



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Community Governance Review Working Group

1 February 2023

Report by Councillor Linda Wootten,
Cabinet Member for Corporate
Governance and Licensing

Community Governance Review for Grantham

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To report the outcome of the additional consultation exercise undertaken and consider the submission of a recommendation to Full Council.

Recommendations

That the Community Governance Review Working Group:

1. Notes the responses of the additional consultation process.
2. Recommends to Full Council that South Kesteven District Council progresses with a formal proposal to establish a Parish Council for Grantham based upon the following principles and commences with the second stage of formal consultation:
 - That the boundary for the new Parish Council for Grantham replicates the existing unparished area of Grantham
 - That the warding arrangements for the new Parish Council for Grantham replicate existing District Council Wards

3. **Considers and recommends to Full Council the size of the new Parish Council for Grantham in terms of the number of Councillors.**
4. **Agrees the revised timetable for the Community Governance Review.**

Decision Information	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Healthy and strong communities
Which wards are impacted?	All wards within and adjoining the unparished area of Grantham

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 A budget of £20,000 was approved as part of the 2022/23 budget setting to facilitate the Community Governance Review. Approximately £14,600 of this budget has been spent on the comprehensive consultation already undertaken. The remainder of this budget will need to support the final stage of formal consultation required as part of the Community Governance Review process.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Chief Finance Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 The Community Governance Review is being conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (the 2007 Act) and statutory guidance issued in 2010 by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- 1.3 Section 93 of the 2007 Act requires Councils to ensure that community governance within the area under review will be reflective of the identities and interests of the community in the area and be effective and convenient.

- 1.4 Where a review is conducted as a result of a community governance application or petition, section 93(8) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires the review to be completed within 12 months. This requirement does not however apply where a Council has taken the decision to undertake a review.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director of Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 Full Council, at its meeting on 26 May 2022, agreed in principle to the establishment of a Parish Council for Grantham, subject to undertaking further consultation with residents of neighbouring parishes and Parish Councils to consider its boundary.
- 2.2 The Community Governance Review Working Group met on 12 July 2022 and considered the further consultation necessary to contribute to the review. It agreed that further consultation should take place with those residents in the following parishes whose properties, through an anomaly as a result of a previous boundary review, are also located within the boundary of an existing Grantham District Council Ward:
- Belton and Manthorpe
 - Great Gonerby
 - Londonthorpe and Harrowby Without
- 2.3 The map at Appendix 1 highlights these particular areas.
- 2.4 The Working Group confirmed that the purpose of this additional consultation exercise was to seek views from those directly affected as to where a boundary for a potential Parish Council for Grantham should sit in the context of the existing unparished area and the location of the District Ward boundary.
- 2.5 The Working Group also agreed to consult with the three affected Parish Councils to ascertain their views as to where a boundary for a potential Parish Council for Grantham should sit with regard to their respective parishes.
- 2.6 A question and answer event was held for representatives of the three Parish Councils on 18 October 2022 further to which each Parish Council was asked to formally consider and provide a response in respect of the location of the boundary.
- 2.7 There were delays in the launch of the consultation and the ability for Parish Councils to consider this matter at public meetings due to the pre-election periods associated with District Council by-elections for seats in the Grantham area.

- 2.8 It should be noted that South Kesteven District Council only has the power to establish a new body as a Parish Council. Should the District Council agree to establish a new Parish Council for Grantham it would be the Parish Council which would need to decide whether or not to designate itself as a Town Council.

3. Key Considerations

Consultation with residents

- 3.1 The additional consultation with residents was targeted solely at those residents who live in the residential areas of Belton and Manthorpe, Great Gonerby and Londonthorpe and Harrowby Without whose properties are located in the areas highlighted in Appendix 1 where they are both in the respective parish but also within a Grantham District Council Ward.
- 3.2 Letters with a copy of the consultation document were hand delivered to all properties within the three areas affected on 28 November 2022. Three separate consultation documents were used, one for each area, and an example of this is attached at Appendix 2. An online version was also available for those residents to access.
- 3.3 The letters invited residents to two drop in sessions held between 2pm and 7pm as follows where they had an opportunity to ask questions and seek points of clarification on the process and question being asked prior to responding to the consultation document:

7 December – St John’s Church Hall, Manthorpe

8 December – Witham Place Communal Room, Grantham

- 3.4 A summary of the responses to each of the three consultation documents are set out in Appendices 3 and 4.
- 3.5 It is clear from the responses to the three consultation documents that the majority of respondents would prefer the boundary for a potential Parish Council for Grantham to retain the existing boundary of the unparished area of Grantham.

Consultation with Parish Councils

- 3.6 Further to the question and answer event held on 18 October 2022 for representatives of the three Parish Councils, the following responses have been received:

Belton and Manthorpe Parish Council

The following summary of comments from Parish Councillors were received from the Parish Clerk via email:

“There are 111 properties on the Manthorpe Estate that could go into a Grantham Town/Parish Council. If that does happen they will have their Council Tax greatly increased, as a precept for the Grantham Parish/Town Council will be a lot higher than they currently pay. That will also mean that the remaining properties in the Belton and Manthorpe Parish Council will also have to pay a higher Council Tax, as the Belton and Manthorpe Precept will be divided amongst fewer properties.

In the financial situation nationally we find ourselves in, and the cost of living crisis, the Parish Council believes that this is completely inappropriate to increase resident Council Tax, without any formal consultation or information given to the residents.

The 111 properties at present are able to use the Manthorpe Burial Ground at a reduced rate. If they are not part of the Belton and Manthorpe Parish Council area they will not be able to ‘claim’ the reduced rate. We believe that some residents have specifically moved to the area in question specifically to be able to use the Burial Ground.”

Great Gonerby Parish Council

The following comments were received from the Parish Clerk via email:

“The Parish Council can see the practical and logistical benefits of transferring the properties off Pennine Way to the proposed town council, however we would respect the views of those affected and surveyed.

The Parish would also need sufficient notice to review our precept requirements due to the reduced income.”

Londonthorpe and Harrowby Without Parish Council

A copy of a letter received from the Parish Clerk is attached at Appendix 5.

- 3.7 Taking into account the consultation responses from residents and the comments from Parish Councils, it is recommended that any boundary for a new Parish Council for Grantham reflects the boundary of the current unparished area of Grantham, maintaining the existing boundaries of those parishes on the periphery of the town of Grantham.

Number of Parish Councillors

- 3.8 The Local Government Act 1972, as amended, specifies that each Parish Council must have at least five Councillors. There is no maximum number.
- 3.9 Although there are no prescribed rules relating to the allocation of Councillors, the Department for Communities and Local Government guidance and reports of research by Aston Business School state that, typically, Parish Councils have the following number of Councillors based on the number of electors within the parish:

- Less than 500 electors – between 5 and 8 Councillors
- Between 501 and 2,500 electors – between 6 and 12 Councillors
- Between 2,501 and 10,000 electors – between 9 and 16 Councillors
- Between 10,001 and 20,000 electors – between 13 and 27 Councillors
- Over 20,000 electors – between 13 and 31 Councillors

3.10 Guidance published by the National Association of Local Councils suggests the number of Parish Councillors be allocated depending on the size of the population represented and that the practical maximum should be 25 Councillors for an area with over 23,000 electors.

Warding arrangements

3.11 The Working Group has previously agreed, in principle, that wards for a new Parish Council for Grantham should replicate the District Council Wards already in place.

3.12 Based upon the guidance of the National Association of Local Councils, as set out in paragraph 3.12, a warding arrangements option for a Town Council with 25 Councillors, based upon the current unparished area of Grantham, is set out below. This provides an average of 1,132 electors per Parish Councillor.

Ward	Current electorate (January 2023)	Number of Councillors
Arnoldfield	4,041	4
Barrowby Gate	3,856	3
Earlesfield	4,001	4
Harrowby	3,653	3
Springfield	3,925	3
St Vincent's	4,979	5
St Wulfram's	3,850	3
		25

3.13 The Community Governance Working Group is invited to consider the warding arrangements and number of Councillors associated with a new Parish Council for Grantham and make a recommendation to Full Council.

Revised timetable for the Community Governance Review

- 3.14 Subject to the Community Governance Review Working Group making a recommendation to Full Council that it progresses with a formal proposal to establish a Parish Council for Grantham, it is proposed that the following timetable also be recommended for approval:

Draft recommendations to Full Council for approval – 1 March 2023

Publication of draft proposals – March 2023

Consultation (Stage 2) on draft proposals – May 2023 (six weeks)

Consideration of stage two representations by Working Group – July/August 2023

Recommendation to Full Council – September 2023

If there is not positive support for the creation of a Parish Council following the stage 2 consultation process:

Recommendation to Full Council to end the process – September 2023

If there is positive support for the creation of a Parish Council following the stage 2 consultation process:

Final recommendations to Full Council for approval – September 2023

Order made by Council (if required) – September 2023

Elections to Grantham Parish Council – May 2024

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 To consider recommending a different boundary for a potential Parish Council for Grantham.
- 4.2 To consider alternative warding arrangements for a potential Parish Council for Grantham.
- 4.3 To consider an alternative number of Councillors for a potential Parish Council for Grantham.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 The recommendations take into account the responses received from the first comprehensive consultation process and the additional consultation undertaken with residents and Parish Councils.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 As set out in the body of the report.

7. Background Papers

7.1 Report to Full Council – 26 May 2022

<https://modern.gov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=261&MId=4131&Ver=4>

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Map of the existing unparished Grantham area boundary with neighbouring parishes

8.2 Appendix 2 – Example of consultation document

8.3 Appendix 3 – Report on consultation responses from residents

8.4 Appendix 4 – Free text comments from residents

8.5 Appendix 5 – Letter from Londonthorpe and Harrowby Without Parish Clerk