

Cherwell District Council

Council

16 July 2018

<p>Graven Hill Community Governance Review – Results of First Consultation and Recommendations for Second Consultation</p>

Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the Community Governance Review (CGR), including the results of the first consultation period held earlier this year.

To consider the draft recommendations of the CGR Working Group that will form the basis of the second consultation phase which will start on 30 July 2018.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Approve consultation on the proposed boundary between Bicester Town Council and Ambrosden being moved to incorporate Graven Hill into Bicester as shown in Appendix 1
- 1.2 Approve consultation on the boundary between Ambrosden and Chesterton being moved to include the orphan area into Chesterton as shown in Appendix 1
- 1.3 Approve consultation on the proposed allocation of councillors for Bicester Town Council (BTC), that is BTC - Bicester South Ward be increased by one councillor and BTC -Bicester East Ward be decreased by one councillor, therefore retaining the same number of councillors.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 In May 2018, Council approved a timetable for a Community Governance Review (CGR) to be carried out.
- 2.2 The first consultation stage has concluded. This report gives details of the responses, and recommendations from the Working Group for the next consultation stage.

3.0 Report Details

2016 District Boundary Review

- 3.1 As Councillors will recall a District Boundary Review was carried out in 2014/2015 that saw new District Wards take effect in May 2016.
- 3.2 As a result of the District Review the LGBCE made alterations to Bicester Town Council wards, which are due to come into effect in May 2019. These alterations are protected electoral arrangements and as such permission will have to be sought from the LGBCE to move Graven Hill into the Bicester Town Parish.
- 3.3 The need for permission does not prevent the CGR from continuing and officers will liaise with LGBCE as required.
- 3.4 The Terms of Reference for the review were published on 16 May 2018, and gave details of matters to be considered:

Parish/Area	Matters to be considered
Development area known as Graven Hill, Ambrosden (shown on the attached map in appendix 2)	Review of the boundary between Ambrosden and Bicester, to consider incorporating the development site of Graven Hill into Bicester
Area to the left of Graven Hill, the so called 'orphan area', Ambrosden (shown on attached map in appendix 2)	Review of the boundary between Chesterton and Ambrosden/Ambrosden and Bicester, to consider incorporating all or part of the orphan area in to either parish

As a result of the initial consultation, the following parishes will also be included in the review as consultees:

Parish/Area	Matters to be considered
Bicester Town	Review of the Boundary with Ambrosden to consider incorporating Graven Hill, and some or all of the orphan area, into Bicester
Chesterton	Review of the boundary with Ambrosden to consider incorporating all or part of the orphan area of the orphan area with Chesterton

- 3.5 The CGR working group met on 21 May 2018 and agreed that the consultation should consider if Graven Hill and the orphan area be moved into the new Bicester South ward which comes into effect in May 2019 and the number of councillors on Bicester Town Council.
- 3.6 A consultation document was produced (see appendix 3), and emailed to all interested parties. The consultation period ran from 25 May 2018 to 22 June 2018. The CGR Working Group met on 25 June to discuss the responses received from the first consultation.

- 3.7 28 responses to the consultation were received, 19 from Graven Hill Plot Holders, 5 from other local residents, 1 from a Parish/Town councillor, 1 from the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils, 1 from Ambrosden Parish Council and 1 from Bicester Town Council.
- 3.8 Of the 28 responses received, 26 were in favour of Graven Hill becoming part of Bicester, and 2 against which gave the alternative of Graven Hill being a separate Parish.
- 3.9 The majority of responses supported an extra councillor for Bicester Town Council, Bicester South ward which comes into effect in May 2019.
- 3.10 Bicester Town Council (BTC) requested that consideration be given to reducing the number of councillors in the new BTC Bicester East Ward by 1 and increasing the new BTC Bicester South ward by 1 so that the number of councillors at Bicester Town Council remain the same.
- 3.11 Ambrosden Parish Council did not object to the removal of the Graven Hill development from Ambrosden Parish but suggested that consideration should be given to the Orphan Area moving into Chesterton rather than Bicester as it was of Rural Character and would be more suited.
- 3.12 There are two properties in the Orphan Area, one business and one residential which were both part of the first consultation. Should this area move Parish the Council Tax amount for the residential property would change. Based on a Band D property there would be an increase of £23.04 from £1762.50 to £1785.54.
- 3.13 If the Orphan area moved from Ambrosden to Chesterton, at the conclusion of the review, a request would need to be made to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) for related alterations. This is because the existing parish boundary is also the District Ward and County Division boundary.
- 3.14 The CGR working group have been made aware of the issue regarding the District Ward and County Division boundaries.
- 3.15 Ambrosden Parish Council also requested that consideration be given to a development recently granted planning permission on the Blackthorn Road being moved into the parish of Ambrosden. However, this was not in the terms of reference or relevant to the current CGR and the working group agreed that this should be addressed at a later date noting that it would be appropriate for it to coincide with the next scheduled elections for Ambrosden Parish Council May 2020.
- 3.16 As the majority of responses agreed that Graven Hill should move into Bicester and an extra councillor allotted to the new BTC Bicester South ward it was agreed that this should form the basis of the second consultation.

Next steps

- 3.17 Recommendations approved by full Council at this meeting will form the basis of the second consultation stage, which will run from 30 July 2018 to 14 September 2018.
- 3.18 At the conclusion of the consultation the CGR working group will meet to discuss responses, ahead of final recommendations being submitted to full Council consideration in 15 October 2018.

- 3.19 Any changes resulting from this review will take effect in May 2019, at the time of the next scheduled elections to Bicester Town Council.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The working group feel that the recommendations made are logical, and in the best interests of the parishes involved.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 With all interested parties as detailed in section 3 of the report.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1 – Not to make any changes. This is rejected, as the CGR Working Group consider the recommendations to be in the best interest of the parishes involved.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications for the Council in relation to these recommendations. The Council Tax in the Orphan area for a Band D property is subject to change as detailed in paragraph 3.12

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

- 7.2 The proposals in this report are in line with the powers of the council as set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and propose a pragmatic and proportionate way forward.

Comments checked by:

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8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

Bicester South and Ambrosden
Fringford and Heyfords
Bicester East

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

N/A

Lead Councillor

None

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Map – Orphan area moved to Chesterton
Appendix 2	Map – Original consultation
Appendix 3	Consultation document
Background Papers	
None	
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