



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Council

23 November 2023

Report by Councillor Graham Jeal,
Chairman of the Community
Governance Review Working Group

Community Governance Review for Grantham

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To report the outcome of the second consultation stage of the Community Governance Review for the unparished area of Grantham following the Council's formal proposition to create a Parish Council for Grantham.

To report a formal recommendation from the Community Governance Review Working Group regarding the creation of a Parish Council for Grantham.

Recommendations

The Community Governance Review Working Group recommends that Full Council:

- 1. Notes the responses of the second stage of the consultation process associated with the Community Governance Review for Grantham.**
- 2. Approves the Order, at Appendix D of this report, to establish a Parish Council for Grantham based upon the following principles:**
 - 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, as outlined in Appendix A of this report**

- 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
 - That the first elections to the new Parish Council for Grantham be held on 2 May 2024
3. Sets a budget for the first year of the newly established Parish Council for Grantham of £46,010, to be precepted by South Kesteven District Council.
 4. Approves a one-off payment to the Parish Council for Grantham of any unallocated funds collected by South Kesteven District Council from Grantham Charter Trustee bank accounts upon the dissolution of the Grantham Charter Trustees.
 5. Allows the costs of running the first elections for the Parish Council for Grantham to be spread across the three years of its first term of office, prior to its next elections in May 2027.

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Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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 £16,000 of this budget has been spent so there is currently a forecast underspend of £4,000.
- 1.2 The District Council is required to provide a newly established Parish Council with a budget to cover the cost of running its first election which is scheduled to take place in May 2024 in order to elect the Councillors. This is projected to cost £34k.

- 1.3 The Community Governance Working Group has recommended that the cost of the elections be spread across the three years of the Parish Council's first term of office. The Working Group anticipates that underspent balances from the dissolved Grantham Charter Trustees would contribute to or cover the first year's element of the Parish Council elections costs. Paragraph 13 (5) of the Charter Trustees Regulations 1996 states that the annual calculation of the precept of the Charter Trustees should not exceed its budget requirement. Any balances or reserves should therefore be returned to South Kesteven District Council. The Working Group has requested that the District Council makes a one-off payment to the Parish Council for Grantham equal to any amount collected on this basis. This request was also made by the Grantham Charter Trustees at its meeting on 5 October 2023 to ensure the funds, precepted from the people of Grantham, can remain under the governance of the town under the new Parish Council.
- 1.4 The District Council is also required to set an operational budget in the new Parish Council's first year to enable the authority to function from May 2024 to March 2025. The Working Group has recommended a proposed budget of £46,010 for the first year of operation. This would represent an approximate charge of £4.07 per band D property for the first year. A precept will be raised by the District Council to cover this cost as part of annual budget setting process for 2024/25. This amount would replace the precept of £3.69 (2023/24 charge) for the Grantham Charter Trustees.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.5 The Community Governance Review has been 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 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.

- 1.8 A dispensation has been granted to those District Councillors who are also Grantham Charter Trustees, enabling them to fully participate in the debate and vote associated with this report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer

2. Community Governance Review Process

- 2.1 In carrying out the Community Governance Review, the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires the District Council to have regard to the identities and interest of the community. This means that Community Governance arrangements should reflect and be sufficiently representative of people living across the whole community. In addition, the Council is required to have regard to the results of the consultation.
- 2.2 Before making any recommendations or publishing draft proposals, the Council is required to take account of the views of local people and stakeholders and ensure that the proposals reflect the identities and interests of the community in the area and are effective and convenient.
- 2.3 If the review results in a recommendation to create a parish, the review must also make recommendations for the:
- name of the new parish;
 - boundary;
 - warding arrangements (the number of wards, boundaries and names of wards); and
 - number of councillors.

Name of Parish Council

- 2.4 It is not open to the District Council to designate an area as a Town Council. If a new council is created, it would initially be named as a Parish Council, e.g., Grantham Parish Council. Section 245 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides the adoption of the name of Town would be a matter for the new Parish Council to resolve, if one is created.
- 2.5 This report therefore refers throughout to “the Parish Council” or “the new Council” even though it is widely understood that any Parish Council for Grantham would choose to call itself a Town Council. It would then fall to the new Parish Council to resolve, under section 245(6) of the Local Government Act 1972, to have the status of a town and adopt the name of Town Council.

Boundary of any new Council

- 2.6 Also being considered as part of the review is the external boundary of any new Council and whether any changes should be made to boundaries with any of the neighbouring parishes. As mentioned at paragraph 2.2 above, any proposal for a future Parish Council should reflect the identities and interest of the community in the area.
- 2.7 Currently the boundaries of the existing District Council wards are not coterminous with the boundary of the unparished area of Grantham. Following the review of the electoral arrangements undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in 2015, three small areas from neighbouring parish areas were included within the Grantham District wards but remained within neighbouring Parish Council areas.
- 2.8 When drawing up parish boundaries, the Council must have regard to the existence of natural communities and at the same time, ensure that boundaries are easy to understand and rely on existing landscape features such as roads or rivers.

Warding arrangements

- 2.9 If it is proposed that a new Parish Council be established, the Council will need to decide whether it should be divided into wards for the purpose of electing councillors and the names of those wards.

Number of Councillors

- 2.10 If it is proposed that a new Parish Council is established, the Council is required to consider the number of Councillors for a new Parish Council. There is no legislative guidance relating to the number of Councillors with the exception that each Parish Council must have at least five Councillors. Guidance published by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) 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.
- 2.11 The Aston Business School also published research that typically Parish Councils have the following number of Councillors based on the number of electors in the parish:

Electors	Councillors
<500	5-8
501 – 2,500	6-12
2,501-10,000	9-16
10,001-20,000	13-27
>20,000	13-31

- 2.12 As of 1 September 2023, the electorate of the unparished area of Grantham was 28,297. This is the most up to date figure available due to the fact that the annual canvass has not yet reached its conclusion, with the revised Electoral Register due for publication on 1 December 2023.

3. Background to the Report

- 3.1 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:

[South Kesteven District Council - Agenda for Council on Thursday, 26th May 2022, 1.00 pm](#)

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

- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Further consultation was undertaken 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

- 3.4 The respective Parish Councils were also invited to contribute to this additional consultation exercise.

- 3.5 Responses to the additional consultation exercise were considered at Full Council on 1 March 2023 where, further to previous consideration on 26 May 2022 in respect of the first formal consultation, a decision was taken to make a formal proposition in respect of the unparished area of Grantham. The proposal was as follows:

That a Parish Council for Grantham be formally established, based upon the following principles:

- *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 (as set out in **Appendix A** to this report)*
- *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*

3.6 The report and associated appendices, together with the minutes from the meeting held on 1 March 2023, can be viewed via the following link:

[South Kesteven District Council - Agenda for Council on Wednesday, 1st March, 2023, 1.00 pm](#)

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=261&MId=4335&Ver=4>

3.7 The Council was required to undertake a second formal consultation on this proposal, which commenced on 1 July 2023 and ended on 7 August 2023.

3.8 The Community Governance Working Group considered the results of the second formal consultation on the Council's proposal at its meeting on 13 November 2023. Full Council is now invited to consider the consultation results.

3.9 Full details and documents associated with the Community Governance Review can be viewed on the Council's website at:

[Community Governance Review for Grantham | South Kesteven District Council](#)

<https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/elections-and-voting/community-governance-review-grantham>

3.10 A flowchart illustrating the different stages of the Community Governance Review process is attached to the report at **Appendix B**.

4. Key Considerations

Results of the second formal consultation exercise

4.1 The period of consultation ran for six weeks from 1 July 2023 to 7 August 2023.

4.2 The results of the consultation indicate clear support in favour of the Council's proposal.

- 4.3 Detailed analysis of the responses received to the survey during this period of consultation are included at **Appendix C**. The full responses together with all comments made by respondents are also available on the Council's website.

The South Kesteven District Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) (Grantham Parish) Order 2023

- 4.4 Taking into account the recommendations of the Community Governance Review Working Group, an Order has been produced and is attached to this report at **Appendix D**.
- 4.5 A leasehold arrangement currently exists between South Kesteven District Council and Grantham Charter Trustees regarding use of the Guildhall and the Mayor's Parlour. This lease is due to expire on 27 November 2024. It is proposed that this lease be transferred from Grantham Charter Trustees to Grantham Parish Council, which is reflected in the Order.
- 4.6 Included in the Order is a schedule of items and regalia proposed to be transferred to the new Parish Council for Grantham upon its establishment. These are items of significant monetary and civic value which have been donated to the people of Grantham through the Mayor of Grantham during respective terms of office. Liability for their insurance and safekeeping would also transfer to the new Parish Council.
- 4.7 Should South Kesteven District Council grant the Order to establish a Parish Council for Grantham, the new Parish Council will supersede the Grantham Charter Trustees which would automatically be disbanded. It is proposed in the Order that this takes effect from the commencement of the new financial year, 1 April 2024.
- 4.8 Full Council is invited to consider the content of the Order.

Budget for the first year of operation

- 4.9 The Community Governance Review Working Group considered a recommendation of the Grantham Charter Trustees and agreed to submit a formal recommendation to Full Council regarding the budget for the new Parish Council for Grantham, as follows:
- That a proposed precept of £43,000 plus 7% inflation (£3,010) making a total of £46,010 for the municipal year 2024/25 be set
 - That South Kesteven District Council be asked to spread the election costs for the initial elections over the three years of the first term of office of the new Parish Council
 - That South Kesteven District Council makes a one-off payment to the new Parish Council for Grantham equal to that of any balances returned to South Kesteven District Council from the Grantham Charter Trustees bank

account(s). This was further requested at the meeting of the Grantham Charter Trustees on 5 October 2023 to ensure these funds, having been precepted from the people of Grantham, can remain under the governance of the town under the Parish Council for Grantham.

- 4.10 The Working Group anticipates that sufficient funds will be included in balances returned to the District Council from the Grantham Charter Trustees bank account(s) to contribute to or cover the first year's element of election costs, which are estimated to be in the region of £11k - £12k.

Timetable for the Community Governance Review

- 4.11 The existing timetable for the Community Governance Review is as follows:

Consideration of stage two representations by Full Council – 23 November 2023
If there is not positive support for the creation of a Parish Council following the stage two consultation process, the process ends subject to any further consultation or information that may be requested. This will require amendments to the timetable.

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

- Order made by Council – 23 November 2023
- Elections to Grantham Parish Council – May 2024

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1 To consider identifying a different boundary for a potential Parish Council for Grantham.
- 5.2 To consider alternative warding arrangements for a potential Parish Council for Grantham.
- 5.3 To consider an alternative number of Councillors for a potential Parish Council for Grantham.
- 5.4 To consider an alternative budgetary arrangement for a potential Parish Council for Grantham.

6. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 6.1 The recommendations take into account the responses received from the first comprehensive consultation process and the additional consultation undertaken with residents and Parish Councils. They also reflect comprehensive consideration by the Community Governance Review Working Group.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 The public consultation undertaken as part of the Community Governance Review is comprehensively set out in the reports considered by Full Council on 26 May 2022 and 1 March 2023, as well as the body of this report and associated appendices.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Report to Full Council – 26 May 2022:

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

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

- 8.2 Agenda 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>

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix A – Map of the proposed boundary for the newly established Parish of Grantham, including proposed warding arrangements
- 9.2 Appendix B – Flowchart of Community Governance Review process
- 9.3 Appendix C – Report on the results of the second stage consultation process
- 9.4 Appendix D – The South Kesteven District Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) (Grantham Parish) Order 2023