

Chichester District Council

Boundary Review Panel

Monday 9 January 2017

Reduction in Number of Parish Councillors on Woolbeding with Redford Parish Council

1. Contacts

John Ward Head of Finance and Governance

Telephone: 01243 534805

E-mail: jward@chichester.gov.uk

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Boundary Review Panel recommends to the Council that a community governance review be undertaken with a view to reduce Woolbeding with Redford Parish Council from seven councillors to five.**

3. Background

- 3.1. A request has been received from Woolbeding with Redford Parish Council to reduce the number of councillors from seven to five.
- 3.2. The *Local Government Act 1972* specifies that each parish council must have at least five councillors; there is no maximum number. In practice there is a wide variation in the number of parish councillors. Research by the Aston Business School found that a typical parish council, representing fewer than 500 people, had between five and eight councillors and those between 501 and 2,500 had between six and 12 councillors. Woolbeding with Redford Parish Council has an electorate of 121 (January 2017).
- 3.3. The Local Government Boundary Review Commission is of the view that it is for each area to consider the appropriate size on its own merits, having regard to its population, geography and the pattern of communities.
- 3.4. The number it is proposing is reasonable for the size of the electorate.
- 3.5. Based on advice, the review process that needs to be followed is:

Stage 1	The Council must decide whether it wishes to conduct a review and then determine its terms of reference - this includes publication to ensure all parties are aware of the intention to undertake a community governance review.
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Stage 2	Consultation is undertaken with the two parish councils and local government electors of the two parishes, together with any other party who may have an interest in the review - this would include
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West Sussex County Council and the ward councillors.

Stage 3 Any comments or representations received are considered by the Council and any draft recommendations made for change must be published and all interested parties informed with a date by which representations must be made.

Stage 4 Taking into account any further representations made, the Council must take a decision on the outcome of the community governance review and any changes to be made – this decision must be published, giving a reason for the decision, and reasonable steps must be taken to ensure all interested parties are informed of the decision and the reasons.

Stage 5 A Reorganisation Order is made which will include a map showing the effects of the Order and a document detailing the reasons for the decision – this must be placed on deposit for public inspection and sent to relevant government bodies. There must also be publication to ensure all parties are aware of the outcome of the community governance review.

3.6 This process needs to be followed regardless of the size of the review. It is suggested that the consultation period for each stage of the review will be four weeks.

3.7 If the reduction in councillors is agreed, the new arrangements would take effect from the next election in 2019.

4 Alternatives Considered

4.1 See above.

5 Resource and Legal Implications

5.1 Chichester District Council does not have a specific budget for reviews of this nature. There is, however, a legal duty to consider the review.

5.2 Although there will be some staffing implications for the Electoral Services, the cost will be minimal.

6 Consultation

6.1 As detailed in the report.

7 Other Implications

Crime and Disorder	None
Climate Change	None

Human Rights and Equality Impact	None
Safeguarding	None

8 Background Papers

8.1 None.

9 Appendices

9.1 None.