

Cherwell District Council

Council

18 May 2022

Community Governance Review – results of first consultation stage and recommendations for second consultation stage.

Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

Purpose of report

To update Council on the outcome of the stage one consultation that was held between 22 November 2021 and 31 January 2022; to consider recommendations for the second consultation stage that is due to be held from 4 July to 9 September 2022; to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to confirm membership of the Parliamentary Boundary and Community Governance Review Working Group (the Working Group) in light of 5 May 2022 district elections.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 That no changes be made to the boundary between Kidlington and Gosford & Water Eaton as part of the current Community Governance Review.

That second stage consultation be carried out on amendments to parish boundaries as follows:

- 1.2 Between Ambrosden and Blackthorn, area A as shown on map 2.
- 1.3 Between Banbury and Bodicote, areas E and F as shown on map 3, and areas F1 and F2 as shown on map 4.
- 1.4 Between Banbury and Drayton, areas C and D as shown on map 5.
- 1.5 Between Bicester, Ambrosden, Blackthorn and Launton, area L as shown on map 6.
- 1.6 Between Chesterton, Bucknell and Bicester, areas G and H as shown on map 7.
- 1.7 Between Horley and Wroxton, and Horley and Hanwell, areas N and O as shown on map 8.
- 1.8 That second stage consultation be carried out on an increase of parish councillors in Chesterton, Bucknell and Somerton Parish Councils.

- 1.9 That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, to confirm representatives to the Parliamentary Boundary and Community Governance Review Working Group for the remainder of the Community Governance Review (CGR) and Parliamentary Boundary Review Process.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 On [18 October 2021](#) full Council approved Terms of Reference for a district-wide CGR, to start on 19 October 2021 and run to October 2022.
- 2.2 The first consultation stage ran from 22 November 2021 to 31 January 2022, and sought views from any interested parties (residents, parish councils, general members of the public) on the issues for consideration put forward by town and parish councils and council officers.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 Details of the consultation were posted online on the '[Let's Talk Cherwell](#)' platform, with links provided from the [CGR page](#) of the Cherwell District Council website.
- 3.2 At the request of the Working Group, paper copy letters were posted out to addresses potentially affected by the proposals, to raise awareness of the consultation. Paper copies were also available from the Democratic and Elections Team on request.
- 3.3 All town and parish councils affected by the proposals were provided with links to the relevant documents, and encouraged to further publicise the consultation within their areas.
- 3.4 Democratic and Elections Officers offered to attend town and parish council meetings of the affected parishes, to answer questions on the CGR process in general or specific aspects of the proposals. Bodicote Parish Council were the only parish council to take up the offer, due to being included in the review as a result of Banbury Town Council wishing to have its external boundaries reviewed.

Proposal 1 – Kidlington/Gosford and Water Eaton.

- 3.5 Kidlington Parish Council requested that a merger of Kidlington and Gosford & Water Eaton parishes be considered. If merger was not supported, Kidlington Parish Council requested an amendment to the existing boundary between the two parishes, to incorporate an area (**area P, appendix 1**) of Gosford & Water Eaton parish into Kidlington parish.
- 3.6 Gosford & Water Eaton Parish Council were not aware of the proposal in advance of its submission by Kidlington Parish Council. Gosford & Water Eaton Parish Council did not support the proposal.

3.7 6,732 documents were posted out, 1 per address, to Kidlington and Gosford & Water Eaton properties. 10 were returned to the council, marked as 'undeliverable'.

3.8 755 responses submitted, a return rate of 11.2%. The breakdown of responses was as follows:

Figures regarding proposed parish merger

- 334 responses said yes, the two parishes should be merged
- 249 responses said no, the two parishes should not be merged
- 155 responses said they had no view

Figures regarding area 'P'

- 301 said yes, a good idea to move area P
- 227 said no, not a good idea to move area P
- 193 responses said they had no view

Figures regarding the position of an amended boundary

- 230 responses agreed with Bicester Road as the proposed boundary location
- 30 responses said the boundary should be somewhere else, such as the A34.
- 9 respondents provided hand annotated maps, showing alternative amended boundaries.

3.9 The Working Group considered all responses, and the representations made by the respective parish councils. The Working Group agreed that as there had not been overwhelming support for the merger proposal or the alternative boundary move regarding area P, and due to the proposed development linked to the Local Plan, no changes should be made to parish boundaries as part of this CGR.

3.10 The Cherwell Local Plan has three sites located in the current parish of Gosford & Water Eaton, PR6a, PR6b and PR7a, which in total would provide 1,790 net dwellings when approved. This would increase the existing parish from 647 properties to 2,437.

3.11 The current Kidlington Parish has 6,085 properties, and if merged with Gosford & Water Eaton would increase to 6,732.

3.12 The Working Group recommend that as and when planning permissions are granted for the local plan developments, and building work has started on site, the question of the parish boundary between Kidlington and Gosford & Water Eaton should be looked at again, through a further CGR at the appropriate time.

Proposal 2 – Ambrosden/Blackthorn

3.13 Ambrosden Parish Council requested that the boundary with Blackthorn be reviewed, in light of development at Blackthorn Meadows in Ambrosden (**area A, appendix 2**).

3.14 85 properties from Blackthorn Meadows have been built across the parish boundary, meaning they are in Blackthorn parish. Ambrosden Parish Council requested that the boundary be moved so that the 85 properties move into Ambrosden Parish.

- 3.15 Blackthorn Parish Council did not support the proposal, and objected during the consultation period.
- 3.16 85 documents were posted out, 1 per address, to the streets in Blackthorn Meadows potentially affected by a boundary move. None were returned as 'undeliverable'.
- 3.17 29 responses were submitted, a return rate of 34.1%. The breakdown of responses was as follows:

Figures regarding moving the boundary

- 25 responses said yes, it is a good idea to move the boundary
- 3 responses said no, it is not a good idea to move the boundary
- 1 response said they had no view

Figures regarding the position of an amended boundary

- 22 responses agreed with the field boundaries as the proposed boundary location
- 2 responses said the boundary should be somewhere else, such as the B4011.

- 3.18 The Working Group considered the responses and as they are supported by residents in the affected area, the recommendation is a boundary change should be made.

Proposal 3 – Banbury and surrounding areas/Bodicote

- 3.19 Banbury Town Council requested that all boundaries with neighbouring parishes be reviewed, in light of recent housing developments that have taken place across the town.
- 3.20 In addition to the general request from Banbury Town Council, the Street Naming and Numbering Team highlighted two specific areas of Bodicote Parish to be addressed during the review.
- 3.21 The first related to Longford Park, and two properties which appeared to be part of Bodicote Parish, rather than Banbury, following an earlier CGR in 2013 (**area F, appendix 3**).
- 3.22 The second related to a recent planning application that had been given permission, located on the edge of Longford Park and the current parish boundary between Bodicote, Banbury and Adderbury (**area E, appendix 3**).
- 3.23 Bodicote Parish Council did not support any amendments to the Banbury Town boundary, and objected to the consultation. Bodicote Parish Council also requested that properties to the west of Bodicote, moved into Banbury as part of the 2013 CGR, be returned to Bodicote Parish.
- 3.24 Consultation documents were posted out to the two properties on Longford Park that would be potentially affected by a boundary change in that area. No large scale posting out of documents to properties in Bodicote took place as no specific areas had been identified by the initial request from Banbury Town Council.

3.25 50 responses were submitted, and the breakdown of responses was as follows:

Figures regarding planning application at area E

- 9 responses said yes, the boundary should be moved so that the site of the planning application is all in one parish
- 29 responses said no, the boundary should not be moved
- 1 response said they had no view

Figures regarding which parish area E should be in

- 4 responses said the site should be in Banbury
- 4 responses said the site should be in Bodicote

Figures regarding properties in area F

- 10 responses said yes they should be moved into Banbury with the rest of Longford Park
- 21 responses said no they should not be moved into Banbury
- 9 responses had no view

Figures relating to question regarding any further changes required to Banbury boundary

- 4 responses said yes there should be further changes
- 35 responses said no there should not be further changes

3.26 Officers from the Democratic and Elections Team attended a meeting of Bodicote Parish Council to discuss the CGR in more detail. Bodicote Parish Council expressed concern over the involvement of Banbury Town Councillors in the Working Group, and the number of Banbury Councillors in general on the District Council compared to those representing Adderbury, Bloxham and Bodicote.

3.27 Officers explained that the make-up of the working group was as a result of nominations from the respective political groups of the Council, and was linked to political rather than geographical representation. All recommendations of the Working Group would be considered and debated by full Council, as the Working Group do not have decision making powers.

3.28 The concerns of Bodicote Parish Council were reported to the then Monitoring Officer Anita Bradley, who wrote to the parish council reaffirming the explanation given by the officers.

3.29 The Working Group considered the responses received, and looked at current development taking place at Blackwell Drive (planning application reference 15/01326/OUT) and south of Salt Way (planning application reference 14/01932/OUT).

3.30 The Working Group agreed that as the Blackwell Drive development will join with the development south of Salt Way, the development could be considered an extension of Banbury, and residents of Blackwell Drive may consider themselves residents of Banbury rather than Bodicote. The Working Group therefore recommend that the properties on Blackwell Drive be consulted on the possibility of a boundary change that would mean they become part of Banbury. The location of the proposed new boundary would follow the line of the planning application site,

with the existing allotment gardens, cricket ground and recreation ground remaining in Bodicote Parish (**appendix 4**).

- 3.31 The Working Group further recommend that properties in Merlin Close, located off the Oxford Road and adjacent to Longford Park, be consulted on the possibility of moving into Banbury (**appendix 4**).
- 3.32 With regard to area F and the two properties in Longford Park that still appear as part of Bodicote, officers reported that for electoral register and council tax purposes these two properties have already been moved into Banbury. An official change to the position of the parish boundary in this area would formalise the existing situation.
- 3.33 In relation to area E, the recently approved planning application reference 19/01047/OUT, the Working Group recommend that this be incorporated into Banbury, with the parish boundary between Banbury and Bodicote moving accordingly.

Proposal 4 – Banbury/Drayton

- 3.34 Drayton Parish Council had previously contacted the council requesting a CGR be carried out in relation to the Castle Grange development.
- 3.35 283 properties forming part of Castle Grange have been built across the parish boundary, meaning they are in Drayton parish rather than Banbury (**area D, appendix 5**).
- 3.36 Drayton Parish Council requested that consideration be given to moving this area into Banbury, and Banbury Town Council supported the proposal.
- 3.37 As well as the request from Drayton Parish Council, the Working Group highlighted two further areas of potential development that they wished to consult on regarding possible boundary changes (**areas B and C, appendix 5**).
- 3.38 286 documents were posted out, 1 per address, to the properties in Castle Grange specifically affected by a potential boundary move plus 3 other properties. 34 were returned to the council as ‘undeliverable’.
- 3.39 29 responses were submitted, a response rate of 10.1%. The breakdown of responses was as follows:

Figures regarding moving area D into Banbury

- 9 responses said yes, the boundary should be moved so that area D is in Banbury
- 20 responses said no, the boundary should not be moved

Figures regarding moving area C into Banbury

- 8 responses said yes the area should be moved into Banbury
- 12 responses said no, the area should not be moved
- 9 responses stated no view

Figures regarding moving area B into Banbury

- 5 responses said yes the area should be moved into Banbury

- 13 responses said no, the area should not be moved
- 11 responses had no view

Figures relating to position of an amended boundary

- 6 responses said the field boundaries as identified on the map should be the new boundary
- 8 responses said the boundary should be somewhere else, such as the B4100
- 2 respondents provided hand annotated maps that detailed alternative boundary locations.

- 3.40 The Working Group agreed that the Castle Grange development (area D) is an urban extension of Banbury and therefore recommended that it should be moved to within the boundary of Banbury.
- 3.41 In relation to area C and planning application 18/01882/OUT, the Working Group agreed that this too would be an urban extension of Banbury, and recommended that it should be moved to within the boundary of Banbury.
- 3.42 Regarding area B, the Working Group agreed that this area should remain in Drayton parish.

Proposal 5 – Bicester and surrounding areas

- 3.43 Councillor Dan Sames requested that the site of proposed development at Wretchwick Way, planning application reference 16/01268/OUT, be included in the CGR (**area L, appendix 6**).
- 3.44 The majority of the 1500 new home site is currently in Ambrosden parish, with some in neighbouring Blackthorn and Launton parishes. Councillor Sames requested the inclusion of the site in the CGR to consider moving the area into Bicester.
- 3.45 In addition to Wretchwick Way, the Street Naming and Numbering Team highlighted two recent commercial developments, one around Skimmingdish Lane under planning application reference 19/02708/OUT (**area J, appendix 6**) and one on Wendlebury Way under planning application reference 19/01740/HYBRID (**area K, appendix 6**), for consideration for a boundary move.
- 3.46 Six residential properties would be affected by a boundary move linked to the Wretchwick Way planning application. All six properties were sent a paper copy consultation document.
- 3.47 No large scale posting of documents took place as no further existing residential properties were identified as being affected by the proposals.
- 3.48 Five responses were submitted, the breakdown of responses was as follows:

Figures regarding moving the boundary so that area L is all in one parish

- 2 responses said yes, the boundary should be moved
- 2 responses said no, the boundary should not be moved
- 1 response had no view

Figures regarding whether area L should be in Bicester or Ambrosden

- 2 responses said Bicester

Figures regarding moving area J

- 2 responses said no, the area should not be moved
- 3 responses had no view

Figures regarding moving area K

- 1 response said no, the area should not be moved
- responses had no view

- 3.49 The Working Group considered all responses and recommend that area L become part of Bicester, with areas J and K remaining in their existing parishes.

Proposal 6 – Chesterton/Bucknell/Bicester

- 3.50 Chesterton Parish Council requested that the boundary between Chesterton and Bucknell be included in the CGR, due to a section along the B4030/Middleton Stoney Road where the existing boundary follows the Gagle Brook rather than following the road (**areas G and H, appendix 7**).
- 3.51 This means that for a short section an area north of the road is within Chesterton, and an area south of the road is in Bucknell. Chesterton Parish Council requested that the boundary be straightened so that it follows the road all the way to Bicester.
- 3.52 In addition to the request from Chesterton Parish Council, the Planning team highlighted a recent planning application on the outskirts of Bicester, planning application reference 14/02121/OUT (**area I, appendix 7**). Part of the application site crosses the Bicester boundary meaning that it would sit within Bucknell.
- 3.53 No large scale posting of documents took place as there are no existing properties in the affected area.
- 3.54 One response was submitted, which supported the proposal to move the boundary to the road.
- 3.55 The Working Group recommend that the boundary be moved so that areas G and H become part of Chesterton and Bucknell respectively.
- 3.56 The Working Group further recommend that the boundary between Bucknell and Bicester be amended so that all of area I, planning application reference 14/02121/OUT, is within Bicester.

Proposal 7 – Epwell/Sibford Gower

- 3.57 Epwell Parish Council requested inclusion in the CGR, to move the boundary between Epwell and Sibford Gower.
- 3.58 In January 2022, shortly before the first consultation stage closed, Epwell Parish Council contacted the Democratic and Elections Team and advised that they no longer wished to pursue the requested boundary alteration.

- 3.59 As the consultation was live at the time it was not possible to withdraw the issue immediately. The request was reported to the Working Group, and therefore there is no further recommendation as it is no longer part of the process.
- 3.60 Reasons for the withdrawal of the issue have been requested from Epwell Parish Council but no response has been received.

Proposal 8 – Horley/Hanwell/Wroxton

- 3.61 Horley Parish Council requested inclusion in the CGR, to move the boundary between Horley and Wroxton (**area N, appendix 8**) and Horley and Hanwell (**area O, appendix 8**), to take in some additional land to Horley parish.
- 3.62 No large scale posting out of documents took place as there are no existing properties in the affected area.
- 3.63 Two responses were submitted, one from Wroxton Parish Council which had no objection regarding an alteration to area N, and one from Hanwell Parish Council who wish to see area O shared between Hanwell and Horley parishes.
- 3.64 The Working Group recommend that the boundary be amended as requested by Horley Parish Council, with areas N and O moving into the parish.

Proposal 9 – increase of Parish Council numbers at Begbroke, Chesterton and Somerton

- 3.65 As well as amending town and parish boundaries, a CGR can alter the number of town/parish councillors.
- 3.66 Three parish councils requested an increase in numbers, due to an increased workload; Begbroke, Chesterton and Somerton.
- 3.67 The Working Group recommend that Chesterton Parish Council have an increase of two parish councillors, from seven to nine.
- 3.68 The Working Group recommend that Begbroke Parish Council have an increase of one parish councillor, from six to seven.
- 3.69 The Working Group recommend that Somerton Parish Council have an increase of one parish councillor, from five to six.

Membership of the Working Group

- 3.70 The cross-party Working Group comprises 8 Members. Membership of the Working Group reflects the political make-up of the Council as at October 2021 when the CGR started.
- 3.71 Councillor Conrad Copeland stood down from the council in the May 2022 elections, and needs to be replaced on the working group.
- 3.72 The results of the May 2022 elections result in a change to the allocation of seats on the working group. Whilst important that the Working Group reflects the political make-up of the council, it is essential that all Groups are represented. Authority is

therefore requested to be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, to confirm representation on the working group for the remainder of the CGR.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Working Group have considered all consultation responses and information provided from the town and parish councils. Once approved the recommendations will form the basis of the second consultation stage of the CGR, to take place from 4 July to 9 September 2022.
- 4.2 Where there are existing residential properties affected by proposals to amend boundaries, hard copy letters will be posted out to ensure residents are aware of the consultation and the opportunity to comment.
- 4.3 The outcome of the second consultation and final recommendations of the Working Group will be submitted to Council in October 2022, when the review will conclude.

5.0 Consultation

Public consultation as detailed in section 3 above; full consultation reports are available via the [CGR page](#) of the Cherwell District Council website.

Parliamentary Boundary and Community Governance Review Working Group.
Recommendations as detailed in section 3 above.

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 approve the recommendations of the Working Group. This is rejected, as the Working Group have considered all consultation responses submitted and discussed all proposals in detail.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The continued cost of carrying out the Community Governance Review can be met from existing budgets, with consultation documents made available electronically and paper copies limited to those residential addresses directly affected.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, 01295 221845,
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Legal Implications

- 7.2 The Council is empowered to undertake a Community Governance Review by section 79 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (the Act). The review must follow sections 88, 93 and 96 of the Act.

Comments checked by:

Helen Lolas, Solicitor and Team Leader, Legal Services. 07801 400941,
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Risk Implications

- 7.3 The Community Governance Review process is an opportunity for the council to re-draw parish boundaries where the proposals are supported by electors, resulting in clarity regarding local identity and reducing the risk of elector confusion.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus, 01295 221556
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Equalities and Inclusion Implications

- 7.4 There are no equalities and inclusion implications arising directly from this report. The council will take steps to ensure that the outcome of the review reflects the identities and interests of the area(s) being reviewed and the need to ensure effective and convenient community governance.

Comments checked by:

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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision N/A as not an Executive report

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

N/A

Lead Councillor

N/A

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- 1 – Map of Kidlington/Gosford & Water Eaton
- 2 – Map of Ambrosden/Blackthorn
- 3 – Map of Banbury/Bodicote/Adderbury
- 4 – Map showing location of proposed further amendments to Banbury/Bodicote
- 5 – Map of Banbury/Drayton proposals
- 6 – Map of Bicester proposals
- 7 – Map of Chesterton/Bucknell/Bicester proposals
- 8 - Map of Horley/Hanwell/Wroxton proposals

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

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