

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

COUNCIL
1 November 2017

Community Governance Reviews

Report of the Interim Chief Executive

Cabinet Member: Councillor Nick Oliver, Corporate Services and Cabinet Secretary

Purpose of Report

To consider the outcome of two community governance reviews in the County.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Council

- 1) **agrees the outcomes of the community governance reviews for Blyth Town Council and Corbridge Parish Council**
- 2) **authorises the Democratic Services Manager to make, sign and seal the appropriate orders for the changes by virtue of the powers contained in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act.**

Key Issues

1. The following two community governance reviews have recently been conducted.

2. **Blyth Parish Council**

A community governance review has been carried out at the request of Blyth Town Council. The terms of reference of the review were 'to consider the electoral arrangements of Blyth Town Council with a view to reviewing its administrative boundary with Seaton Valley Parish Council'.

3. The effect of the boundary change would be to transfer

- an area of land (A), shown hatched red on the attached map (**Appendix 1**) from Blyth Town into Seaton Valley Parish

- a small triangular area of land (B), shown hatched green on the attached map, from Seaton Valley Parish into Blyth Town.
4. Blyth Town Council states that the area of land (B) is attached to a larger area in Blyth where housebuilding is currently being developed. It is possible that some houses may be built in this area which is currently in Seaton Valley Parish with the remainder of the houses being in Newsham. Blyth Town Council feels that there are obvious implications for maintenance of open spaces, representation, and differences in Council Tax.
 5. As part of the four week consultation process, a press release was issued in the local newspaper and notices displayed in both Blyth Town and Seaton Valley Parish. In addition, Seaton Valley Parish Council and the division councillor(s) were directly consulted by letter. Members of the public can also access details of the review via the Council's website.
 6. Two e-mails supporting the proposal have been received as follows:-
 - (1) 'Further to your website post about changes to Blyth and Seaton Sluice parish boundary. As a Blyth resident, I think the proposed changes, which align parish boundaries to the current road configuration, seem eminently sensible to me and has my support'.
 - (2) 'Just to let you know that my Council (Seaton Valley) met last night and considered the proposed boundary changes put forward by Blyth Town Council. Council asked me to inform you that they support the proposals and that it has no objection to the administrative boundary between Blyth and Seaton Valley being amended.'
 7. Council is asked to approve the amendments to the administrative boundary between Blyth Town Council and Seaton Valley Parish Council.

8. **Corbridge Parish Council**

A community governance review has been carried out at the request of Corbridge Parish Council. The terms of reference of the review were 'to consider the electoral arrangements of Corbridge Parish Council with a view to removing its sub division into wards.'

9. The Parish of Corbridge currently comprises two wards, the Corbridge Ward and the Dilston Ward. The current electorates are 2,638 and 384 respectively. The Parish has a total of eleven Parish Councillors with nine representing the Corbridge Ward, and two representing the Dilston Ward.
10. The Parish Council is concerned that, at a Parish Council election, residents living in the Dilston Ward were unable to vote as the vacancy applied only to the Corbridge Ward. Ideally, Parish Councillors representing the Dilston Ward would

also be resident in that ward, however, this is rarely the case. It has been very difficult to find anyone resident in that ward to stand for election. If the wards were removed then all eleven Parish Councillors would represent the whole of Corbridge Parish.

11. As part of the four week consultation process a press release was issued in the local newspaper and notices displayed in Corbridge Parish. In addition, the division councillor was directly consulted by letter. Members of the public can also access details of the review via the Council's website.
12. No comments have been received as a result of the consultation process.
13. Council is asked to agree to the removal of the Parish Council's subdivision into wards.

Background

1. Councils now have extensive powers delegated to them in relation to the creation of parishes, modification of boundaries and names changes by virtue of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act. At the request of parish councils, the public or even on their own initiative they may conduct Community Governance Reviews. The aim of reviews is to improve the local governance in an area. The process is managed by principal councils with outcomes incorporated into formal orders.
2. Delegated powers have been granted to the Democratic Services Manager to conduct reviews subject to full council reserving the power to agree any formal orders arising out of reviews.

Implications

Policy	
Finance and value for money	None. There were no additional costs incurred in the community governance review other than officer time.
Legal	
Procurement	N/A
Human Resources	All the work can be carried out by existing employees who possess the necessary skill and expertise.
Property	N/A
Equalities	N/A

(Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
Risk Assessment	The items raised pose a minimal risk to the organisation.
Crime & Disorder	There are no crime and disorder implications
Customer Consideration	The proposals should improve the governance of the local community.
Carbon reduction	N/A
Wards	Seghill with Seaton Delaval Corbridge

Consultation

Press releases were issued, notices displayed in the parishes, and the division councillors consulted.

Background papers:

Community Governance files

Report sign off.

Interim Chief Executive	DL
Finance Officer	N/A
Monitoring Officer/Legal	LH
Human Resources	N/A
Procurement	N/A
I.T.	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	NO

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