

Swindon Borough Council

Community Governance Review 2015

**Review of Community Governance Arrangements within the
Borough of Swindon**

(Draft) Terms of Reference and Timescale

Introduction

Swindon Borough Council is conducting a Review of Community Governance Arrangements within the Swindon Local Authority area in accordance with Part 4 Chapter 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

The Council is required to have regard to the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. This guidance was considered when drawing up these Terms of Reference (TOR).

What is a Community Governance review

It is a review that can take place for the whole or part of the Borough to consider one or more of the following:

- 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.

The Council is required to ensure that community governance within the area under review will be:

- Reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- Is effective and convenient.

In doing so the community governance review is required to take into account:

- The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- The size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

Why undertake this Community Governance review

The Council believes that parish councils play an important role in terms of community empowerment at the local level and wants to ensure that parish governance within the Borough continues to be robust, representative and enabled to meet new challenges. Furthermore, it wants to ensure that there is clarity and transparency to the areas that parish councils represent and that the electoral arrangements of parishes – the warding arrangements and the allocations of councillors – are appropriate, equitable and readily understood by their electorate.

This review is taking place partly due to a number of parish councils having asked for their electoral arrangements to be reviewed, including the number of parish councillors and their parish warding arrangements, and also having regard to a petition currently on-going for the creation of a new parish in an area that is currently parished.

Areas to be reviewed

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Bishopstone | Inglesham |
| Blunsdon St Andrew | Liddington |
| Castle Eaton | Nythe |
| Chisledon | South Marston |
| Covingham | Stratton St Margaret |
| Hannington | Stanton Fitzwarren |
| Haydon Wick | Wanborough |
| Highworth | Wroughton |
| | |
| All unparished areas of the Borough | |

Who will undertake the Review

The Borough Council is responsible for conducting a review within its electoral area. The Director of Law and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Corporate Governance Review Working Group, will be responsible for making both draft and final recommendations during the process. The Council will be required to approve the final recommendations prior to the Community Governance Order being made.

A full consultation process will form part of the Review to take full account of the views of local people.

Indicative Timetable for the review (*still being finalised*)

| Action | Timeline | Outline of Action |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Report to Cabinet / Council | October / November 2015 | Timescale and Terms of Reference approved |
| Commence Review | December 2015 | Council publishes Notice of the Review and notifies stakeholders |

| Action | Timeline | Outline of Action |
|---|---------------------------|--|
| Introductory stage – Meetings with stakeholders | December 2015 | |
| Stage 1 | January – March 2016 | Initial submissions invited |
| Stage 2 | April - June 2016 | Consider submissions. Prepare draft recommendations |
| Stage 3 | July – September 2016 | Draft recommendations published and comments sought |
| Stage 4 | September – November 2016 | Consider final submissions and prepare recommendations |
| Final recommendations | November – December 2016 | Publish Final recommendations |
| Implementation Order | November – December 2016 | Council to make Order |

Electorate forecasts for the Borough

This Review will be conducted using electoral data taken from the December 2015 electoral register.

Representations

Swindon Borough Council welcomes all representations from any person or body who may wish to comment or make proposals on any aspect of the matters under review

Representations should be addressed to; The Electoral Services Manager, Swindon Borough Council, Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, SN1 3JH. Representations may be delivered by email to elecereg@swindon.gov.uk or by fax to (01793) 463155.

All initial representations must be made by 31st March 2016 and the draft recommendations will be published by 1st July 2016.

This Review is deemed to have commenced on the date of this Notice

Stephen Taylor
Director of Law & Democratic Services