



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Council

1 March 2023

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

Community Governance Review for Grantham

Report Author

Graham Watts, Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer

 Graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To report the outcome of additional consultation exercise undertaken and consider recommendations from the Community Governance Review Working Group regarding the proposed creation of a Parish Council for Grantham.

Recommendations

That Full Council:

1. Notes the responses of the additional consultation process.
2. Formally proposes 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
 - That the size of the new Parish Council for Grantham consists of 22 Councillors, comprising 4 Councillors for St Vincent's Ward and 3 Councillors for all remaining Wards
3. Approves 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Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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 Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

2.1 Full Council, at its meeting on 26 May 2022, considered responses to the first formal consultation process that was undertaken to commence the Community Governance Review for Grantham. The report and associated appendices, together with the minutes from that meeting, can be viewed via the following link:

[Agenda for Council on Thursday, 26th May 2022, 1.00 pm \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/Agenda-for-Council-on-Thursday-26th-May-2022-1.00-pm)

2.2 The decision at that meeting was that Full Council 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.

2.3 The Community Governance Review Working Group met on 12 July 2022 and considered the further consultation necessary to contribute to the review following this decision by Full Council. The Working Group 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 undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, are also located within the boundary of an existing Grantham District Council Ward:

- Belton and Manthorpe
- Great Gonerby
- Londonthorpe and Harrowby Without

2.4 The map at **Appendix 1** to this report highlights these respective areas.

2.5 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.

2.6 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.

2.7 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 the location of the boundary and feed their respective responses back to the Working Group.

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 The Community Governance Review Working Group met on 1 February 2023 to review the results of this additional consultation process, further to which it formally agreed to submit the recommendations contained within this report to Full Council.
- 2.10 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 new 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 affected properties within the three areas on 28 November 2022. Three separate consultation documents were used, one for each area, and an example of this is attached to the report 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 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** attached to the report.
- 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 and Warding Arrangements

- 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.
- 3.11 The Working Group had 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 above referenced guidance and taking into account existing District Council Wards, the Working Group recommended the below warding arrangements option for a Parish Council consisting of 22 Councillors:

Ward	Current electorate (January 2023)	Number of Councillors
Arnoldfield	4,041	3
Barrowby Gate	3,856	3
Earlesfield	4,001	3
Harrowby	3,653	3
Springfield	3,925	3
St Vincent's	4,979	4
St Wulfram's	3,850	3
		22

Revised timetable for the Community Governance Review

- 3.13 The Working Group recommended that the below revised timetable for the Community Governance Review be approved by Full Council:

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 identifying 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 The public consultation undertaken as part of the Community Governance Review is set out in the report considered by Full Council on 26 May 2022 and the body of this report.

7. Background Papers

7.1 Report to Full Council – 26 May 2022:

[Agenda for Council on Thursday, 26th May 2022, 1.00 pm \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/Agenda/AgendaForCouncilOnThursday26thMay2022100pm)

7.2 Agendas packs and minutes of meetings of the Community Governance Review Group available on the South Kesteven District Council website:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=717&Year=0>

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