

Community Governance Reviews and Community Governance Applications

Practical Considerations

A fact-sheet to assist Parish Councils and other organisations when deciding whether to request a Community Governance Review

Thinking of requesting a Community Governance Review?

If you or an organisation you are part of are considering requesting a Community Governance Review, there are a range of factors which need to be considered.

Thinking about these, and your responses, now will assist Telford & Wrekin Council in determining whether a review is appropriate, and will help form the Terms of Reference.

What is a Community Governance Review?

A Community Governance Review enables Telford & Wrekin Council to review and put in place, or make changes, to community governance systems and structures. This may be by creating, merging, abolishing or changing parish or town councils in the review area. A Community Governance Review is a review of the whole or part of the district to consider one or more of the following:

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- The naming of parishes and the style of local governance;
- The electoral arrangements for parishes – i.e. the council size; the number of councillors to be elected to the council and parish warding.

What to do next

Please consider the range of questions and statements on the following pages, and your responses to each. This will help form the basis of your submission if you decide to proceed with a petition to request a Community Governance Review.

Additional Information

Additional information which will help you identify what is required is available.

The *Guidance on Community Governance Review* was published by the Department for Communities & Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in 2010. It can be accessed at:

[Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#)

Further details on creating parish, town or community councils can be found at www.createacouncil.nalc.gov.uk

Area Changes

What are the area(s) being considered for review?

Is a new Parish being proposed?

What do you consider the new Parish should be called?

Which existing Parishes are affected?

What do you consider the existing Parishes should be known as in future?

What is the level of projected new dwellings in each of the affected wards/areas?

What is the impact / relationship with the existing **Borough** council wards/areas?

Do the existing warding arrangements work well or do you feel changes are required?

What boundary changes do you feel may be required?

Have you identified on a local map the nature and extent of your proposed changes?

Electoral Arrangements

What are the existing numbers of electors in each of the affected wards/areas?

What is the existing number of Parish councillors in each of the affected wards/areas?

Telford & Wrekin Council will consider each request for a Community Governance Review, when it is supported by a valid petition. This requires the signatures of a percentage of the current electorate, as set out below:

1. for an area with less than 500 local electors, the petition must be signed by at least 37.5% of them
2. for an area with between 500 and 2,500 local electors, the petition must be signed by at least 187 of the electors
3. for an area with more than 2,500 local electors, the petition must be signed by at least 7.5% of them.

Do you have the required number of valid electorate signatures to validate your petition?

What do you consider should be the numbers of councillors in the areas being proposed?

Financial Arrangements

What is the existing annual Parish budget for each of the affected wards/areas?

What is the existing Band D equivalent for the affected wards/areas?

The criteria by which options for the future will be judged

Telford & Wrekin Council is required to take into account:

- the impact of existing community governance arrangements on community cohesion and
- the size, population and boundaries of any local community or proposed parish or town Council.

Government guidance set out the kind of considerations which should be taken into account when considering a petition for a Community Governance Review. This includes:

- the creation of a parish
- the name of a parish
- the establishment of a separate parish council for an existing parish
- the alteration of boundaries of existing parishes
- the abolition of a parish
- the dissolution of a parish council
- changes to the electoral arrangements of a parish council
- a strong, inclusive community and voluntary sector
- a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride; and
- a sense of place – a place with a ‘positive’ feeling for people and local distinctiveness
- reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area
- the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion;
- the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish
- people from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities
- people knowing their rights and responsibilities

Your petition must set out at least one recommendation that the petitioners want the review to consider making. Please consider the above factors and identify which are relevant to your request, and outline the reasons why.

It may help to consider the following questions in relation to any new / revised parish being proposed:

Does it have a separate, distinctive and recognisable community of identity of its own?

Does it have an adequate infrastructure of meeting points, community halls, local schools, neighbourhood stores, community organisations, and voluntary groups etc, to support a distinct community of identity that would justify separate parish governance?

What happens next

Telford & Wrekin Council will make a decision as to whether a Community Governance

Review is appropriate, and whether the petition you have submitted is valid.

The legislation requires Telford & Wrekin Council to determine and publish the terms of reference under which a Community Governance Review is to be undertaken. It also requires that the terms of reference specify the area under review. If any modifications are made to the terms of reference, these must also be published.

A review is deemed to have started once the terms of reference have been adopted by Telford & Wrekin Council at a meeting of the Boundary Review Committee.

Legislation requires Community Governance Reviews to be completed within 12 months of the Terms of Reference being published.

Before making any recommendations or publishing final proposals, the Council will take full account of the views of local people. The Council will comply with the statutory consultative requirements by:

- consulting local government electors within the area under review
- consulting any other person or body (including a local authority) which appears to the Council to have an interest in the Community Governance Review. This may include other community groups and local organisations.
- taking into account any representations received in connection with the Community Governance Review.

Information to accompany your petition

Telford & Wrekin Council will be able to assist with the provision of some information to accompany your petition, upon request. Specifically, the Council can make available the following items:

- The numbers of electorate in a specific area or parish
- The current precept charges applicable to a specific area or parish
- Boundary maps of a specific area or parish

We would ask that you, when submitting a petition to request a Community Governance Review, provide the remaining details and information as set out in this document. Specifically this will include:

- The names and details of each person signing the petition
- Proposals of the change(s) being requested, and the reasons for the proposals
- Details of local community organisations, community facilities, schools, establishments and other key representatives within the area(s) of review.
- Details of the existing Parish Council(s), their electoral make-up, size and budget.

[Here is a link](#) to a set of Terms of Reference for an earlier Community Governance Review undertaken by Telford & Wrekin Council published 02 October 2013. This may help you to identify the kind of information that is required to support a request.

Community Governance Applications

A Community Governance Application is made by a designated neighbourhood forum, and there is no requirement for a petition.

A community governance application is an application for a community governance review to be undertaken.

An application is not a valid community governance application unless the following conditions are met:

- The application may be made only by an organisation or body designated as a neighbourhood forum under section 61F of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990**(b)**
- The application must relate to the whole or any part of an area specified in a neighbourhood development plan made under section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- The application must define the area to which the review is to relate (whether on a map or otherwise), and specify one or more recommendations which the applicant wishes a community governance review to consider making.
- If the specified recommendations include the constitution of a new parish, the application must define the area of the new parish
- If the specified recommendations include the alteration of the area of an existing parish, the application must define the area of the parish as it would be after alteration

