



# Northumberland

## County Council

### COUNCIL

02 SEPTEMBER 2020

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## COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW: AMBLE

Report of Acting Interim Chief Executive

Cabinet Member: Councillor Nick Oliver

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### Purpose of Report

To consider the outcome of a community governance review in the County.

### Recommendations

#### It is recommended that Council

- (1) notes the outcome of the community governance review for Amble Town Council and that the status quo be retained in relation to the proposed boundary change with Warkworth Parish Council and that the number of Councillors on Amble Town Council remain as at present.
- (2) agrees the proposed boundary change with Hauxley Parish Council.
- (3) authorises the Head of Democratic and Electoral Services Manager to make, sign and seal the appropriate order for the boundary change with Hauxley Parish Council by virtue of the powers contained in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act.

### Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the “we want you to love where you live” priority included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2021.

### Key issues

1. A Community Governance Review has been conducted since the last meeting of the Council as follows:-
2. Amble Town Council has requested that a community governance review be carried out as follows:-

- Change the boundary with Warkworth Parish Council to include Rivergreen, Mariner's View, Gloster Hill area to the Farm Cottages and the new housing development.
  - Change the boundary with Hauxley Parish Council to include the whole of the sewerage works and the remainder of the adjacent field.
  - The total number of members of the Town Council be increased from nine to eleven with the two new members being split between the East and West Wards. This change would accommodate recent new development and future residential developments which have been approved and could be built within the next five years.
3. Amble Town Council's reasons for requesting the boundary change with Warkworth Parish Council is that it says that many residents have expressed that they feel more part of Amble than Warkworth. Most residents use the facilities which Amble has to offer, whether for shopping, health, business, leisure or voluntary purposes. It believes that these residents should have a say in what happens in Amble and to choose who represents them. A total of 105 properties would be affected by the proposal.
  4. In accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government Guidance on Community Governance Reviews, a four week consultation process was carried out inviting any comments in writing. As part of the consultation, a press release was issued in the local newspaper, notices put up in the parish, and a notice published on the County Council website. The Division County Councillors, Councillor T. Clark and J. Watson, were consulted directly. Maps 1, 2 and 3 showing the proposed boundary changes are attached.
  5. Amble Town Council produced its own leaflet which it distributed to all of the residents in the affected area. This document briefly outlined its reasons for requesting the boundary change and included contact details for responses to Northumberland County Council.
  6. During the consultation period, Warkworth Parish Council requested that the consultation period be extended to enable it to make contact with the residents who would transfer to Amble Town Council, should the proposals be approved. The request was considered and agreed to. The consultation period was, therefore, extended by a further month. All Parishes involved and the Division County Councillors were directly informed and notices revised and republished. Warkworth Parish Council also produced a leaflet which was distributed to all of the residents in the affected area.
  7. 10 responses in favour of the proposal were received from members of the public and 23 in objection during the consultation period. The responses are reproduced in **Appendix 1** of the report for information.
  8. Warkworth Parish Council strongly objects to the proposal (**reproduced in Appendix 1**).

9. Hauxley Parish Council strongly objects to the proposal. Hauxley Parish Council responded to the consultation period on 15 November 2019, however, sent its response to Amble Town Council rather than to Northumberland County Council. This error did not become known until 14 February, 2020, after the report on the review was submitted to the February Council meeting for decision. It was agreed to withdraw the report from the Council meeting to allow Hauxley Parish Council's views to be taken into consideration. It was also agreed to allow the Parish additional time to consider Amble Town Council's proposals. Hauxley Parish Council has now provided additional comments and this letter is included in **Appendix 1** along with its original comments.
10. No comments have been received from the Division Councillors.
11. Amble Town Council's proposal was based on its assertion that there was public demand for the boundary change with Warkworth Parish Council, however, this does not appear to have been borne out in the responses to the consultation. A significant majority of responses to the consultation period have been in objection to the proposed boundary change with Warkworth Parish and, in view of this, it is felt that the status quo should be preserved.

Amble Town Council has clarified the position regarding its request for an increase in the number of Councillors and would wish the increase to go ahead regardless of the outcome of the proposed boundary changes. However, the number of Councillors on Amble Town Council should remain as at present, but, it would be welcome to reapply after any additional house building was complete.

12. No representations were received from the public regarding the proposed boundary change with Hauxley Parish Council. The Parish Council refers to the designation of its neighbourhood area for the purposes of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan which would mirror the existing civil parish boundary. However, consideration of an amendment to a parish boundary should not be restricted by the Neighbourhood Plan.
13. It is, therefore, recommended that the proposed boundary change with Warkworth Parish Council and proposed increase in Members be rejected and the status quo retained. The boundary change with Hauxley Parish should be agreed.

## **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 Head of Democratic and Electoral Services to conduct reviews subject to full council reserving the power to agree any formal orders arising out of reviews.

**Implications**

<b>Policy</b>	N/A
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	None. There were no additional costs incurred in the community governance review other than officer time.
<b>Legal</b>	N/A
<b>Procurement</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resources</b>	All the work can be carried out by existing employees who possess the necessary skill and expertise.
<b>Property</b>	N/A
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	The items raised pose a minimal risk to the organisation.
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	There are no crime and disorder implications.
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	The proposals should improve the governance of the local community.
<b>Carbon reduction</b>	N/A
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	N/A
<b>Wards</b>	Amble Amble West with Warkworth

**Background papers:**

Community Governance file

**Report sign off**

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Liam Henry
Service Director Finance & Interim S151 Officer	Chris Hand
Relevant Executive Director	Kelly Angus
Acting Interim Chief Executive	Kelly Angus
Portfolio Holder(s)	Nick Oliver

**Author and Contact Details**

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