



Terms of Reference – Community Governance Review of Bestwood St Albans Parish Council.

Introduction

Gedling Borough Council is carrying out a Community Governance Review in the Parish of Bestwood St. Albans in accordance with Part 4, Chapter 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

The Council is required to have regard for the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. This guidance has been considered in drawing up these terms of reference.

Why are we carrying out a Community Governance Review in the Parish of Bestwood St Albans?

Gedling Borough Council has received a valid petition asking for the formation of a separate Parish Council for the Village Ward of the Parish. The petition contained in excess of 250 signatures from people indicating that they were electors of the Village Ward of the Parish. At that time the Village Ward of Bestwood St. Albans Parish had 1571 local electors (based on the 1 April 2016 Electoral Register). Following checking of the petition it was established that it contained 218 valid signatures for the purposes of a Community Governance Review.

The petition proposes the formation of a separate parish council for the Village Ward with the wording as set out below:

“We the undersigned call upon Gedling Borough Council to conduct a Community Governance Review of the area within Bestwood Village ward (including the polling areas of SA1 – Bestwood Village and SA2 – Killarney Park) for the purpose of establishing a separate parish council for the named area. The community recognise the distinct and different needs of an isolated rural area, as opposed to their more urban neighbours and feel that a more locally representative body would be best placed to act in the best interests of the residents and community as a whole.”

What is a Community Governance Review?



The Community Governance Review is the process used to consider whether the existing parish council should be in any way modified. There are a number of options with regards to the outcome of the review depending on the results of the consultation. The review could recommend to Council that:

- a) There should be no change to the existing arrangements;
- b) There should be changes to the electoral arrangements for the parish or an alteration to the number of seats;
- c) The existing parish council should be abolished;
- d) A Parish council should be established for one or both of the existing parish wards, and if so, the boundary, names, and the electoral arrangements for each, ie how many councillors on each and the election cycle; or
- e) An 'alternative style' for one or both of the areas should be established, eg. parish, neighbourhood, community or village meeting.

There are two stages to the review: the first stage will gather opinions on whether Bestwood St. Albans Parish Council should be divided into separate parishes for the area; the second stage will be the Council's recommendations on the way forward which the public will be able to comment on.

Who carries out the Review?

The Borough Council is responsible for conducting the review. A decision on whether or not to change or replace the existing Parish Council will be taken by Gedling Borough Councillors at a meeting of Full Council in July 2017.

What area is being reviewed?

The area under review is the current Parish of Bestwood St. Albans which is comprised of two Parish wards known as "Village" and "Top Valley".

The Village ward is made up predominantly of the area known as Bestwood Village, and situated on the Western border of Gedling Borough adjacent to the Ashfield district. The ward also encompasses the area of residential development at Killarney Park, properties along Lamins Lane as well as a small number of properties accessed directly from the A60, Mansfield Road. The Village ward is comprised of Borough polling districts known as SA1 and SA2 which are located within the Bestwood St Albans Borough Ward and part of the Sherwood Parliamentary constituency.

The Top Valley Ward is located on the northern fringe of the Nottingham conurbation and is known locally as the Warren Hill Area. It is a densely populated urban area. The Top Valley ward is made up of Borough polling



district GA3 which is part of the Bestwood St Albans ward and is part of the Gedling Parliamentary constituency.

In proposing any new parish arrangement for Bestwood St. Albans the Council is not bound by the area referred to in the petition but the scope of the review can only extend to the Gedling Borough Council administrative area.

As part of the review the Council has to provide the number of electors in the area. If the Council recommends that a Parish Council/Councils should be set up, this information will be used to decide on the electoral arrangements, e.g. how many councillors on each parish council.

The Council has used the Register of electors of 1 April 2015 in providing the existing electorate figures which are:

	Current electors	Number of Parish Councillors	Ratio of Electors to Councillors	Estimated electors in 2020
Village ward	1571	4	1:420	1681
Top Valley	2373	5	1:515	2456

Who will we consult?

A full consultation process will form part of the Review to take full account of the views of local people. The Act requires the Council to consult the local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body who appears to have an interest in the review and to take the representations that are received into account.

The Council will also identify any other person or body who it feels may have an interest in the review and write to them inviting them to submit their views at both stages of consultation.

This will include:

- Ward Members
- Tenants and Residents' Associations
- Groups and Societies
- Schools and Colleges
- Members of Parliament
- Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils
- Local Political Parties
- The Police



The Council will also be pleased to receive comments from any other person or body that wishes to make representations; any such person that makes representations during the initial invitation to submit proposals will be invited to make comments in respect of the draft proposals.

As required by Section 79(3) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Borough Council will notify Nottinghamshire County Council that a review is to be undertaken, provide them with a copy of the terms of reference for the review and will consult them on the matters under review.

The Council intends to clearly publish all decisions taken and the reasons for taking those decisions and will work towards the Government's view that "Community Governance Reviews should be conducted transparently so that local people and other stakeholders who may have an interest are made aware of the outcome of the decisions taken on them and the reasons behind these decisions."

With this in mind a cross-party group of Councillors will be convened to consider the responses to both stages of the consultation. The views of this group will be taken into account before recommendations are made to the meeting of Council in July 2017.

What matters will the review focus on?

The recommendations made in a community governance review have two main objectives:

- 1) To improve community engagement and better local democracy; and
- 2) More effective and convenient delivery of local services.

The review must ensure that community governance within the area under review reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient. It must also take into account any existing arrangements such as community or resident's associations or neighbourhood councils.

It may be the case that some or all of the area would be better served by other forms of community governance. The 2007 act states "In deciding what recommendations to make... the principal council must take into account any other arrangements ... that have already been made or could be made for the purposes of community representation or community engagements in respect of the area under review." Alternatives to a Parish Council include Community Associations, Residents'/Tenants Associations and Neighbourhood Forums.

The Council is anxious to ensure that electors should be able to identify clearly with the parish in which they are resident because it considers that this sense of



identify and community lends strength and legitimacy to the parish structure, creates a common interest in parish affairs, encourages participation in elections to the parish council, leads to representative and accountable government, engenders visionary leadership and generates a strong, inclusive community with a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride.

Timetable for the Review

Publication of this Terms of Reference formally begins the review, and the review must be completed within twelve months.

Action	Timescale
Terms of Reference Presented to Council	14 September 2016
Publish Terms of Reference	26 September 2016
Initial Consultation period	26 September - 9 December 2016
Prepare draft proposals	By 28 February 2017
Consultation on draft proposals	6 March – 1 May 2017
Deadline for submissions	1 May 2017
Prepare final proposals	Mid-June 2017
Report to Council	12 July 2017
If required: Organisation of Community Governance Order	After 12 July 2017

How to submit your views

You can submit your views by

Going to: www.gedling.gov.uk/haveyoursay

Writing to:

Community Governance Review (Elections)
Gedling Borough Council
Civic Centre
Arnot Hill Park
Arnold
Nottingham
NG5 6LU

Emailing: elections@gedling.gov.uk

When will the review begin?

The review will begin on 26 September 2016.

