council or evidence of sustained and informed local support for abolition demonstrated over an eight-year period, it is unlikely that the principal council will pursue the matter further.

### **Parishes - Grouping or de-grouping**

A CGR has the authority to suggest whether parish councils should be grouped or kept separate. Grouping parish councils involves several criteria to ensure effective and convenient local governance while maintaining community identities.

Some key points:

1. **Community Identity and Interests:** The grouping should respect the identities and interests of the local communities involved
2. **Effective Governance:** The arrangement should promote effective and convenient local government
3. **Size and Population:** Consideration of the size, population, and boundaries of the local communities or parishes

4. **Compatibility:** The grouping should be compatible with retaining community interests and not create artificially large units.