

**Public  
Key Decision – Yes**

## **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Title/Subject Matter:** Community Governance Review – Glatton and Conington Parishes

**Meeting/Date:** Corporate Governance Committee – 25th September 2024

**Executive Portfolio:** Councillor J Harvey – Executive Councillor for Governance and Democratic Services

**Report by:** Elections and Democratic Services Manager

**Ward(s) affected:** Stilton, Folksworth & Washingley

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### **Executive Summary:**

A Community Governance Review (CGR) can be undertaken by the principal council for the area (i.e. this Council) and is a review of the whole or part of the District to consider one or more of the following –

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- The naming of parishes and the style (i.e. whether to call it a town council or village council etc.) of new parishes;
- The electoral arrangements for parishes (including 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 legal framework within which principal councils must undertake these reviews is set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (as amended).

Glatton Parish Council have submitted a request for the Council to undertake a CGR to review the parish boundary between Glatton and Conington.

The Council has power under section 82 of the 2007 Act to undertake CGRs at any time.

### **Recommendation(s):**

The Committee is

### **RECOMMENDED**

**to consider the options to proceed as follows -**

- (a) to conduct a Community Governance Review as requested by Glatton Parish Council to alter the parish boundaries of Glatton parish and the neighbouring parish of Conington with Terms of Reference of the review and timetable for consultation to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee; or
- (b) to decline to instigate a Community Governance Review giving the reasons for decision.

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider a request from Glatton Parish Council to undertake a Community Governance Review to review the parish boundary between Glatton and Conington parishes.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On 17th April 2024 a request was received from Glatton Parish Council following a resolution at a meeting of the Parish Council on 1st March 2024 for Huntingdonshire District Council to review the parish boundary between Glatton and Conington. A copy of the letter is attached at Appendix A, which encompasses maps detailing the areas of land affected. The main reason for the review being sought is that the Parish Council has requested the change to the anomalous boundaries to reflect current local identities and facilitate effective neighbourhood plans.
- 2.2 An approach was made by Glatton Parish Council to Conington Parish Council at their meeting in November 2022 to consider the request and discussion at a further meeting held in November 2023 and have concluded at both meetings that they did not wish to make any changes to the existing arrangements.
- 2.3 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (“the Act”) provides for a principal council to conduct a review of the community governance arrangements for the whole or part of its area for the purpose of considering whether or not to make any changes to parish boundaries or size, and/or the creation of new parishes. Section 93 of the Act allows principal councils to decide how to undertake such a review, provided that they comply with the duties in the Act which apply to councils undertaking reviews. If, following a review, the Council decides that changes should be made to the parish boundaries; they may make an Order giving effect to the changes.
- 2.4 Section 93 also states that in reaching conclusions on the boundaries between parish wards the principal council should take account of community identity and interests in the area and consider whether any particular ties or linkages might be broken by the drawing of particular ward boundaries. Principal councils should seek views on such matters during the course of a CGR and seek sound and demonstrable evidence of such identities and linkage.

## **3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 3.1 The guidance states that when considering parish ward boundaries principal councils should ensure they consider the desirability of fixing boundaries which are, and will remain, easily identifiable, as well as taking into account any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries. A CGR offers an opportunity to put in place strong, clearly defined boundaries, tied to firm ground features, and remove anomalous parish boundaries.

- 3.2 While a principal council can undertake a CGR at its own discretion, the Act provides for local electors to petition the principal council to require a CGR to be conducted. This allows local communities the opportunity to compel principal councils to undertake a CGR where the principal council is not able to agree to an informal request. In this case, Glatton Parish Council is asking the Council to use its power under Section 82 of the Act. If the Committee is minded to agree to conduct a CGR, the Council is required to determine the Terms of Reference under which a CGR is to be undertaken. The Terms of Reference must clearly specify the area under review and must be published. The guidance states that “Ultimately, the recommendations made in a community governance review ought to bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services”.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The Council must consult all interested parties as part of a review and take into account any representations received. The review must be conducted having regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area reflects the identities and interests of the community, and the need to secure that community governance in that area is effective and convenient.
- 4.2 Under the 2007 Act a principal council is required to consult both those local government electors in the area under review, and others who appear to the principal council to have an interest in the review. Other bodies can include local businesses and local public and voluntary organisations. In areas for which there is both a district council and a county council the district council must notify the county council of their intention to undertake a Review and the Terms of Reference.
- 4.3 Conington Parish Council, the other parish affected, was contacted by Huntingdonshire District Council advising them of the request that had been submitted by Glatton Parish Council. Conington Parish Council responded and provided background to approach already made to them by Glatton Parish Council stating that it “preferred to respect the historical boundaries and maintain the status quo”. It further stated that the request had been made in the context of “asking Conington Parish Council its permission to include part of Conington parish within the scope of their Neighbourhood Plan”. A copy of the response from Conington Parish Council is attached at Appendix B.
- 4.4 The two parishes affected are currently part of Stilton, Folksworth and Washingley Ward and any changes would not affect District Council representation.
- 4.5 The Committee are reminded of the guidance in undertaking a CGR to provide the opportunity for principal councils to review and make changes to community governance within their areas to continue to reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government.

- 4.6 The Committee will need to consider whether Glatton Parish Council has given full and proper reasons in their request for a Review or if further information is needed. The guidance states that “principal councils should use their knowledge and awareness of local issues when deciding whether to undertake a review”.

## **5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

- 5.1 The undertaking of a Community Governance Review aligns with Priority 2: Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations set out in the Corporate Plan 2023 to 2028.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council has power under Section 82 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct CGRs. A CGR must be conducted in accordance with the requirements set out in Chapter 3 of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (as amended) and guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 100(4) of the 2007 Act. These requirements are highlighted in section 4 of this report.

## **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There will be an associated cost in conducting the Review based on Officer time in consulting interested parties before reporting back to this Committee with the consultation response. If a decision is made to commence a Review, Terms of Reference and timetable for consultation will be drafted for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee and Officers will work with both the relevant Parish Councils in consulting interested parties in the parishes.

## **8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

- 8.1 There is a requirement to keep community governance under review to ensure that it is reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient.
- 8.2 Glatton Parish Council considers a change of boundary is necessary. The District Council has discretion over whether or not to undertake a CGR. It may decide to proceed with a CGR in order to establish local opinion on the issue or decline to initiate a review due to the comments received from Conington Parish Council.

## **9. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

Appendix 1 – Glatton Parish Council 17th April 2024

Appendix 2 – Conington Parish Council 30th August 2024

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007  
Communities and Local Government Guidance on Community Governance  
Reviews March 2010](#)

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