

# **COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

## **Community Governance Review of the District Responses to the First Stage of Consultation 22 February 2018**

### **Report of Democratic Services Manager**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the responses received to the first stage of consultation process and agree what will be included in the Terms of Reference document.

**This report is public.**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) To agree the issues to be taken forward into the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review of the District.**
- (2) To decide on the method of consultation for the issues being taken forward for inclusion in the Terms of Reference.**
- (3) To decide on a method to agree the Terms of Reference for the Review (options are given in paragraph 3.0 of the report).**

#### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Council Business Committee considered the Community Governance Review (CGR) of the whole district at its meeting on 03 November 2016.
- 1.2 The Committee agreed a timetable for the review, the first stage being to commence publicising the project and an initial consultation with parishes and other interested parties. The aim of this first stage was to establish which particular issues need to be addressed during the review.

#### **2.0 Responses to the Consultation**

- 2.1 After consultation across the district, 23 responses have been received which are attached, in a summary table, at Appendix A to this report.
- 2.2 An officer comment has been included against each reply to indicate whether issues can be considered or not and officers will go through these with Members at the meeting to provide more information. Several of the comments received are outside the scope of a CGR review. Members will also note that many of the comments are not CGR issues. These tend to be

observations about the worth of parish councils in general or the operations and procedures at named parish councils.

### **3.0 Terms of Reference**

- 3.1 At the conclusion of this meeting when there is clarity about the issues being taken forward, a Terms of Reference document for the review will be drafted, to be approved by this Committee before the second stage of consultation commences.
- 3.2 The Committee has a meeting scheduled for Thursday 8 March 2018. Members are asked whether they would like to utilise that meeting to consider and agree Terms of Reference; whether they would prefer to agree the Terms of Reference document via email, or whether they would be happy to delegate approval of the Terms of Reference to the Chairman.

### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 Although a number of the responses will be noted rather than actioned, the process has demonstrated that there is an awareness and appreciation for the work of parish councils and parish meetings in this district, and on the whole they are working effectively in the communities they serve. There are also some issues which are outside the scope of the review, and those individuals and organisations that submitted those responses can now be advised on the most appropriate course of action.

#### **CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

None

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Chapter 3 of Part 4 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 devolved the power to take decisions about such matters such as the creation of parishes and their electoral arrangements to local government and local communities in England. Principal councils are required, by Section 100(4) of the 2007 Act, to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State when undertaking reviews and the guidance has been followed in the drafting of this report.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

An amount of £10,000 has been included in the 2017/2018 budget and £25,000 in the 2018/2019 budget in order to resource this project. There will be costs associated with carrying out the consultation which will be met from within the budget provision that has been allocated. If ultimately new parish arrangements are made, that would have implications for council tax setting as the new parish would have powers to precept, the same as others parishes within the district. Reaching a decision by October 2018 should allow sufficient time for council tax records to be updated prior to the release of the 2018/2019 charge notices. It is expected that the amendment of Council tax records could cost in the region of £15,000 and sufficient funding for this has been included within the budget allocation for 2018/2019.

**OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces:**

None

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comment to make.

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comment to make.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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**E-mail:** lvines@lancaster.gov.uk

**Ref:**

## APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF REPLIES

	Response	Officer comment
1	<p>I wish to be made aware of all meetings and consultations concerning the Community Governance Review of Silverdale Parish Council.</p> <p>The Silverdale Parish Council is an effective and valued body in the community so at this stage I wish it to be recorded that I consider Silverdale needs and wants a Parish Council.</p>	To be noted.
2	<p>Heysham Neighbourhood Council formally request the process of forming a Parish Council, to include the areas discussed with Lisa Vines, to be given consideration. We trust that this is all in order, please confirm receipt of this email.</p> <p>For clarity, the following polling districts would be included in the proposed Heysham Parish Council:</p> <p>HECA – Heysham Central No. 1            HECB – Heysham Central No. 2            HENC – Heysham North No. 3            HESA – Heysham South No. 1            HESB – Heysham South No. 2            OVEB – Overton (Heysham)</p> <p>These districts fill the gap (currently un-parished) between Middleton Parish (in the south) to Morecambe Town Council (in the north) and Heaton-with-Oxcliffe (in the east).</p>	<p>This can be progressed.</p> <p>Options for consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poll under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003 Section 116</li> <li>• Door to door consultation to gauge household (preferred)</li> </ul>
3	<p>I understand you are reviewing parish councils.</p> <p>My experience of living in Silverdale for several years is that the entire process is extremely undemocratic. My wife and I were unaware of the existence of the parish council, or how it was elected for several years. On one occasion at a normal national election we were handed a voting slip for the parish council with a list of several names and asked to vote. As we had no idea who any of them were, we didn't bother. That's the only time we have even known an election was taking place. In recent years I have become more involved in the community and once asked the then chair of the parish council how elections were advertised. He said a notice was put up in the library and seemed surprised that I didn't think this was adequate. There are at least a dozen different notice boards in the village, however as I rarely have a reason to visit the</p>	To be noted.

	<p>centre of the village I rarely read the notices on them.</p> <p>A major form of communication in this village is via the parish magazine, but as non church goers for many years we were unaware of its existence. We then found it was possible to pay to receive it, but it has taken several years of asking for us finally this year to start receiving it this year, having lived in the village for 17 years. The whole process is like something from a by-gone age. If the parish council wants to communicate with everyone in the village, not just a self selecting sample of retired people, then a mail shot to every house is the only way it can happen. It could also embrace modern technology more. It does maintain a good web site, but few people are likely to seek it out unless they already have a reason to so it needs something more proactive to get people to read it.</p>	
4	<p>I am concerned on 2 points. Firstly, you list 4 aims for the City Council in reviewing “arrangements” and then want a response by 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018 having written the letter on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017. This is Christmas and New Year period and hardly enables the improved community engagement, community cohesion, better local democracy and better services and leaves me very concerned that Lancaster City Council is up to something.</p> <p>Why? Because you then refer to whether residents want town and parish council? The number of councillors? Should there be wards (we have 2 for Carnforth Town Council in Crag and Carnforth)? Why is it important you know what issues (on governance) concern us? Perhaps you are unaware that that National Association of Local Councils policy is that the whole of England should be parished? Does the City Council see a greater role for itself or for Town/Parish Councils?</p> <p>I agree that a 5-week period could be long enough as a “early stage” but over this period of 5 weeks?! You then say “<u>only</u> those raised with us by the deadline will be taken to the next stage” – how on earth can we do justice to a review if this is such an important matter?</p> <p>Is this about elections or true governance, so why are you heading it up? I do not wish to appear rude but I think as a Town Councillor I am entitled to ask such scrutiny questions and perhaps there</p>	To be noted.

	<p>is a Council or Cabinet agenda paper to which you could refer me? Any documentation referring to this review would be helpful.</p> <p>In the meantime I suggest a 5-week delay to this and undertake it (if necessary, and appropriate) in January/February 2018 perhaps with a workshop for Town &amp; Parish Councillors as the early stage?</p> <p>Further reply: Thank you Lisa, no problem with any delay, I have no doubt that you are doing as instructed and I do hope you realise there is absolutely no criticism of you personally. I just wonder why CBC think that Parish Councillors, who do their job totally without any remuneration, have time at this time of year to worry about this when their Parishes have other things to think about? Do they not realise we have full agenda's too? Rhetorical questions!</p> <p>However thank you for your reply. We meet tomorrow evening (with a Budget agenda!!) and will no doubt deal with your letter.</p>	
5	<p>I'm in favour of keeping the parish Council in Caton with Littledale.</p> <p>I feel out villages need a parish council. As living in a rural area LCC tend to forget our small villages, to given an example Caton was affected by the floods this year. Our village need someone to turn to, to help them. We are the first point of call if there is anything wrong in the village. We can keep the village informed a lot more efficiently and quickly if needed.</p>	To be noted.
6	<p>I am responding to the request for submissions at this early stage of the Community Governance Review. I cannot pretend to know what is the impetus for this Review, or its likely scope and directions, but thought I would like to submit a point of view.</p> <p>I am "a member" of the Mourholme Local History Society – which covers the area of Carnforth, Warton, Silverdale, the Yealands, Borwick and Priest Hutton. I live in Silverdale, so have most experience of this Parish Council, but would expect other PCs to have similar roles.</p> <p>My concern regards the importance of a PC having a watchful eye on the built heritage of its parish. I am aware that City Council has a prime</p>	To be noted.

	<p>responsibility for protection of historic buildings – particularly those that have a Grade Listed status. But the Parish Council also has a responsibility here. For example, in the recent past the Silverdale PC drew up a list of important historic buildings and built features – the Historic Asset Register (which was forwarded on to the City Council I believe). Only their close knowledge of the village could enable its completion I would suggest.</p> <p>The Silverdale PC also has some direct responsibilities – under a charitable status they own and maintain the historic wells of Silverdale – a fascinating piece of history that explains how the village has shaped its growth over time (piped water only came here in 1938). The wells range from little more than a spring, to a handpump, to a large complex of stone troughs and basins used for both livestock and human consumption (Woodwell in particular).</p> <p>Their input into planning applications can also include important balanced views of the built heritage that might be affected by any particular plan. Again, I suggest a Parish Council can take a more balanced perspective on such an issue than, say, an affected neighbour.</p> <p>I do hope matters of the close oversight of the built heritage of a parish will be given proper consideration.</p>	
7	<p>I feel our Parish is too large to be of service to North Quernmore. The signs for Quernmore Parish are rotting on the street and the Parish Council itself is based in Quernmore. There are no people on the Parish Council I joined once but they weren't interested in North Quernmore so I left. They do not spend money here. Only in the village of Quernmore.</p> <p>It would be more productive to have a North Quernmore Parish.</p>	<p>To be noted.</p> <p>Write to Chair of Parish Council asking whether view of a split into two Parishes is shared Quernmore Parish Council and provide information on CGR by petition.</p>
8	<p>I am a councillor on Caton-with-Littledale PC. Our Parish Clerk informed us about the Community Governance Review at our December meeting. The PC decided to suggest that councillors respond as individuals at this stage, and we will consider any proposals from Lancaster City Council collectively in due course.</p> <p>So these are my personal thoughts on the community governance review.</p>	<p>To be noted.</p> <p>Write to Chair of Parish Council asking whether issue of a reduction in the number of Councillors from 12 has merit to be taken forward and provide information on CGR by petition.</p>

Caton-with-Littledale is a large village and has had a parish council since (I think) 1899. 12 councillors may be elected. It has been many years since there has been a need for an election to the PC, and currently we are under strength. We may try to co-opt more councillors later this year. I served two years as Chair until May 2017; it is our custom and practice to stand down after two years in post and at present we have no Chair as no-one was willing to serve so chairing meetings rotates among the councillors. We meet monthly (apart from August) and meetings are publicised through the village bulletin The Link, noticeboards, Lancaster Guardian, village website and Facebook. We employ a Parish Clerk for 14 hours a week.

The PC uses its funds to support our community centre (Victoria Institute), maintain the Play Park, pay for grass-cutting and the upkeep of the War Memorial and some planters in the village. It provides small grants for a range of village organisations such as the Scouts and Twinning Group. We maintain two car parks in the centre of the village. The Parish Council maintains a public toilet in the village, and carries out minor repair and maintenance projects throughout the village. We are planning to install bike racks near our Post Office/convenience store. The PC contributes to road safety by deploying a Speed Indicator Device (SPID) around the village. The PC also provides and erects the Christmas Tree each year. The Parish Council funds the village website. We adopted an Emergency Plan in 2016 and are working on a Neighbourhood Plan for our parish. The PC has reported on the damage caused by the November 2017 floods in our village. The only ceremonial function the PC carries out is to present a wreath and read the names of the Fallen at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

For the future, I do not see any advantage in splitting our PC to cover smaller areas. Although our parish is made up of four settlements (Caton, Brookhouse, Littledale, Caton Green) it is a reasonably coherent unit as it is. It may be that we should have fewer councillors. Attracting new councillors is difficult and we particularly need people of working age. Funds for training are available, and we have had training from LALC for the PC as a whole. I've been to some LALC training sessions too, but feel that more locally-provided training could be beneficial.



9	<p>I wish to respond to this Review: The last time a Review of this kind took place, I regard the Result as completely disastrous in its effect on the composition of Ellel Parish Council. This Parish is divided into three Wards, Ellel South, Ellel North, and University.</p> <p>The Division, with number of Councillors, was formerly, as follows:-  Ellel South. (Dolphinholme, north of the River Wyre, to south Galgate, and including appropriate rural area). Four (4) Councillors.  Ellel North. (Most of Galgate, plus some rural.) Four (4) Councillors.  University. Not the whole University, but that area, largely into which University had expanded southwards. One (1) Councillor.</p> <p>I think that only once, in the last twenty years or so, was the University seat filled by election. This was when a candidate was nominated by a Political party, and was standing (with a political label) for election as a City councillor. He was unsuccessful for the latter, and whilst returned unopposed as a Parish Councillor, attended only one Meeting, made no further contact, and the position was subsequently filled by co-option of someone with no connection with University, either as a resident or as a member.</p> <p>Reflecting the further expansion of Lancaster University (Alexandra Park), this changed after the last Review, and the composition is now as follows.</p> <p>Ellel South, two (2) Councillors.  Ellel North, three (3) Councillors.  University, four (4) Councillors.</p> <p>Predictably, no nominations were received for University Ward. Parish Councils are usually (but not always) of a village and Rural flavour, and a University is inward looking, everything provided, and with a transient population. At the last Election, three councillors were elected (unopposed) for Ellel North, and two (from a Field of four) for Ellel South. So, the unsuccessful candidates, together with those who had not even submitted Nomination papers, were co-opted. This caused, as you may imagine, some hilarity locally. I mention, in passing, that I was a successful candidate in Ellel South, so, no sour grapes!</p>	<p>To be noted.</p> <p>Advice can be provided by the election manager on nomination processes.</p>

	<p>I have no criticism of the quality of the composition as such: as practical and business-like individuals they are ideally qualified for care of assets (recreation and sporting facilities), and Stewardship of funding. It is probable that there will be no collective objection from Ellel Council to the present arrangement, since it enhances the sum obtained from Precept, and enables us, as Statutory Consultees, to comment on Planning applications. (Not that the latter has been of any value in the past!)</p> <p>I stress that although a Member of the Council, I submit this as an individual, and not as an official or even collegiate view. I simply feel that what has happened is inappropriate in what is the first tier of Local Government.</p>	
10	<p>I reply to your invite to comment on the Community Governance Review.</p> <p>I believe that Parish Councils serve a vital role in adding 'local knowledge' to City Councils decision making.</p> <p>Credence must be given to those who live local to the area and have primary evidence to contribute.</p> <p>All planning decisions in AONB's, should in my opinion, be subject to a visit by a Planner and a member of the local Parish Council - so that both parties can put forward their views ON SITE.</p> <p>I commend the 'joined up thinking' on the recent Development Plan in the Arnsdale and Silverdale AONB.</p> <p>This showed that 'boundary' lines should not be a major problem when discussing things that effect people either side of an imaginary line - Highway issues, Planning issues, Tourism issues should all be discussed by 'joint' Council groups.</p> <p>This would especially, make sense when working on highway problems - surely pooling resources would make better economic sense eg; when gritting roads.</p> <p>I believe that it would make better economic sense to allow Parish Councils to manage their own budgets for Highways. They know what is needed and could 'source' cheaper Contractors locally.</p> <p>I know this is a County issue but the principle is the same.</p> <p>Thank you very much for the opportunity to air my</p>	To be noted.

	views.	
11	Yealand Conyers Parish Council would like to respond to this consultation. We wonder whether a larger 'ward' would be more appropriate in the future. Many of the statutory costs for the smaller parish Councils are duplicated, but we work together on many issues. It may be more cost efficient to employ a Clerk who works more hours but serves a larger area There is also the difficulty in attracting enough new Councillors when there is only a small pool of willing residents.	Refer also to response 21.  Two parishes can be merged into one, retaining two wards (Redmayne and Conyers) using the existing boundaries and polling districts (WARB and SILB).  Consultation by letter is proposed due to the rural nature of the area and the number of properties involved (266).
12	The area that I wish to bring forward to the review concerns the difficulty of having Caton with Littledale parish council being held accountable for there poor and wrong decision making. There seems to be no redress when they as a group make mistakes that impact on members of the parish and place persons at risk. The majority of the parish councillors are opted on members. There does not seem to be a higher pathway to bring concerns of poor decision making by members of Caton with Littledale parish council other than bringing the issue back to the same members who have made the wrong decision in the first place.	To be noted.
13	In response to your letters of 7 and 20 December 2017, the unanimous views of Melling-with-Wrayton Parish council are as follows  Parish Boundaries There are small historical anomalies in the boundary lines between Melling-with-Wrayton and Cantsfield, and Melling-with-Wrayton and Arkholme, but we are happy to leave things as they are.  Electoral arrangements We are happy with the present arrangements.  Parishes and wards Although the village of Melling and the hamlet of Wrayton are geographically distinct we are happy with the present arrangement whereby Melling-with-Wrayton is a unitary parish under a common parish council.	To be noted.
14	I've seen some of the communications regarding	To be noted and advised

	<p>the Parish Review.</p> <p>I don't know if it's relevant but I would like to comment that it is incredibly frustrating, having my home village of Dolphinholme, entirely split in two between the Lancaster District and Wyre Districts. Half of Dolphinholme have one set of bins, the other a different ... and so on.</p> <p>It seems inefficient and confusing at best.</p> <p>If there was an opportunity for this to be reviewed, so that the village, as one, belongs to either one District or another, it would be a great improvement!</p>	<p>that this is outside the scope of the CGR and would have to be raised with the LGBCE as part of a future boundary review.</p>
15	<p>Hornby with Farleton Parish Council have no issues to raise as part of this review.</p> <p>Councillors of Hornby with Farleton Parish Council would like it noting that they are happy to stay as they are.</p>	<p>To be noted.</p>
16	<p>The answer I got from Cockerham Parish Council was "how to get more parish councillors – we are struggling to find people. It we don't get people the parish council might not be viable".</p>	<p>To be noted.</p> <p>Write to Chair of Parish Council asking whether issue of a reduction in the number of Councillors from 7 has merit to be taken forward and provide information on CGR by petition.</p>
17	<p>Carnforth Town Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on Lancaster City Council's proposed community governance review.</p> <p>Carnforth has a long and proud history of self-governance predating local government reorganisation in 1974. Although your review would appear to be concerned only with such mundane matters as boundaries and electoral arrangements, we would request that the review be widened to consider other long-term, more strategic issues facing local government in this area.</p> <p>Given the financial pressures facing the upper two tiers of local government in Lancashire, we believe there is scope for parish councils to play an enhanced role in the provision of local services. Carnforth Town Council is therefore</p>	<p>To be noted.</p> <p>Write to advise that not within the scope of this CGR.</p>

	<p>keen to explore ways in which its powers and responsibilities might be extended to the advantage of the residents it serves. The Town Council is in a unique position of being closer to its residents than either the City or County Council and could, if properly supported by these larger organisations, develop the huge potential its position provides.</p>	
18	<p>After discussion of the Community Governance Review by Slyne with Hest Parish Council the following comments have been made:  The Council strongly favours the retention of parish councils in the present form as being in touch with the local community, the first tier of local democracy and providing key front-line services.  This Council favours more opportunity being given to parish councils rather than less to act at a local level to provide services.  On a physical basis the Council does not wish to see the coalescence of this parish with neighbouring ones due to changes in parish boundaries or building and development but to retain Green Belt and other spaces between parishes.  The Council believes that parish councils should retain their individuality rather than being grouped into a body. In general each parish has its own character and distinct issues to be dealt with, councillors are in touch with the electorate and often matters can best be dealt with at a local level. Formal or informal contact can be made with other parishes as and when this is considered appropriate or necessary. This should not preclude co-operation between parishes on wider ranging issues.</p>	To be noted.
19	<p>Hello. At the January meeting of the Parish Council, Members discussed in some detail whether they considered that current arrangements for parish councils are fit for purpose or could be improved.</p> <p>There was a general feeling that engagement in the local community, whilst improving, needs further development as the Parish Council's achievements, its duties and responsibilities and its governance arrangements are largely unknown, unsupported and unchallenged. This is something that the Parish Council will address themselves to a large degree through social media, Newsletters and encouraging residents to attend and be vocal at our meetings.</p> <p>In terms of the wider governance arrangements it</p>	<p>Change of name to be taken forward.</p> <p>Proposal to write to all properties within the current Thurnham Parish Council area (polling district ELLG – 294 properties) due to the rural and far reaching nature of the Parish boundary.</p>

	<p>was felt that this is currently adequate and only wished to make the comment that they would like the name of the Parish Council amending to Glasson and Thurnham Parish Council.</p>	
20	<p>Thank you for your letter dated 20th December regarding the forthcoming Community Governance Review.</p> <p>Morecambe Town Council considered the matter at its meeting held on 18th January 2018 and asked me to forward the following response to you.</p> <p>Since the last Boundary Review, the Town Council has been concerned at the creation of the three wards named Lowlands Road Lune Drive, and Out Moss Lane as they are very small in terms of electorate numbers. The Town Council understood that one of the aims of the last Boundary Review was to seek to more evenly distribute the number of electors that each councillor represented. In the opinion of the Council the current arrangements do not make sense, with one Councillor (Lune Drive) representing less than 150 people, whilst in our largest ward (Harbour) each Councillor represents 1,100 electors, and in Bare South East, where there is one Councillor, the current electorate is 1,303. This creates an uneven distribution of workload amongst Councillors. Therefore, the Town Council requests the following changes to be made to its electoral arrangements, to improve Councillor Elector ratios, and thus spreading more evenly the workload of all 26 elected members of Morecambe Town Council:</p> <p>(1) The Town Council to continue with 26 elected members;</p> <p>(2) The three small wards of Lowlands Road, Lune Drive and Out Moss Lane to be merged into larger wards on the basis that this would even out the average number of electors that each Town Councillor represented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowlands Road into Westgate;</li> <li>• Lune Drive into Torrisholme; and</li> <li>• Out Moss Lane into Poulton</li> </ul> <p>The Town Council believes that the requested merges are geographically appropriate given the current existing ward boundaries of the other 8 Town Council wards and the local communities within the town. The Town Council suggests that</p>	<p>Morecambe Town Council to be advised that the issues raised in their response cannot be taken forward as part of a CGR.</p> <p>Although there is validity in their suggestions, these are issues that need to be raised with the LGBCE as part of a boundary review. As the last review was effective from 01 December 2014, no further changes can be made for at least 5 years.</p> <p>Morecambe Town Council can raise this issues directly with the LGBCE after 01 December 2019.</p>

	<p>following the merges, the number of Councillors for each of the Poulton, Torrisholme and Westgate wards is increased by one.</p> <p>(3) If the proposed changes in (2) above were made the new ward structure of the Town Council and numbers of Councillors per ward would be as set out below (based on Electorate figures provided by the Electoral Registration Officer on 18th January 2018)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ward</th> <th>Electorate</th> <th>No. Of Cllrs</th> <th>Ratio</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bare North</td> <td>3,089</td> <td>3</td> <td>1:1030</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bare S East</td> <td>1,303</td> <td>1</td> <td>1:1303</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bare S West</td> <td>1,274</td> <td>1</td> <td>1:1274</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Harbour</td> <td>5,502</td> <td>5</td> <td>1:1100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Heysham N</td> <td>2,737</td> <td>3</td> <td>1:912</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Poulton</td> <td>3,844</td> <td>4</td> <td>1:961</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Torrisholme</td> <td>3,822</td> <td>4</td> <td>1:956</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Westgate</td> <td>4,679</td> <td>5</td> <td>1:936</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Totals</td> <td>26,250</td> <td>26</td> <td>1:1010</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>(4) The Westgate ward to be renamed Westgate and Lancaster Road to reflect the actual area of town it covers.</p> <p>I trust that you consider the views and requests of the Town Council favourably during the Review.</p>	Ward	Electorate	No. Of Cllrs	Ratio	Bare North	3,089	3	1:1030	Bare S East	1,303	1	1:1303	Bare S West	1,274	1	1:1274	Harbour	5,502	5	1:1100	Heysham N	2,737	3	1:912	Poulton	3,844	4	1:961	Torrisholme	3,822	4	1:956	Westgate	4,679	5	1:936	Totals	26,250	26	1:1010	
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Westgate	4,679	5	1:936																																							
Totals	26,250	26	1:1010																																							
21	<p>In response to your request , the Parish Council of Yealand Redmayne wish to suggest that the smaller Parishes of Yealand Redmayne and Yealand Conyers be merged, to save time, money and admin. Both parishes have the same issues.</p> <p>Also consideration could be given the reduction of Councillors throughout Lancashire ? 60 seems a high number and there must be some cost savings to be made - economies of scale - if the number were reduced.</p>	<p>Refer also to response 11.</p> <p>Two parishes can be merged into one, retaining two wards (Redmayne and Conyers) using the existing boundaries and polling districts (WARB and SILB).</p> <p>Consultation by letter is proposed due to the rural nature of the area and the number of properties involved (266).</p> <p>Parish Council to be advised that the issue of the number of Councillors on other bodies such as Lancashire County Council is an issue for LGBCE and is outside the scope of this review.</p>																																								
22	<p>Hello. At the January meeting of the Parish Council, Members discussed in some detail</p>	<p>To be noted.</p>																																								

	<p>whether they considered that current arrangements for parish councils are fit for purpose or could be improved.</p> <p>There was a general feeling that governance arrangements are currently adequate and are not in need of wholesale change. Members did wish to take this opportunity, however, to ask that consideration be given to involving Parish Council's at an early stage of the planning process so that they and the developers/planners get an opportunity to air and understand the others views.</p> <p>Members are aware that parish council's are given such an opportunity at Level 3 of the pre-application process but there was a general feeling that there would be many benefits to be gained from being involved even earlier.</p>	<p>The comment on involvement of parish councils in planning processes will be passed to colleagues in Regeneration and Planning.</p>
23	<p>Hello. At the January meeting of the Parish Council, Members discussed in some detail whether they considered that current arrangements for parish councils are fit for purpose or could be improved.</p> <p>There was a general feeling that the Parish Council is happy with its governance arrangements it was felt that these are currently adequate and do not need to be changed or improved.</p>	<p>To be noted.</p>
24	<p>Further to the request for community involvement in the above review, I am responding to the piece in the Lancaster Guardian recently and to an item of interest mentioned in the Thurnham Parish Council meeting this month.</p> <p>As a resident of the Parish and also Chair/Secretary of Glasson Action Partnership, a voluntary group in Glasson Dock, I consider that the governance of parish councils is essential -- a local source of influence for issues to be discussed and responded to and if necessary forwarded to the next tier of local government for action.</p> <p>I also consider that the work of the parish councils in this regard is not appreciated by the community they serve. The apathy may well be caused by lack of knowledge as to the role and 'education' may help. A local election is rarely held and willing individuals sought by the incumbent parish councillors when a vacancy</p>	<p>Response to be noted.</p> <p>Please also see response at number 19 relating to the proposal to change the name of the Parish Council.</p> <p>Letter to be sent with appropriate contact for Lancashire County Council relating to the Parish Champion.</p>



	<p>arises. The effect of this is that 'it goes on without us' mentality. There is also a cost to the parish of holding an election.</p> <p>I understand there is a County Councillor who has a special responsibility for Parish Councils - a Parish Champion with power to act at a different level to the local Council. What is this role and expectations?</p> <p>I regularly attend Thurnham Parish Council meetings so I am aware of the work and dedication of our Councillors. I have over many years picked up the response from Councillors that they are not listened to by the next tier upwards and concerns not responded to or acted upon particularly planning issues: their work/concerns being of no consequence.</p> <p>In view of a letter which is signed by yourself, I do not think my comments above address the list of issues contained, but would not want to lose my Parish Council nor to find it amalgamated with any others as this would inevitably restrict the agenda items being discussed within a time frame and dilute the possibility of action.</p> <p>Glasson Dock is included in Thurnham Parish Council and may be could/should be included in the title. You will note I have included a copy of this email to Thurnham Parish Council for information.</p>	
25	<p>I'd like to make a brief contribution to the community governance review. My interest in this review is particularly prompted by two things – having watched Fleetwood Town Council save its local museum after the county council withdrew from funding it, and having working with a number of parish council's around flooding issues.</p> <p>I am currently the county councillor for Lancaster South East an area that is both parished and unparished. As you will be aware a significant number of houses flooded in the Newlands/Bowerham/Hala area in November 2017, primarily although not only because Burrow Beck broke its banks.</p> <p>When I attended the Halton flood meeting it was clear that the parish council was leading work on understanding and responding to the flood event</p>	To be noted.

	<p>there. When we got to our own flood meet I keenly felt the absence of a parish council to lead on work in our area. I volunteered at that meeting to try to co-ordinate some work, but it is proving to be slow going and needs building from the ground up, rather than being incorporated into the ongoing programme of work of a parish council.</p> <p>There are also other areas of my division where a parish council or similar could be very useful. Along with City Councillors James Leyshon and Anne Whitehead we hold regular street cleans and litter picks – both are activities that in other parts of the county would be organised and supported by parish councils, and of course parish councils often spend some of their precept on things like street maintenance and general beautification of the area. This work is certainly work residents would like to see undertaken.</p> <p>I am aware that the establishment of new parish council's might lead to extra costs for residents. However, I would hope that Lancaster City Council's current rates relief policies would extend to any new parish precepts and thus those who could least afford extra costs would be protected.</p>	
26	<p>I am a great believer in devolved government in principle, but I believe that Ellel Parish Council is a text book example of how the theory and reality of local democracy do not always match as well as they might. I do not know what the answer is (I have no desire myself to become a parish councillor) but I do think it is worth drawing attention to some of the issues so that these may be considered in deciding what changes, if any, should be made.</p> <p>I should add that I do think our parish councillors take their roles seriously and work hard. I simply question whether the structures currently in place really benefit the community as they should. At fault in my view, are 1) the composition of the parish, 2) a considerable degree of apathy or resignation amongst the community, and 3) a certain sense of entitlement and lack of democratic impulse amongst the council members themselves (which may well be an institutional failing, rather than an individual one) For example, I only found out about this consultation when I saw a fellow resident refer on Facebook to the extension of the deadline. The</p>	To be noted.

Parish Council itself made little, if any, effort, as far as I am aware, to raise awareness of the consultation or encourage residents to take part. I am involved in producing a very inclusive non-partisan village magazine (originally at the behest of the Parish Council), yet no one from the Council draw this to our attention or posted anything on social media. When it was posted on social media by a resident, one councillor commented cynically that while people could take part if they wanted to, it would only be ignored anyway.

Similarly, when a resignation recently meant there was a vacancy on the council, no use was made of the village magazine or local social media in trying to find a suitable person to co-opt. I only found out about this by chance when I look at the Parish Council website – a website, incidentally, which is notoriously out of date when it comes to looking for meeting minutes and agendas. I very much doubt whether the website has anywhere near the level of traffic required to make it an effective instrument of PC public relations.

Ellel Parish Council area now comprises a large village (with only a semi-rural character), a small village, part of a University and the surrounding rural area.

The council is dominated by people from the smaller village (Dolphinholme) and the rural hinterland. Whilst I do not allege that the council has no interest in the larger village, it is nonetheless a problem, in my opinion, that there is such poor direct representation of that community.

A particular concern of mine is that the council dismissed out of hand – despite urgings from the former MP – the possibility of even exploring the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Galgate, yet only a few months later agreed to support a Neighbourhood Plan for Dolphinholme, where several of its members reside. The irony is that had Galgate not been a parished area, a community group could have been formed and spent the last two or three years engaging with the local authority and others on a subject that is now obviously of huge local interest.

The level of engagement and awareness of Parish Council activity amongst the population of Galgate is also very low. Very few people have any interest in standing for the council and there

is almost never an election. This contrasts strongly with Dolphinholme, where several people stood for the two seats available.

Predictably, there were no candidates for the University wards, making up 4 of the 9 seats on the Council following the boundary changes. The seats were instead filled by co-option, including those who lost in the elections, as they had 'taken the trouble to stand'. When a request was made by a senior member of the University to hold at least one seat open while a suitable person with University connections was sought, the council went ahead and co-opted a member who did not meet

this criterion. There were comments to the effect that Council would not benefit from the input of the 'itinerant' University community. I can see their point, but surely it is not theirs to make. The result is that the University is represented on the Council by members who have no affiliation with the University and, most likely in some cases, very little interest in it.

Galgate village has a strong community spirit and a vibrant business community as evidenced by the wide range of activities and advertisers featured in the bi-monthly magazine Rhubarb City News, which I help to produce, which is delivered free of charge to every home in Galgate. But as strong as Galgate's identity might be, the local government apparatus seems set up more to represent the historical and more amorphous entity of Ellel, now with the incongruous interpolation of Lancaster University's South Campus. You might say that Galgate is stuck between a rock and hard place.

At a time when the village of Galgate faces serious existential and environmental issues, and needs ways of discussing and articulating its concerns, and its vision, in a coherent and constructive way, it seems unfortunate that the local Parish Council is very far from being what might envisage as an effective first tier of local government for a community of this character and size.

A final thought (it follows from the above, though it is not one I have previously entertained): might a Galgate Parish (or Village) Council, with a more narrowly drawn boundary, provide a better vehicle enabling local engagement and democracy and first-tier local government to

	flourish?	
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