



# Borough of Telford and Wrekin

## Boundary Review Committee

Friday 19 July 2024

### Community Governance Review - Draft Recommendations

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Zona Hannington - Cabinet Member: Finance & Governance
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Anthea Lowe - Director: Policy & Governance
<b>Service Area:</b>	Policy & Governance
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<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	Boundary Review Committee – 19 July 2024

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

Boundary Review Committee is asked to:

- 1.1 Note the draft proposals for the Community Governance Review and the proposed reorganisation of the Town and Parish Councils across the Borough;
- 1.2 Finalise the proposals (including any amendments put forward and agreed by the Committee) to be put out to a final consultation commencing forthwith; and
- 1.3 Agree the revised final timetable for the conclusion of the Community Governance Review.

#### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The report forms part of the ongoing Community Governance Review which is taking place across the Borough. Following the Committee's initial call for

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proposals from across the Borough, work has been undertaken by officers to draw together a set of proposals for the future organisation of our Town and Parish Councils.

2.2 The proposals provided with this report reflect the feedback provided from the submissions made to the Community Governance Review process and the objectives of the review when it was published, including consideration of the factors set out further in this report.

2.3 Members are now asked to confirm the final version of the draft proposals which will be published as part of the final consultation of the Community Governance Review, before the Committee takes a final decision later in the year.

### **3.0 Background**

3.1 The Boundary Review Committee agreed, at its meetings of 20 July 2023 and 7 September 2023, to commence a Community Governance Review to examine whether the organisation of the Town and Parish Councils (and Parish Meetings) best reflected the needs of the Borough.

### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

4.1 The draft proposals, for consideration by the Committee, are as set out in Appendix A – Draft Proposals, along with the associated rationale. Following discussions with the Chair, it is understood there may be a desire to give careful consideration to the proposals for The Nedge area with a potential to review the proposals contained in this report.

4.2 A map of the proposals is attached as Appendix B and individual maps will be available at the Committee Meeting.

4.3 Members may agree to make changes to the proposals contained in Appendix A at the meeting which will then form part the final recommendations which are put out for a final consultation.

4.4 Due to resources being utilised to deliver the parliamentary election called at short notice, this report has been delayed. That being the case, a revised timetable for the Community Governance Review is set out at Appendix C. Members should note the need to maximise time for interested parties across the borough to respond to the proposals and that the review must be completed by 6 September 2024.

### **5.0 Alternative Options**

5.1 The Council has the power to undertake a Community Governance Review, as set out in section 82 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

5.2 Whilst the Council could choose to not make any changes as part of this Community Governance Review, the responses thus far to the consultation suggest that there may be merit in making some changes. In doing so, the Council

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will be demonstrating that it is fulfilling its legal duty to ensure proper governance and electoral arrangements of its parishes.

### **6.0 Key Risks**

- 6.1 If the Council chooses not to continue with the Community Governance Review, there would be a risk that our election arrangements in respect of Town and Parish Councils are inefficient. In addition, should the review come to an end, there is a risk that the organisation, and governance, of Town and Parish Councils will not reflect the communities they serve.
- 6.2 The law requires a Community Governance Review to be undertaken and completed in a period of 12 months so sufficient resource will have to be devoted to ensure that the process completes within the timeframe permitted by law. In addition, there is a risk that the second stage consultation on the proposed changes does not elicit many responses. Officers will look to mitigate these risks by ensuring as wide ranging and reaching consultation as possible.

### **7.0 Council Priorities**

- 7.1 The recommendations in this report align with the following Council priorities:
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live; and
  - A community-focussed, innovative council, providing efficient, effective and quality services.

### **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The cost of undertaking the Community Governance Review are being met from within existing budgets.

### **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 9.1 The relevant legislation which sets out the Council's powers in relation to CGRs is the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Together, this legislation enables the Council to undertake a Community Governance Review, including considering the most appropriate boundaries for Town and Parish Councils and the way in which Town and Parish Councils are organised across the Borough, for example by considering the way in which parishes are grouped together.
- 9.2 The legislation sets out the process for conducting and giving effect to recommendations made in a CGR, noting that the process includes provisions for stakeholder and public consultation.
- 9.3 It is important to note that any CGR must be undertaken within a period of 12 months from the date upon which it commences.

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### **10.0 Ward Implications**

10.1 It is possible that the Parish areas and / or wards within some Borough wards may change as a result of a CGR. Where this is proposed, this is set out within the draft proposal document.

### **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

11.1 There are no direct health, social and economic implications arising from this report.

### **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

12.1 As part of the CGR, stakeholders and the public will have the opportunity to participate in consultation exercises. Officers will carefully consider how best to ensure the participation of underrepresented groups across the Borough and seek to ensure that any consultation is as wide-reaching as possible, by considering the methods in which consultation is undertaken.

12.2 To ensure that the Council engages with under-represented groups, we will undertake the following activities:

- Targeted social media to under-represented groups;
- Correspondence to our 3000+ community groups seeking feedback;
- Engaging with Telford College and the Universities within the Borough; and
- Engagement with our lived-experience groups including the Making it Real board.

### **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

13.1 There are no direct Climate Change and Environmental Implications directly arising from this report. It may be, that as the consultation process gets underway, environmental factors are provided as part of consultation responses. The Council will consider these as they arise and report any such incidences to Committee for consideration.

### **14.0 Background Papers**

- 1) [Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#)
- 2) Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Part 4, Chapter 3: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/28/part/4/chapter/3>
- 3) Reports to Boundary Committee of 20 July 2023 and 7 September 2023

### **15.0 Appendices**

- A Draft Proposal
- B Draft Proposal Map
- C Revised Timetable for Community Governance Review

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### 16.0 Report Sign Off

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Legal	11/07/2024	11/07/2024	ACL