

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

21 March 2024

Report by the Democracy and Standards Committee

Report Title **West Northamptonshire Community Governance Review:
Update**

Report Author **Paul Hanson, Head of Democratic and Elections**
paul.hanson@westnorthants.gov.uk

List of Approvers

Monitoring Officer	Sarah Hall	27/02/2024
Chief Finance Officer (S.151)	Martin Henry	29/02/2024
Communications Lead/Head of Communications	Becky Hutson	29/02/2024

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. This report updates Council on progress with the Community Governance Review (CGR) of parish arrangements within West Northamptonshire. The report invites the Council to consider the outcome of the first stage consultation and the recommendations of the Democracy and Standards Committee regarding proposals for further consultation.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Council:

- a) Notes the update on the Community Governance Review of parishes in West Northamptonshire and the outcome of the first stage of formal consultation.

- b) Notes the recommendation of the Democracy and Standards Committee and agrees to adopt the relevant proposals set out in Section 5 as the basis for the second stage of formal consultation, noting that these recommendations have been made by the Committee after taking account of the statutory requirements applicable to CGRs and the outcome of the consultation.
- c) Agrees that Ravensthorpe and Brington parishes be included within amended Terms of Reference as set out in section 5.5.
- d) Notes that a number of proposals require the consent of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as they relate to 'protected' arrangements as defined by s.86 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (the 2007 Act) and notes that consent has been sought prior to the second stage of consultation commencing. Should consent be refused in any of these cases, these proposals will not form part of the second stage of consultation.
- e) Notes that a number of proposals will require further work and information to be gathered prior to the second stage consultation and delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Democracy and Standards Committee, to finalise the proposals and/or the wording used for the second stage consultation to ensure participants receive sufficient information to enable them to respond.

3. Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 The CGR is undertaken within a statutory framework. The Council is required to consult and must take decisions at the conclusion of each phase of the consultation as to how to proceed.
- 3.2 The first stage of the formal consultation has concluded and the Council must now determine which proposals received during the consultation are viable and should be worked up into detailed proposals to proceed to the second stage of the consultation. The second stage may, depending on the nature of the proposals, involve consultation with individual households. Care must be taken to ensure proposals consulted on during that stage are viable and are compliant with the statutory requirements applicable to CGRs.
- 3.3 Consulting on proposals that were not supported through the consultation or were not underpinned by any qualitative evidence is not likely to represent an effective use of the Council's resources. Likewise, consulting further on proposals that are impossible to deliver as part of a CGR (such as changes to the Council's external boundaries) is not recommended for similar reasons. Any such proposals have been highlighted in Section 5 below.
- 3.4 The intended outcome of the review is to ensure that community governance arrangements within West Northamptonshire are reflective of the identities and interests of communities and support efficient electoral processes. Specifically, Section 93 of the 2007 Act requires principal councils to ensure that CGRs will be:
 - reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
 - effective and convenient.

When considering the criteria identified in the 2007 Act, principal councils should take into account a number of influential factors including:

- the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 The 2007 Act devolved powers to local authorities to review parish arrangements within their respective areas and agree changes. The Act created the title of Community Governance Reviews to cover such activity.
- 4.2 A CGR provides an opportunity for authorities to put in place strong, clearly defined boundaries and to remove any anomalous parish boundaries that exist. This can be the case where a boundary review has recently been undertaken, as is the case in West Northamptonshire, resulting in anomalies between council ward and parish boundaries. Statutory guidance issued by the Government emphasises the importance of undertaking reviews to address boundary anomalies when they arise.
- 4.3 When conducting the review, the Council must act in accordance with the requirements of the Act, the associated regulations and statutory guidance. The Council must consult and take account of any representations received in connection with the review. When undertaking the review, the Council must also have regard to the need to secure community governance arrangements that are effective and convenient and which reflect the identities and interests of the community in the area under review as set out at paragraph 3.4 above.
- 4.4 The review is being conducted in accordance with the [Terms of Reference](#) as agreed by full Council at its meeting on 28 September 2023.
- 4.5 Ahead of commencing this review, all Parish and Town Councils were invited to suggest to the Council whether their parish areas should be included within the review. Along with the outcome of the recent Local Government Boundary Review in West Northamptonshire, this pre-review consultation has helped to determine the parish areas identified for inclusion.
- 4.6 The Democracy and Standards Committee oversaw the consultation and were provided with updates at their meetings. Some of the activities undertaken during this stage of the CGR included:
- 4.6.1 Attendance at the Larger Parishes Forum meeting to discuss plans for the consultation and listed to the views of parishes.
 - 4.6.2 Working with the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils (NCALC), a briefing and question and answer session for parishes was delivered. The session was well-attended, with over sixty delegates signing up.
 - 4.6.3 A similar briefing session for members of this Council was held on 20 December, attended by over twenty members.
 - 4.6.4 A dedicated webpage, with a Frequently Asked Questions section, was created to support the consultation.
 - 4.6.5 Working with colleagues in the Communications Team, a dedicated consultation portal was been established to facilitate public engagement with the

consultation. This has been promoted through the Council's usual communications channels.

4.6.6 A dedicated email address to deal with CGR queries has been set up and is overseen by officers working on the review.

- 4.7 At the close of the first stage of consultation on 31st January, the Council had received 172 fully completed responses and 237 incomplete responses. Incomplete means the respondent had worked through some of the survey but had not reached the final point where the response was submitted. In the vast majority of cases the incomplete responses contained little qualitative data, but where views were expressed these were considered and are summarised below, alongside the complete responses. Additionally, the Council received a number of emails via the dedicated cgrconsultation@westnorthants.gov.uk email address and these have also been considered in drawing up recommendations for the second stage consultation.
- 4.8 The second stage consultation that will follow is not concerned with simply putting suggestions received during the first stage out to consultation for a view; the Council is required to carefully consider the outcome of the consultation, take account of the statutory requirements applicable to reviews and the accompanying guidance before publishing clear and compliant proposals for change. The Council cannot propose a change that does not meet these criteria or does fall under the purview of a CGR.
- 4.9 When considering these proposals, the Committee was reminded that any proposals for changes to parish arrangements recommended to Council should be supported by evidence. This includes evidence of compliance with the statutory requirements and an indication that there is sufficient support or interest in the proposal to merit inclusion within the second stage of consultation.
- 4.10 The attention of the committee was drawn to 'protected' arrangements as defined by Section 86 of the 2007 Act. This means parish electoral arrangements, such as parish warding arrangements, made by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England within the past five years may not be changed without the consent of the Commission. The specific parish arrangements put in place by the Commission as part of the recently completed electoral review for West Northamptonshire Council are set out in the Commission's final report, but include revised parish electoral arrangements for Boughton, Daventry, Hackleton, Kingsthorpe and Northampton, including parish warding arrangements and the number of parish councillors assigned to each ward/parish:

Boughton Parish

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Boughton Village & Buckton Fields	10
Dixon Road	1

Daventry Parish

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Daventry North East	3
Daventry North West	3
Daventry South	10

Hackleton Parish

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Hackleton & Piddington	6
Hackleton Urban	5

Kingsthorpe Parish

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Kingsthorpe	3
Obelisk East	1
Spring Park	3
St David's	4
Sunnyside & Obelisk West	4

Northampton Parish

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Abington & Phippsville	2
Billing Aquadrome	1
Blackthorn & Rectory Farm	2
Briar Hill	1
Castle	3
Dallington Spencer	3
Headlands	4
Kingsley & Semilong	2
Moulton Leys	1
Parklands	1
Queens Park	1
Talavera	2
Weston Favell & Abington Vale	2

- 4.11 Having reviewed the proposals submitted as part of the initial consultation, five of those proposals would, if adopted, constitute a change to parish arrangements put in place by the Local Government Boundary Commission. Officers have therefore written to the Commission to highlight the proposals in question and to invite the Commission to grant permission. At the time of writing the outcome is not known, but officers will advise the Committee as soon as a response is received.
- 4.12 In order to facilitate the committee's deliberations, officers have reviewed each

proposal and have made recommendations as set out in Section 5 below. Proposals that are within the scope of the review and are supported by evidence that aligns with the statutory guidance (see 3.4) will be recommended for inclusion.

4.13 Proposals that are within scope but which either lack strong evidence, where the evidence is conflicting or where there are competing proposals are set out separately for the committee to consider on their merits. Officers will endeavour to provide background information on the likely viability of such proposals, such as whether they cut across arrangements put in place by the most recently completed CGRs in West Northamptonshire.

4.14 Proposals that are not considered to be viable, either because they cannot lawfully form part of a CGR, are not practicable to implement, attracted no support as evidenced by the consultation or would conflict with protected arrangements and are not likely to be accepted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, have also been highlighted. It is recommended that these proposals be ruled out of further consultation.

4.9 As a reminder, the timetable for the review is as follows:

Activity	Start date	End date
Pre-consultation with parish councils	July 2023	18 August 2023
Publication of Terms of Reference	29 September 2023	-
Research and information gathering, arranging local meetings if required	29 September 2023	28 November 2023
Initial consultation	28 November 2023	31 January 2024
Consideration of draft submissions received and preparation of draft recommendations	27 January 2024	26 April 2024
Draft recommendations published and consulted on	26 April 2024	25 July 2024
Consideration of consultation outcome	25 July 2024	24 Sept 2024
Council decision and publication of proposals	26 September 2024	-
Review of polling districts and places	30 September 2024	30 November 2024
Election with new arrangements in place	1 May 2025	-

5 Issues and Choices

5.1 Officers undertook initial consultation with parishes prior to the publication of the terms of reference for the review. This consultation, alongside the outcome of the recent boundary review, informed the terms of reference of the review. It should be noted that two parishes contacted the Council during the consultation to request proposals be considered. These parishes were not part of the original terms of reference and so the Committee is asked to consider whether to recommend the Terms of Reference be amended accordingly.

5.2 Community Governance Reviews must be completed within 12 months, and the Council's proposed timeline follows this model. Due to the potential number of parish areas under

review, it was suggested that the Council make the most of the 12-month allowance in order to conduct consultation and draw up recommendations.

- 5.3 As explained in Section 4, officers have reviewed the consultation feedback and are now able to make recommendations to the Committee about which proposals should form part of the second stage of the consultation. The Committee should consider each proposal carefully as consulting on some proposals may result in the Council writing to several thousand households and this will have an impact on the Council's resources.

5.4 Proposals Recommended for Inclusion in the Stage 2 Consultation

- 5.4.1 In respect of the following proposals, it is recommended that the Council adopt these as proposals for Stage 2 of the consultation. This is because the proposals are consistent with the purpose of the Community Governance Review, are compatible with the statutory requirements and the outcome of the Stage 1 consultation suggests there is merit in consulting affected stakeholders further.

- 5.4.2 Where the proposals affect a specified number of properties, this will allow the Council to consult with the occupiers of those properties directly. Where the proposals are more straightforward in nature (e.g. to alter the number of members on a parish council) the Council will run an open consultation but will not write to all of the households within that parish.

5.4.3 Adstone

- 5.4.4 The pre-review consultation generated a suggestion that Adstone Parish Meeting be included in the review in order that a consultation on its potential dissolution could take place. If the Parish Meeting were to be dissolved, the area would be incorporated into a suitable neighbouring parish. Suitable parishes could be Canons Ashby and Maidford, which are both part of Rural South Northamptonshire ward and are reachable from Adstone by road.

- 5.4.5 The Stage 1 consultation generated no further responses about this suggestion. An email was sent directly to the listed Chairman of the Parish Meeting but no response was received.

Recommendation: that the proposal to dissolve Adstone Parish Meeting and absorb the area into a neighbouring parish be included within the Stage 2 consultation

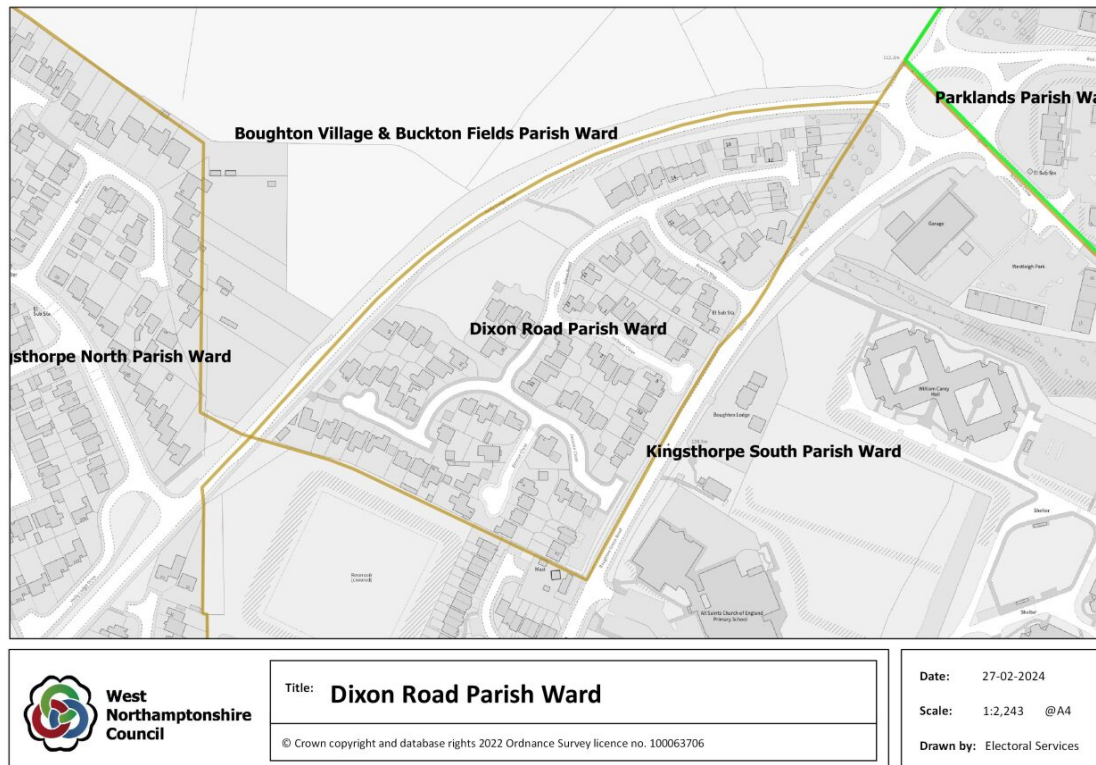
5.4.6 Boughton and Kingsthorpe

- 5.4.7 The Council included within the Stage 1 Consultation information relating to the small parish ward (Dixon Road) that was created by the Local Government Boundary Commission as a result of the alignment of the new Council ward boundary between Kingsthorpe South Ward and Moulton Ward. The ward is composed of 207 electors. It was suggested this ward move from Boughton Parish to Kingsthorpe Parish to re-align the parish and ward boundaries (map shown below). The response from Boughton Parish Council endorsed this proposal.

- 5.4.8 Two responses referred to the size of Kingsthorpe Parish Council, suggesting it was already large. However, these may have been based on a misunderstanding as the maps for Kingsthorpe and Boughton were presented adjacent to one another, which may have caused

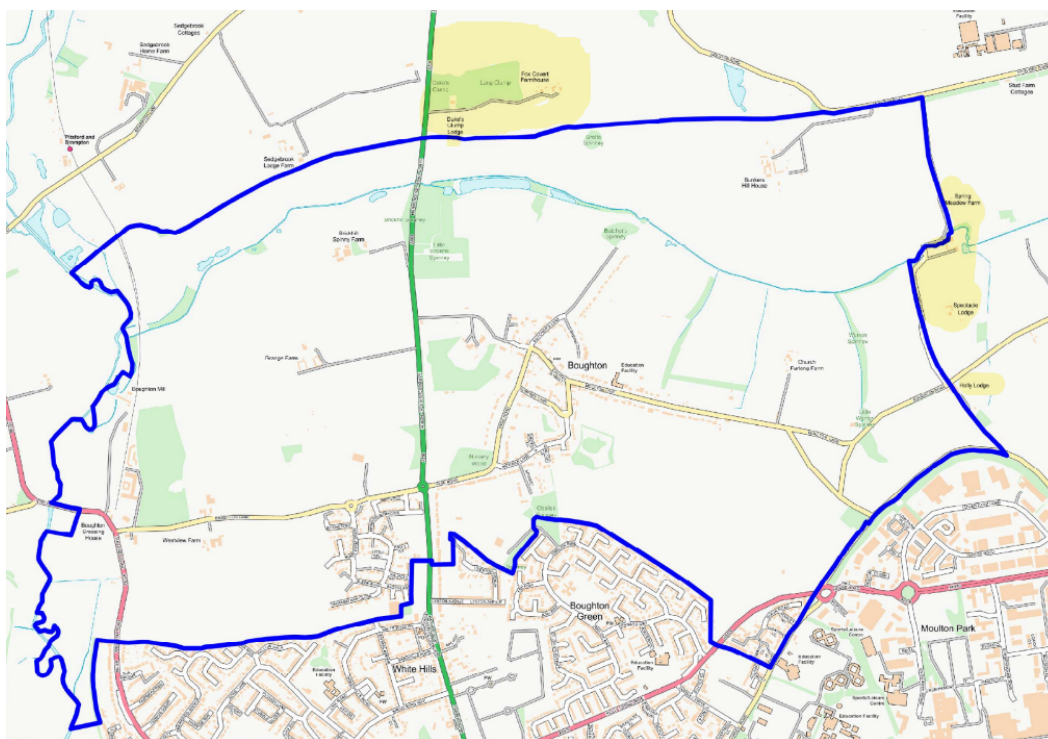
confusion in terms of whether it was proposed to merge Kingsthorpe and Boughton. To clarify, no such proposal has ever been made.

- 5.4.9 Five responses were received under the heading of Kingsthorpe Parish, the majority of which related to the proposal to move the Dixon Road parish ward from Boughton to Kingsthorpe, which was not opposed. One respondent identifying themselves as a local ward member suggested exploring moving the Buckton Fields estate from Boughton Parish to Kingsthorpe Parish. This suggested was examined carefully as part of the boundary review of the Council's own warding arrangements and was discounted based on consultation feedback and input from local ward members. Eight incomplete responses were submitted, none of which yielded any data.
- 5.4.10 It should be noted that this proposal would constitute a change to 'protected' arrangements as defined by s.86 of the Act and permission from the Boundary Commission has therefore been sought.



Map 1: Dixon Road Ward

- 5.4.11 Boughton Parish Council also suggested moving individual dwellings adjacent to Boughton Parish into the Parish. The dwellings in question are Fox Covert Farmhouse, Fox Covert Hall, Duke's Clump Lodge, Spring Meadow Farm, Spectacle Lodge and Holly Lodge. The parish council suggest that this would bring the whole of Spectacle Lane together with properties served by it into the parish. (areas highlighted yellow on the map below.)



Map 2: Boughton Parish

Recommendation:

- a) That the proposal to transfer dwellings at Dixon Road from Boughton Parish to Kingsthorpe Parish be included within the Stage 2 consultation, subject to approval being obtained from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- b) That members consider whether the transfer of other dwellings adjacent to Boughton Parish be included within the Stage 2 consultation.

5.4.12 **Brington**

5.4.13 Brington was not included within the original term of reference for the review. However, the Council was contacted by the Clerk to the parish council during the first stage consultation to advise that the Council considered whether any changes might be required when it met in January 2024. The Council voted to propose that the parish meeting of Althorp be included within the Brington Parish Boundary.

5.4.14 As the Council is being asked to adopt recommendations for the second stage consultation, there is a window of opportunity to amend the terms of reference for the review to include Brington Parish.

Recommendation: that the terms of reference are amended to include Brington parish and the proposal to incorporate Althorp Parish Meeting as set out above is included in the second stage of the consultation.

5.4.15 **Brockhall**

5.4.16 The pre-review consultation generated a suggestion that Brockhall Parish Meeting be included in the review in order that a consultation on its potential dissolution could take place. If the Parish Meeting were to be dissolved, the area would be incorporated into a suitable neighbouring parish. The only suitable parish that could incorporate Brockhall would be Norton, as the other surrounding parishes are in neighbouring council wards.

5.4.17 The Stage 1 consultation generated no further responses about this suggestion.

Recommendation: Recommendation: that the proposal to dissolve Brockhall Parish Meeting and absorb the area into a neighbouring parish be included within the Stage 2 consultation.

5.4.18 **Clay Coton**

5.4.19 The pre-review consultation generated a suggestion that Clay Coton Parish Meeting be included in the review in order that a consultation on its potential dissolution could take place. If the Parish Meeting were to be dissolved, the area would be incorporated into a suitable neighbouring parish. Suitable parishes could be Elkington, Lilbourne, Stanford and Elkington. Lilbourne and Yelvertoft are connected to Clay Coton by road.

5.4.20 The Stage 1 consultation generated no further responses about this suggestion.

Recommendation: Recommendation: that the proposal to dissolve Clay Coton Parish Meeting and absorb the area into a neighbouring parish be included within the Stage 2 consultation.

5.4.21 **Cottesbrooke**

5.4.22 The pre-review consultation generated a suggestion that Cottesbrooke Parish Meeting be included in the review in order that a consultation on its potential dissolution could take place. If the Parish Meeting were to be dissolved, the area would be incorporated into a suitable neighbouring parish. Suitable parishes could be Creaton, Guilsborough or Naseby, all of which are connected to Cottesbrooke by road.

5.4.23 The Stage 1 consultation generated no further responses about this suggestion.

Recommendation: Recommendation: that the proposal to dissolve Cottesbrooke Parish Meeting and absorb the area into a neighbouring parish be included within the Stage 2 consultation.

5.4.24 **Kings Sutton, Farthinghoe and Middleton Cheney**

5.4.25 During the pre-review consultation with parishes, Kings Sutton Parish Council suggested the Council may wish to consider whether Purston, which is not connected to Kings Sutton by road, could be moved to an alternative parish. Neighbouring parishes include Middleton Cheney, Farthinghoe and Newbottle. Middleton Cheney appears to be the most logical solution as Purston is only accessible by road from that parish.

5.4.26 A response was received from a member of West Northamptonshire Council endorsing the proposal and also suggesting Overthorpe could be included within Middleton Cheney. A further 'no comment' response was received. A number of incomplete responses were received, one of which stated "remain with Kings Sutton".

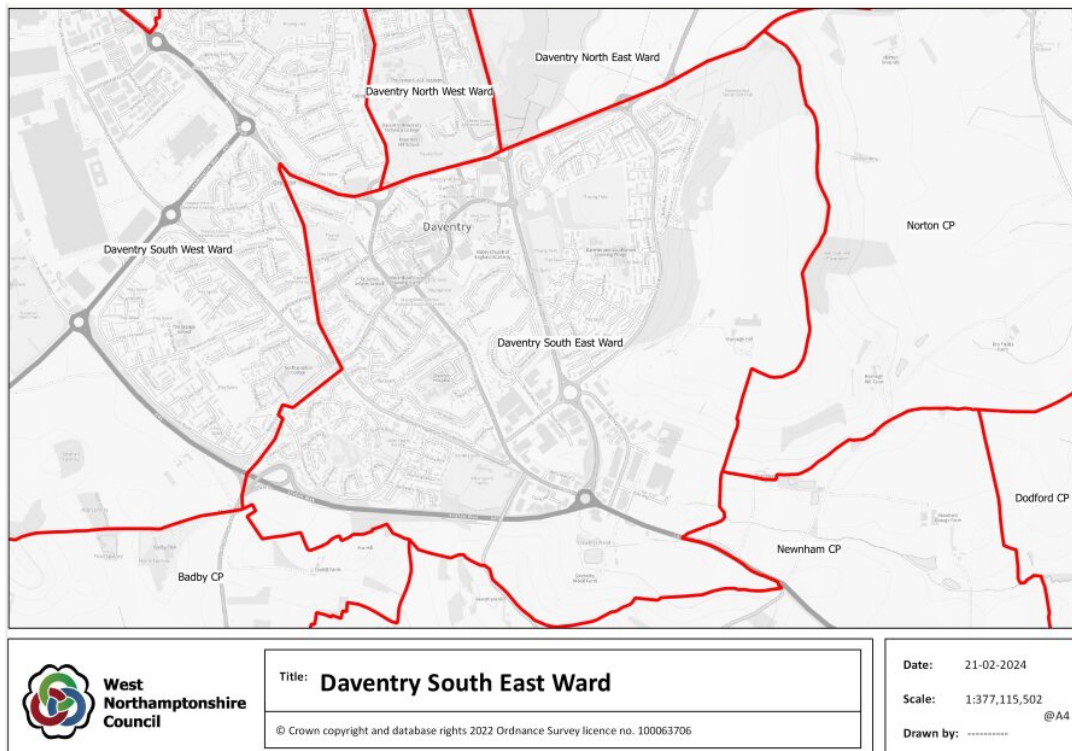
Recommendation: that the proposal to alter the boundary between these parishes to potentially include Purston within Middleton Cheney parish be included within the Stage 2 consultation.

5.4.27 Daventry

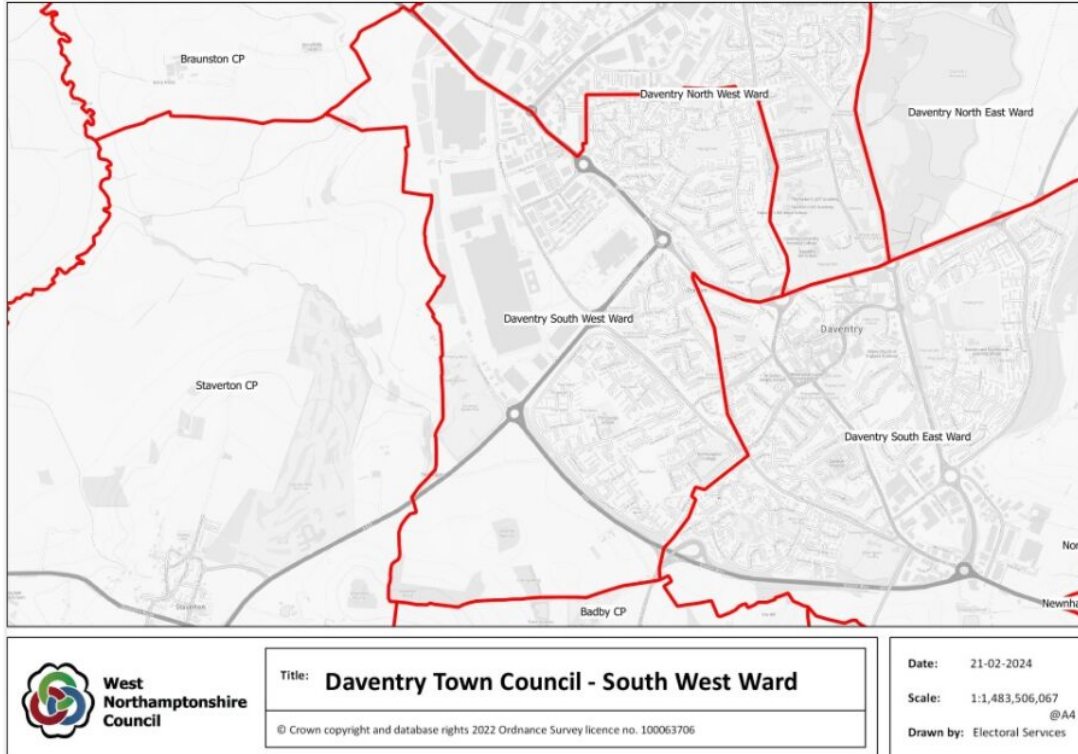
5.4.28 Daventry Town Council suggested they might wish to change the number of parish councillors to an odd number. Eight responses were received in relation to this proposal, with the majority supporting a change to the number of councillors. Some suggested a reduction, while others suggested an increase. Four incomplete responses were also received, one of which was in favour of an increase (the other three expressed no view).

5.4.29 Daventry Town Council have voiced a concern that the newly-created Daventry South Town Council ward is very large (in parish terms) and better representation could be achieved were the ward to be divided into two approximately equal halves. The Town Council has also suggested that changing the number of councillors at the same time would be difficult to achieve as an approximately equal split would be far more difficult to achieve using existing polling district boundaries.

5.4.30 A map of the proposed split of Daventry South town council ward is set out below, along with electorate numbers and proposed numbers of town councillors in accordance with the Town Council's suggestion.



Map 3 Daventry South East Ward



Map 4: Daventry Town South West ward

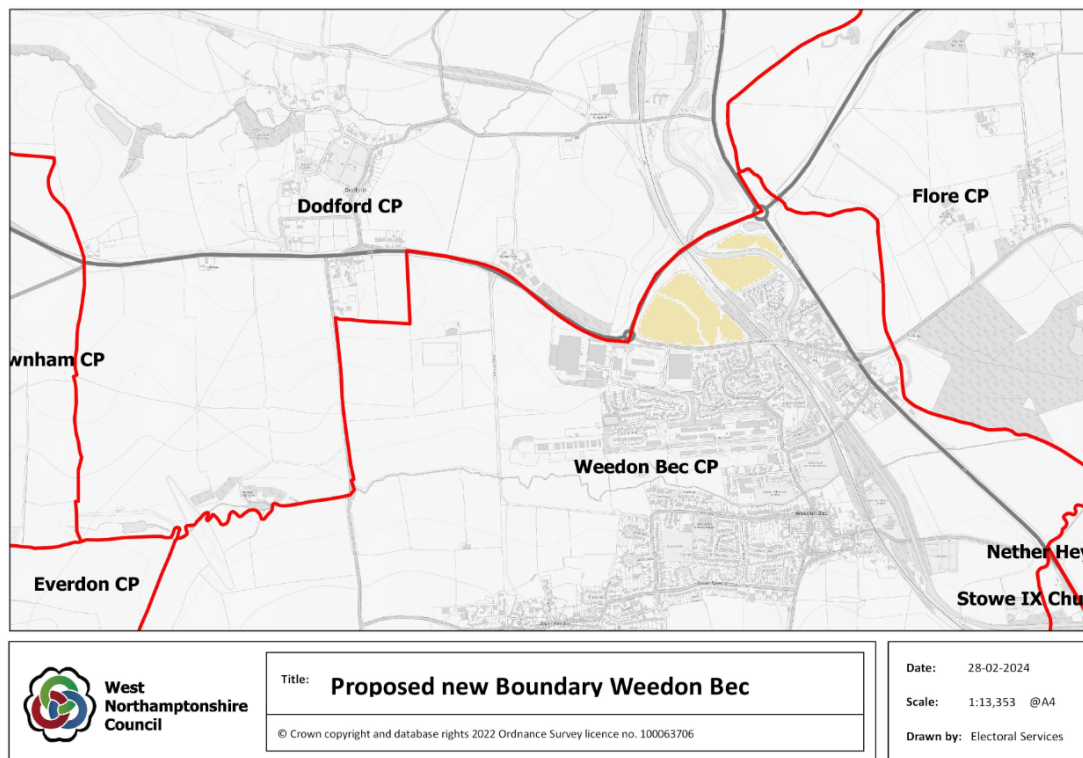
5.4.31 The Council considers that this suggestion is logical, although it would represent a change to the parish electoral arrangements put in place by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. Permission has therefore been sought from the Commission to take this proposal forward.

5.4.32 For clarity, the proposal is that Daventry South Parish Ward be divided into two parish wards as shown above and named Daventry Southeast and Daventry Southwest. The ward to the southeast will be composed of polling districts ADW7, ADE2 and ADE3. The electorate is 6554 and is forecast to rise to 6752 by 2028. The ward to the southwest will be composed of polling districts ADW1, ADW3 and ADW6. It will have an electorate of 6361, forecast to rise to 7012 by 2028. It is proposed that each ward will be represented by five councillors, representing no overall increase.

Recommendation: that the proposal to divide Daventry South Ward into two town council wards included within the Stage 2 consultation, subject to consent being sought and obtained from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

5.4.33 **Dodford and Weedon Bec**

5.4.34 It was suggested to the Council that the boundary between Dodford Parish and Weedon Bec parish be moved to align with the new section of the A45 constructed in 2017, from the roundabout on the A5 north of Weedon Bec to the roundabout with Weedon Bec High Street.



5.4.35 One response was received from a resident in support of the recommendation. The change does not conflict with any of the new council wards and there are no dwellings in the area in question.

Recommendation: that the proposal to alter the boundary between Dodford and Weedon Bec be included within the Stage 2 consultation.

5.4.36 Hackleton and Wootton

5.4.37 The Local Government Boundary Commission created a ‘Hackleton Urban’ parish ward to the northwest of Hackleton Parish. This was undertaken to ensure the area in question, where development had taken place on the border between the former Northampton and South Northamptonshire districts, could be incorporated within the new WNC Nene Valley ward. The area in question is currently home to 763 electors.

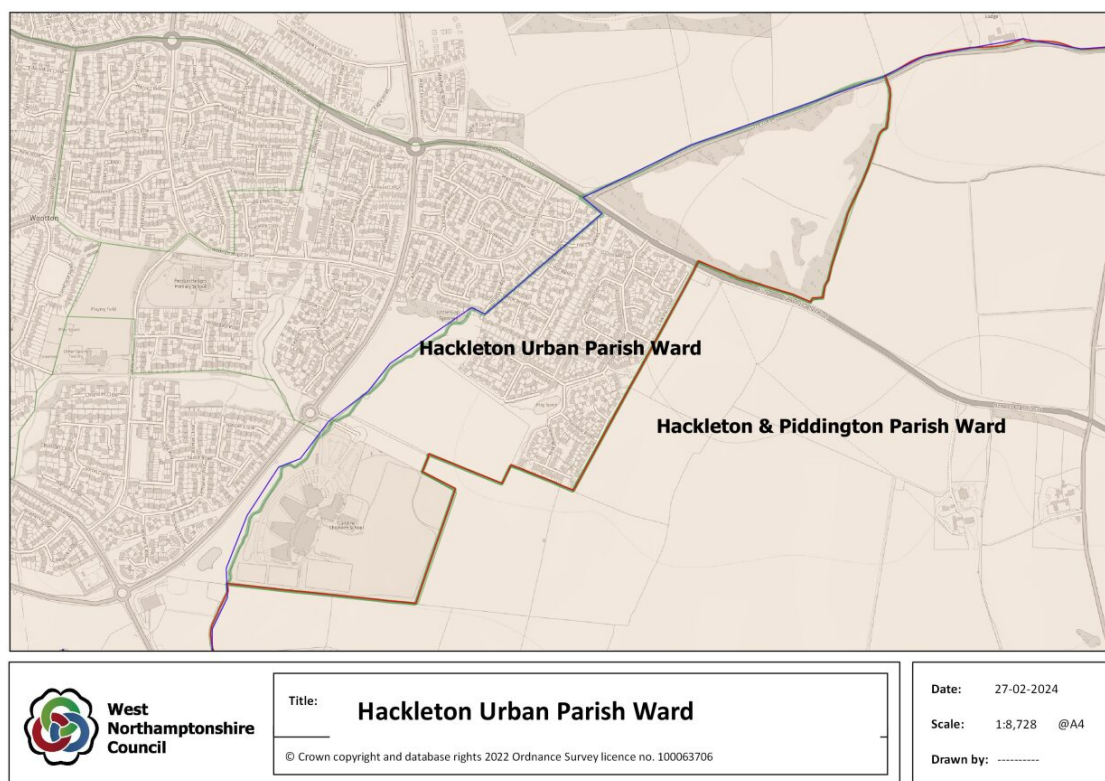
5.4.38 The Council received a proposal to move the area covered by this parish ward from Hackleton Parish into Wootton Parish. During the Stage 1 consultation the Council received a response from Hackleton Parish Council supporting the proposal. Wootton Parish Council have also responded to indicate they support the proposal. As the Hackleton Urban Parish Ward contains 5 parish councillors, Hackleton Parish Council also proposed to increase the number of parish councillors in the remaining part of Hackleton Parish to 11 in order to maintain their current number.

5.4.39 It was suggested that an expanded area of land be transferred from Hackleton to Wootton in order to ‘future-proof’ the parish arrangements in case of further development. While this proposal is logical, because the new WNC ward boundary runs along the eastern side of the newly-created Hackleton Urban Parish Ward this could only be achieved by creating a parish

ward. A parish ward in this location would not be viable at present, so it is not recommended that this part of the proposal forms part of the second stage of consultation. Ideally this proposal would need to be taken forward by the Local Government Boundary Commission the next time a review of the Council's wards is undertaken.

5.4.40

During the pre-review consultation, the Council received a proposal to move the area covered by this ward from Hackleton Parish into Wootton Parish. During the Stage 1 consultation the Council received a response from Hackleton Parish Council supporting the proposal. Another response suggested the parish ward should be left in Hackleton but the response did not cite community reasons, instead highlighting their perception of the efficacy of each parish. Four incomplete responses were received. One suggested the parish boundaries should be left unchanged while the other three expressed no view.



Proposal: that Hackleton Urban Parish Ward be moved into Wootton Parish and Hackleton Parish retain 11 parish councillors.

5.4.41 **Hardingstone, Great Houghton and Little Houghton**

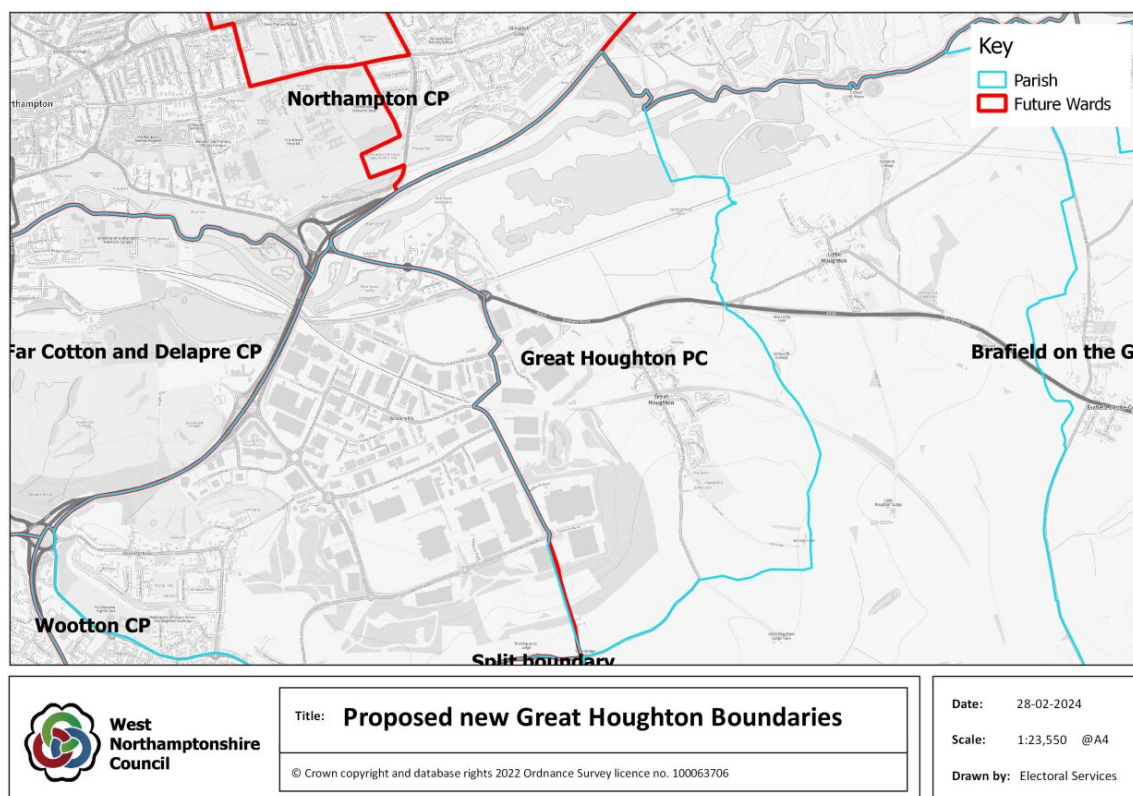
5.4.42 During the pre-review consultation it was suggested to the Council that the boundaries of Great Houghton Parish Council be altered to incorporate part of Hardingstone Parish to the west and part of Little Houghton Parish to the northeast.

5.4.43 The proposed change to the northeast would incorporate land containing the parish playing field, which was purchased in 1972 but is located in the neighbouring parish of Little Houghton.

5.4.44 Great Houghton Parish Council also suggested extending its parish boundary to the west in order to incorporate the total area of the proposed development of The Green, which will

incorporate a significant number of new homes. Officers have checked this part of the proposal and can confirm it conflicts with the new pattern of wards put in place by the Boundary Commission as the current boundary also forms the boundary between the new Nene Valley and Cogenhoe and the Houghtons wards. The only way to resolve this would be to create a parish ward. Unfortunately this is not viable at this point in time but could be revisited, ideally by the Boundary Commission, at a future review.

5.4.45 Three complete responses were received. One focussed on the area of land to the west of Great Houghton, which is not recommended for inclusion within the second stage of the consultation as set out above. Another response largely focussed on the amount and nature of new development in the area. A third was supportive of the proposal to move land from Little Houghton to Great Houghton.



Recommendation: that the proposal to move land from Little Houghton to Great Houghton, as shown of the map above, be included in the second stage consultation.

5.4.46 Helmdon

5.4.47 In the pre-review consultation, Helmdon Parish Council suggested they might wish to reduce the number of councillors (currently nine) by one.

5.4.48 Helmdon Parish Council subsequently responded to the Stage 1 consultation to advise they did not wish to make a change. However, two residents responded to suggest a reduction should be considered and a further incomplete response suggested seven parish councillors. Helmdon has 696 electors, which is below the NALC recommended threshold for nine councillors (currently 2000 electors).

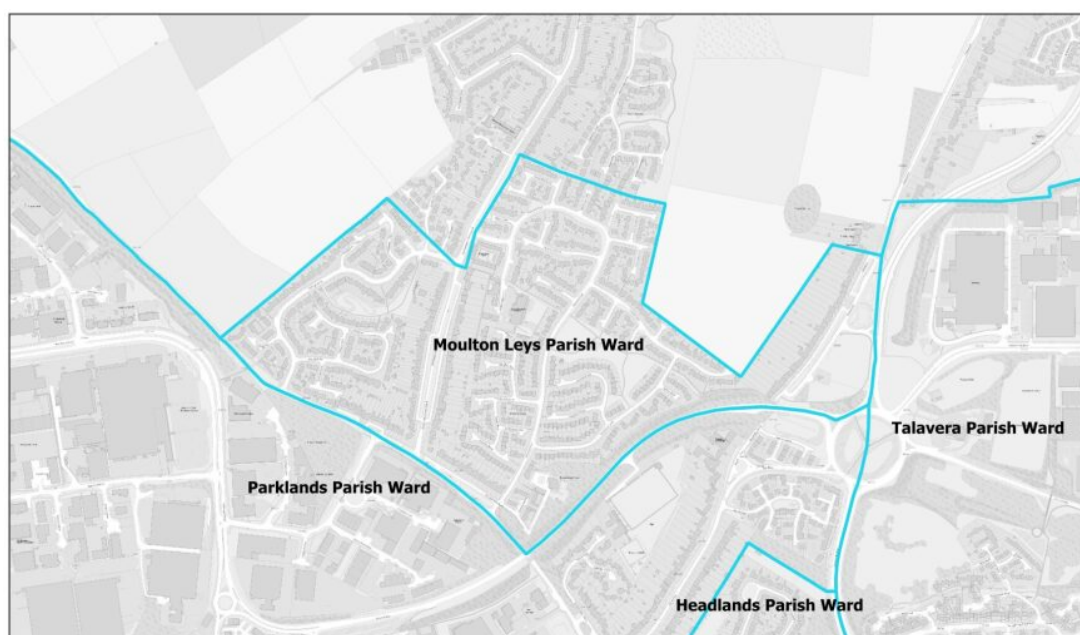
Recommendation: that the proposal to consider changing the number of parish councillors for Helmdon Parish Council be included in the Stage 2 consultation.


5.4.49 **Moulton/Overstone**

5.4.50 The review of the Council’s electoral wards conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England found support for the including the area known as Moulton Leys within a revised Moulton ward along with the parishes of Moulton, Overstone, Boughton and Pitsford. In order to achieve this, the Commission created a Moulton Leys parish ward within Northampton Town Council, represented by a single town councillor.

5.4.51 Within their report, the Boundary Commission stated “regarding Moulton Leys, we note that during the warding pattern consultation, the Council and some others expressed the view that this area and the community here looked more to Moulton to the north, than Northampton Town to the south. We also note that Boughton Lane and Moulton Lane form strong identifiable boundaries with Moulton Park industrial estate creating a demarcation between Moulton Leys and the rest of Northampton Town. Therefore, we are content that including Moulton Leys in Moulton reflects community interests and represents the best balance of our statutory criteria.

5.4.52 In light of the changes implemented by the Boundary Commission and taking account of the reasons underpinning the change, the Council included Moulton and Moulton Leys within the terms of reference for the review. During the Stage 1 consultation the Council sought to gather views about whether Moulton Leys should remain within the Parish of Northampton as a parish ward or become part of Moulton Parish.

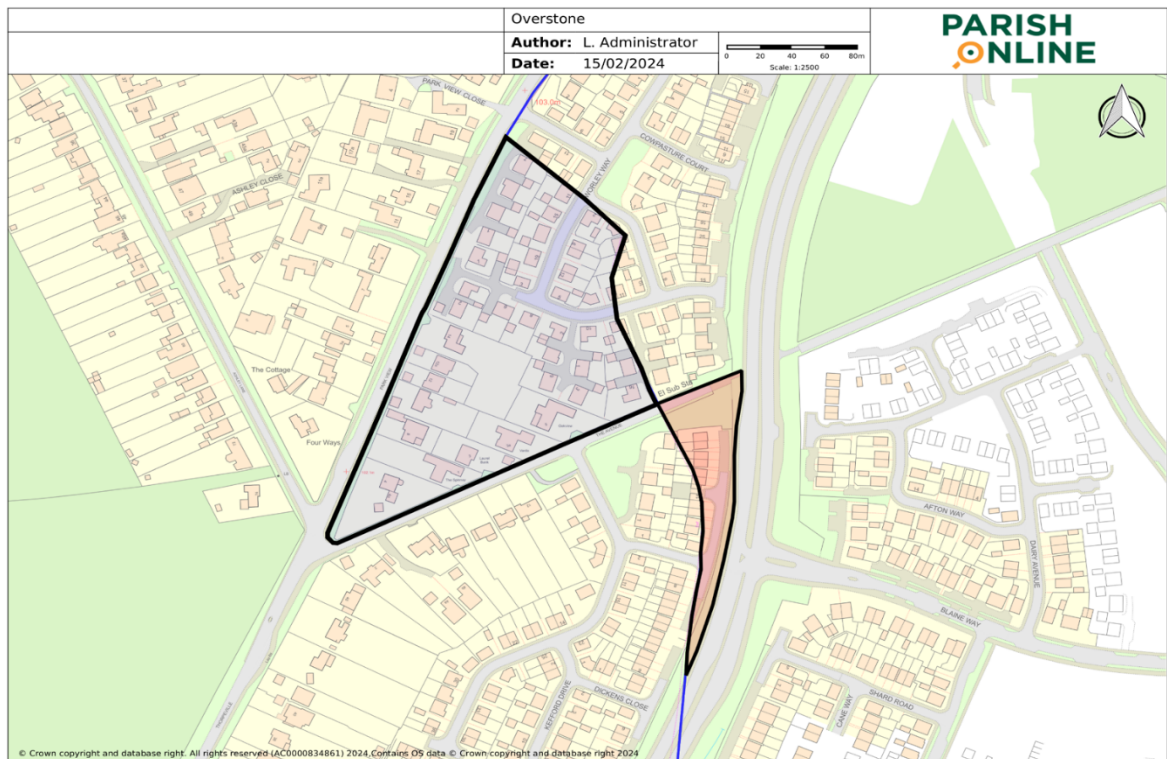


 West Northamptonshire Council	Title: Moulton Leys Parish Ward	Date: 28-02-2024
	<small>© Crown copyright and database rights 2022 Ordnance Survey licence no. 100063706</small>	Scale: 1:7,721 @A4
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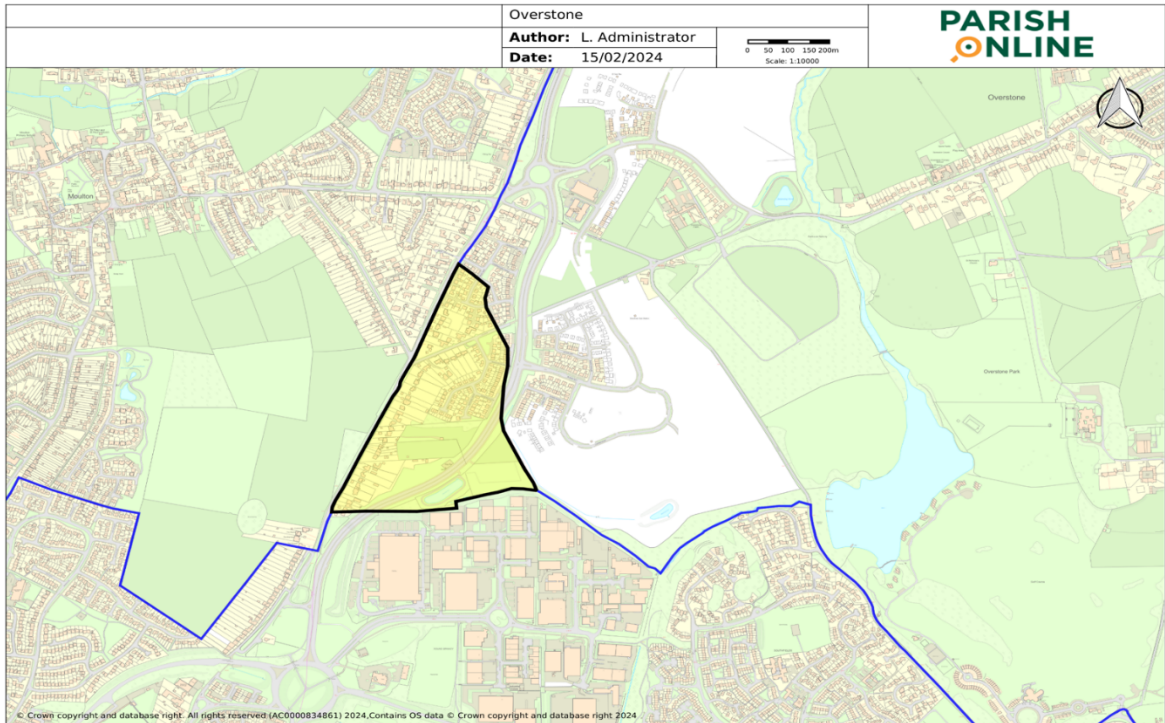
- 5.4.53 This proposal generated a significant number of responses (around 69 complete responses and 28 incomplete responses). The responses were mixed. Of those expressing a clear view, a majority indicated they did not support the suggestion while a minority were in favour. Others suggested more information would be required before they could form a view and requested a thorough consultation.
- 5.4.54 Survey conducted by Northampton Town Council
- 5.4.55 Northampton Town Council promoted a survey of residents via their website from 11th January to 25th January. The Town Council, in their submission to the Council's consultation, stated that the survey was shared widely on social media, including local Facebook groups but was ultimately open to any person to respond to. In the introduction to the survey, the Town Council stated "Northampton Town Council would like to retain Moulton Leys which historically formed part of Northampton Borough". The Town Council drew attention to the difference between the precept levied by the Town Council and Moulton Parish Council but did not attempt to present any other qualitative or quantitative data about the advantages or disadvantages of the proposal to potential respondents.
- 5.4.56 The survey found that 31% of respondents identified with Moulton, while 64% identified with Northampton. A further question found that 29% of respondents primarily accessed services in Moulton, while 62% primarily accessed services in Northampton. This is, perhaps, unsurprising given the scale and range of services located in Northampton when compared to Moulton.
- 5.4.57 Further questions sought to assess support for the proposal and found a significant majority of respondents did not support the proposal. The survey generated 137 responses in total. A petition opposing the proposal was also submitted via Northampton Town Council signed by over 460 people.
- 5.4.58 The Committee also heard from Councillor Mike Hallam and Jamie Lane, who spoke on behalf of their residents to oppose the proposal.
- 5.4.59 While a majority of respondents were opposed to the proposal, the Committee was mindful of the fact that a range of views were expressed and that over 1800 electors reside in the area in question. Having taken account of the consultation, the Committee resolved to propose the inclusion of Moulton Leys within the second stage consultation. However, the proposal to be consulted on will be that Moulton Leys is not included within Moulton Parish and remains within Northampton Parish. The Committee formed the view that consulting on a proposal for no change would be reflective of the consultation undertaken so far while allowing affected residents to have their say through a formal consultation.
- 5.4.60 it should be noted that, although the consultation will be on the basis that no change is proposed, were the Council to find there is actually support for the change then the proposal would represent a change to the parish electoral arrangements put in place by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and permission would therefore be required.
- 5.4.61 A further suggestion from Moulton Parish Council involved the Northampton North Sustainable Urban Extension (NNSUE). It was pointed out that the boundary between Moulton and Overstone parishes passes through some of the newly constructed properties. Moulton Parish

Council suggestion that new A43 bypass would provide a definitive boundary between the two parishes and further suggested that residents of this area use community facilities in Moulton. However, Overstone Parish Council commented that the majority of the NNSUE lies within Overstone parish and advised that some of the residents in the area outlined above had expressed a desire to remain in Overstone parish rather than moving to Moulton parish. Overstone Parish Council therefore suggested a number of options.

5.4.62 Option one proposed by Overstone Parish Council was to move the boundary to The Avenue (road) as shown below moving Moulton residents into Overstone and Overstone residents into Moulton. This would create a straight boundary, clearly defined boundary between the 2 parishes.



5.4.63 Option two proposed by Overstone Parish Council would continue the boundary along the Old A43, so that the area shaded in yellow would move into Overstone. This would result in a straight boundary that would be easily understood by residents, while the whole of the SUE would be in Overstone.



5.4.64 It was also suggested that the number of councillors in Overstone Parish could be increased to reflect the scale of development. This is a logical suggestion which could be included in the second stage consultation.

Recommendation:

1. That the proposal that Moulton Leys remain within the Parish of Northampton be included within the second stage consultation.
2. That the options set out above in relation to the boundary between Moulton and Overstone be included in the Stage 2 consultation.

5.4.65 **Northampton**

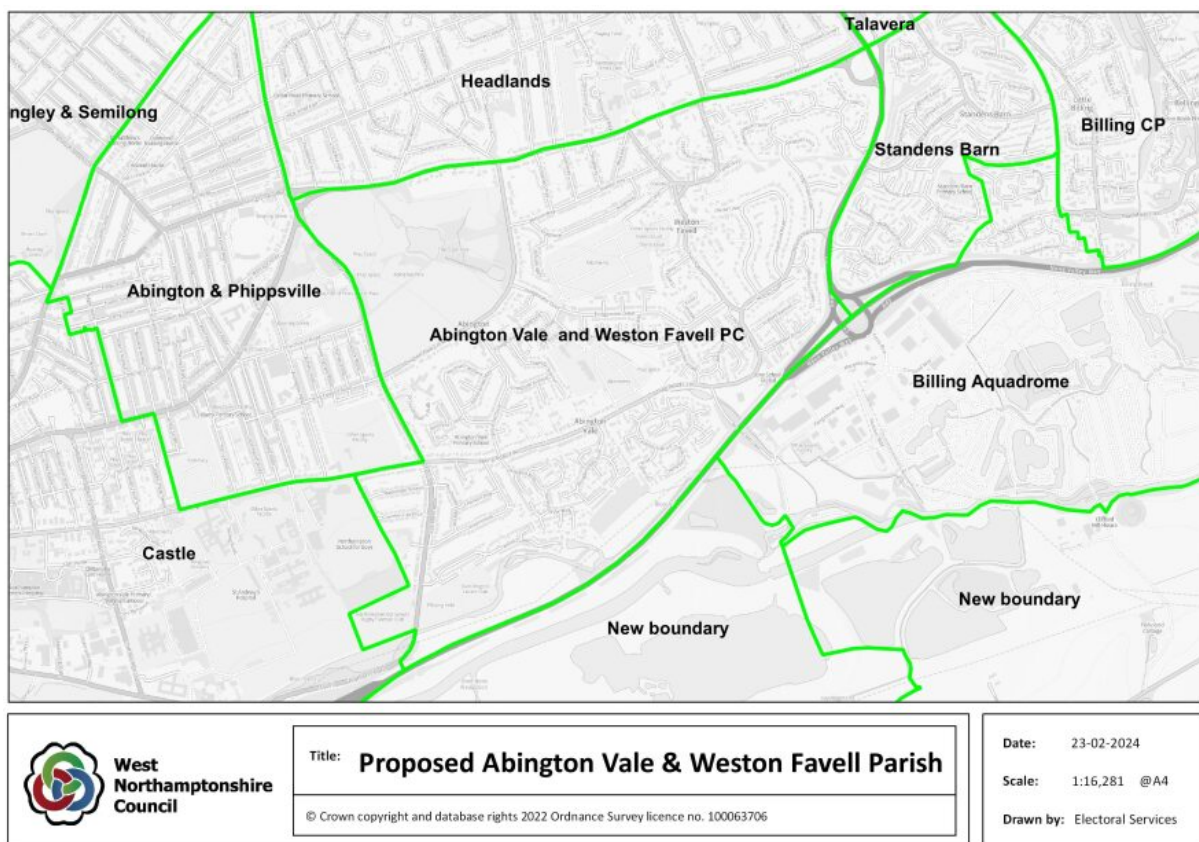
5.4.66 A significant majority of responses relating to the parish of Northampton were concerned with the proposal for Moulton Leys. However, other responses were received and the following proposals are highlighted for members to consider.

5.4.67 Northampton Town Council submitted a request that the number of councillors on Northampton Town Council (currently 25) be increased to reflect the size of the parish. It should be noted that 25 is the maximum number of members recommended by NALC for a parish or town council. This change would require consent of the Boundary Commission as they have set numbers for town councillors as part of their review. It is suggested the committee may wish to review this proposal once the second stage consultation is complete as there are a number of proposals that impact on the Town Council that may need to be taken into consideration should they be included within the final order.

5.4.68 **Abington Vale and Weston Favell**

5.4.69 As part of the Stage 1 consultation, a proposal was submitted suggesting a new parish council be created in the Abington Vale and Weston Favell areas of Northampton. This area was unparished prior to 2021, at which time the Community Governance arrangements implemented by Northampton Borough Council (passed by resolution in 2020) incorporated the area within the newly-formed Northampton Town Council, along with other unparished areas of the town.

5.4.70 The proposal submitted to the Council would establish a parish that covers much of the Abington Vale and Weston Favell Town Council ward with the exception of the Standens Barn area, which would remain part of Northampton Town Council and link Billing Aquadrome Ward to the rest of the Town Council. An outline of the area covered by this proposal is set out below.



5.4.71 The Abington Vale and Weston Favell Town Council ward has been put in place by the Local Government Boundary Commission as a consequence of the review of West Northamptonshire Council’s electoral arrangements carried out in 2022-3. As this proposal would constitute a change to protected electoral arrangements (under Section 86 of the 2007 Act), the Council is required to seek and obtain permission from the Local Government Boundary Commission before any change can be made.

5.4.72 Councillor Andrew Kilbride submitted a letter to the Council during the Stage 1 consultation setting out detailed reasons to support the creation of a new parish in this area and asking that the proposal be tested via the Stage 2 consultation. These can be summarised as follows:

- The area covered by the proposal has naturally formed communities within the identified boundary with the exception of the Standens Barn area, which is divided from

the rest of the area by a dual carriage way and which has no natural community links with the rest of the area. It was suggested this area would benefit from remaining part of the Town Council and it large enough for form a viable ward of the Town Council.

- The area in question has two very active residents' associations; Bridgewater Residents Association & Weston Favell Residents Association. Both communities host regular events such as the Queen's Jubilee, summer fetes, days out, coffee mornings etc.
- The Weston Favell Scouts & Brownies organisations are located within this area, which serves local children very well, together with open spaces including the playground areas in Bridgewater Drive and award-winning Abington Park.
- The area is served by St Peters church in Weston Favell Village, which has a strong membership of church attendees and has church rooms nearby where many community events take place.
- Both communities use the Weston Favell allotments in Graspin Lane which are very well utilised and a source pride for locals and creates community wellbeing.
- The area is served by Bridgewater Primary School, Abington Vale School, and Northampton Schools for Boys.
- There are many other community facilities, including three public houses, Northampton County Lawn Tennis Club, a supermarket, hairdressers and local shops.

5.4.73 Councillor Kilbride stated his belief that the area identified is a close and self-sufficient community that would make an ideal Parish given the opportunity. It was suggested that a parish council in this area could raise its own precept and ensure it is spent meeting the needs of residents in this area by purchasing more playground equipment, youth projects, allotments and maintenance. He suggested the area had benefitted little from being incorporated as part of the Town Council.

5.4.74 Letters have been received from Andrew Lewer MP (Northampton South) expressing support for the exploration of this proposal. Further letters of support were received from the Chair of Bridgewater Residents' Association, Stephen Legg, expressing support for the proposal and The Chair of Weston Favell Village Residents' Association suggesting more information should be made available in order that a balanced view can be taken on the suitability of such a measure.

5.4.75 Northampton Town Council indicated that it would like to retain this area within the Town Council.

Recommendation: that the committee determine whether to include the proposal within the second stage consultation.

5.4.76 **Tollgate Close**

5.4.77 Northampton Town Council invited the Council to consider moving the boundary of Semilong Parish Ward to incorporate the road known as Tollgate Close which currently sits within the Kingsthorpe Parish area. The Town Council believes this would ensure a cleaner boundary that incorporated the area up to Mill Lane.

5.4.78 It should be noted that the Town Council did not put forward evidence as to how this proposal would meet the key legal tests applicable to a CGR, i.e. that the identities and interests of the

community in the area are reflected in the proposal or that the change would provide effective and convenient local government.

Recommendation: that the committee determine whether to include the proposal within the second stage consultation.

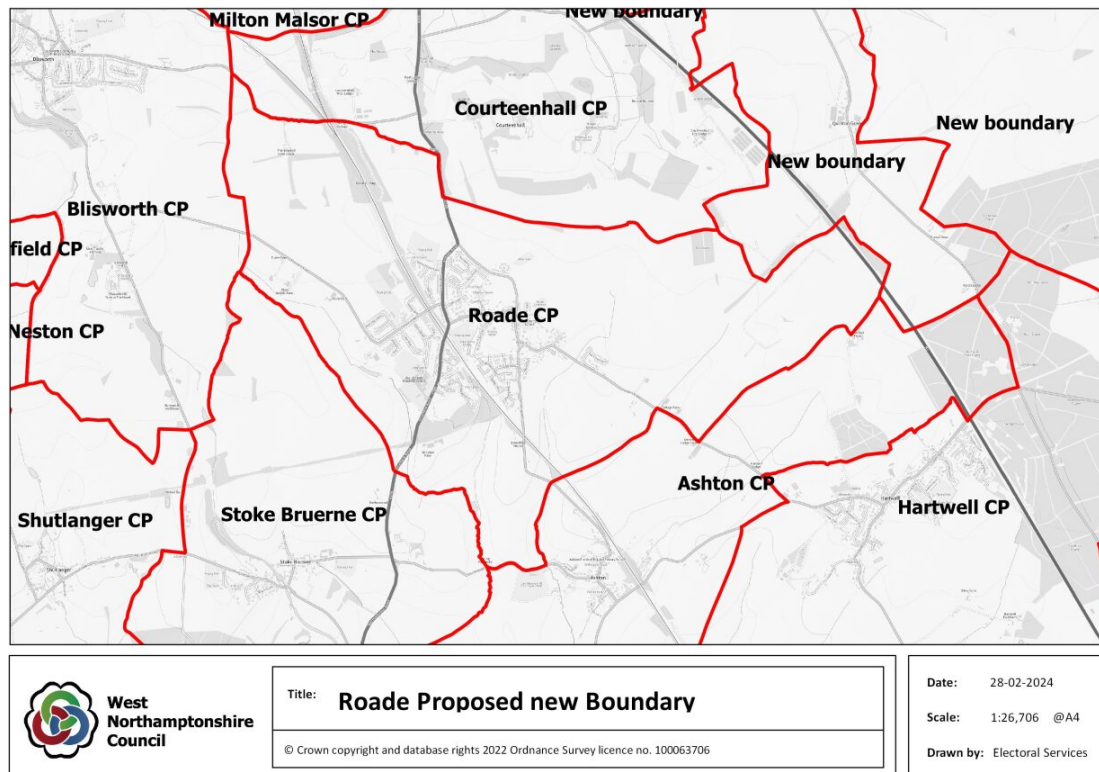
5.4.79 Pitsford

5.4.80 During the consultation, one suggestion was received to move Moulton Grange from Moulton to Pitsford. This proposal appears logical as the development is accessed from Pitsford.

Recommendation: that the proposal be included in the second stage consultation.

5.4.81 Roade and Stoke Bruerne

5.4.82 As part of the pre-review consultation, the suggestion was made that the boundary between Roade and Stoke Bruerne parishes be moved to align with the new Roade bypass. Four responses were received. Two were in favour of the proposal, one did not answer the question and one questioned why the change should be made. The proposal is logical and would not impact directly on residents.



Recommendation: that the proposal be included within the second stage consultation.

5.4.83 **Silverstone**

5.4.84 Twelve responses to the consultation were received, all of which were submitted under Silverstone. Nine of those responses suggested changes should be made and of those nine, five responses suggested merging the parishes of Silverstone and Whittlebury together. This proposal appeared to be on the basis that both parishes share similar challenges and opportunities linked to the motor racing circuit.

Recommendation: that the proposal be included within the second stage consultation.

5.4.85 **Ravensthorpe**

5.4.86 Ravensthorpe was not included within the original term of reference for the review. However, the Council was contacted by the Clerk to the parish council during the first stage consultation to advise that the Council considered whether any changes might be required when it met in November 2023. The Council voted unanimously to reduce the number of Parish Councillors from the current 9 (7 for Ravensthorpe ward and 2 for Coton ward) to 8 (7 for Ravensthorpe ward and 1 for Coton ward).

5.4.87 The Parish explained that the basis for the reduction is that the number of electors is just 55 for Coton and 496 for Ravensthorpe, totalling 551 electors. The Council understands that 8 Councillors in total is still higher than the recommended number of 7 based on elector numbers but is satisfied that 8 would be a reasonable number for the two wards.

5.4.88 As the Council is being asked to adopt recommendations for the second stage consultation, there is a window of opportunity to amend the terms of reference for the review to include Ravensthorpe Parish.

Recommendation: that the terms of reference are amended to include Ravensthorpe parish and the proposal to reduce the number of councillors as set out above is included in the second stage of the consultation.

5.4.89 **Thorpe Mandeville**

5.4.90 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. There was no response to the consultation survey, but the Chairman of the Parish Council wrote to the Council to advise that although Thorpe Mandeville is amongst the smallest Parish Councils in West Northamptonshire, the current maximum representation of five councillors creates a difficulty maintaining a quorum due to the minimum stipulated attendance of three councillors. The Council also believes an increase in the number of councillors would enable the parish to attract more candidates or working age.

5.4.91 The recommendation of NALC is for parishes to start with a minimum of 7 members.

Recommendation: that the proposal be included within the second stage consultation.

5.4.92 **Tiffield and Towcester**

5.4.93 Prior to the commencement of the formal consultation the Council received a suggestion that the village of Caldecote be moved from Towcester parish to Tiffield Parish. In total, thirteen complete responses were received in relation to this suggestion. Three responses in favour were submitted under the heading of Tiffield, while seven responses in favour were submitted under the heading of Towcester. Two responses were opposed to the proposal while the remaining response expressed no view. Of the twelve incomplete responses received, five were in favour and the rest expressed no view.

One comment suggested *“the boundary between Towcester and Tiffield Parish should run along the northern edge of South Northants Local Plan v2 employment allocations AL1 and AL3, so the employment allocations would continue to be within Towcester parish and the land to the North including the village of Caldecote and the surrounding farmland would become part of Tiffield Parish.*

5.4.94 The map below shows that area referred to above. It is suggested that this would be a logical boundary to use in order to separate the areas.



Recommendation: That the proposal to incorporate Caldecote within the parish of Tiffield be include in second stage consultation, with the boundary marked as per the map above.

5.4.95 **Upton**

5.4.96 One proposal was received, suggesting the parish name should be changed to St Crispin and Upton.

Recommendation: that the proposal be included within the second stage consultation.

5.4.97 **West Hunsbury**

5.4.98 Two responses were received to the consultation, both of which suggested increasing the number of councillors from 8 to 9 to reflect population growth. There are 3388 electors in West Hunsbury Parish, which supports an increase in the number of councillors according to the NALC suggested numbers.

Recommendation: that the proposal be included within the second stage consultation.

5.5 **Proposals not Recommend for Inclusion in the Stage 2 Consultation**

5.7.1 In respect of the following proposals, it is recommended that these are not adopted by the Council for inclusion in the Stage 2 consultation. This may be because the proposals are not compatible with the statutory requirements of a Community Governance Review or because the proposals found no support during the Stage 1 consultation. Alternatively, these may concern parishes that expressed an interest in being part of the review but in respect of which no suggestions or proposals were made, meaning there is nothing to consult on during Stage 2.

5.7.2 **Billing**

5.7.3 No specific proposal was made and there was no response to the consultation.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.4 **Blisworth**

5.7.5 No specific proposal was made. One comment was submitted to the consultation reinforcing a desire to maintain the independence of the parish.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.6 **Brackley**

5.7.7 No specific proposal for change was made. One comment was submitted to the consultation about funding services but there were no proposals to change parish arrangements.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.8 **Braunston**

5.7.9 Braunston Parish Council suggested the only change they might wish to make would be to the number of parish councillors. However, they did not indicate whether the number should increase or decrease.

5.7.10 Both of the responses received by the Council suggested the current number is correct. No responses supported a change.

Recommendation: that the proposal to consider changing the number of parish councillors for Braunston Parish Council is not included in the Stage 2 consultation.

5.7.11 **Byfield**

5.7.12 Byfield Parish Council suggested they would wish to increase the number of parish councillors from 9 to 10.

5.7.13 No responses were received in relation to this proposal. The electorate for Byfield is not forecast to reach the NALC recommended threshold for increasing the number of councillors.

Recommendation: that the proposal to consider changing the number of parish councillors for Braunston Parish Council is not included in the Stage 2 consultation.

5.7.14 **Church with Chapel Brampton**

5.7.15 It was suggested to the Council that part of Pitsford Parish be incorporated into Church with Chapel Brampton so the parish boundary aligns with the former Northampton to Market Harborough railway line either side of Brampton Lane. However, this change would not align with the new Council ward boundaries between Moulton and Long Buckby and the area is not large enough to create a viable parish ward.

5.7.16 Notwithstanding this, no responses were received in support of this proposal.

Recommendation: that the proposal is not included in the Stage 2 consultation.

5.7.17 **Cogenhoe and Whiston**

5.7.18 Cogenhoe and Whiston Parish Council suggested the boundary between Cogenhoe and Whiston Parish and Ecton Parish be re-aligned with the River Nene so that Cogenhoe Mill Caravan is included in Cogenhoe and Whiston Parish rather than being split between the two parishes. One incomplete response was received but did not indicate in favour or against the proposal.

5.7.19 While the proposal is logical, it must be noted that the proposed change does not align with the boundary between North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire and is not therefore resolvable via a Community Governance Review.

Recommendation: that the proposal is not included in the Stage 2 consultation.

5.7.20 **Cold Ashby**

5.7.21 No specific proposal for change was received. There were no complete responses to the consultation and one incomplete response which suggested no change should be made.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.22 **Cold Higham**

5.7.23 No specific proposal for change was received. There was one response to the consultation from the Chair of the parish council, who indicated no changes are required.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.24 **Croughton**

5.7.25 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation and there was no response to the consultation.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.26 **Culworth**

5.7.27 No specific proposal was made. There was one response to the consultation suggesting the number of councillors should be changed and the parish should be divided into wards, but there was no explanation or rationale provided. In the absence of any qualitative evidence to support this proposal, no change is recommended.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.28 **Duston**

5.7.29 No specific proposal was made prior to the Stage 1 consultation. Five responses were received during the Stage 1 consultation. A response submitted on behalf of Duston Parish Council indicated no change was desired.

5.7.30 One respondent suggested moving the development of St Crispin from Upton Parish to Duston Parish. This change would not align with the newly-created wards of Duston and Upton. This would require a parish ward to be created as it would not be coterminous with the new ward pattern. Other responses did not make specific proposals for change but commented on parish arrangements in general or the decision to form North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council. Seven incomplete responses were received, none of which proposed a change.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.31 **East Hunsbury**

5.7.32 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. Two responses received during the consultation, one of which was on behalf of the parish council. The parish council proposed no change. One resident suggested all aspects of parish governance (i.e. number or councillors, warding arrangements) should be changed but did not indicate what changes should be made or why. In the absence of any qualitative evidence, no change can be recommended.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.33 Easton Neston

5.7.34 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. There was one complete response and one incomplete response to the consultation suggesting no change is required.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.35 Everdon

5.7.36 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. One partial response to consultation was received but no change was suggested.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.37 Eydon

5.7.38 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. There were no responses to consultation and no changes were suggested.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.39 Far Cotton & Delapre

5.7.40 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. Four complete responses were received and one incomplete response. Two respondents suggested no changes were necessary. One response recommended abolishing the parish on grounds of cost but did not present any information relevant to the key legal tests, such as reflecting the identities and interests of the community in the area. Another submitted a comment questioning the effectiveness of the parish.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.41 Flore

5.7.42 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. There was one response to the consultation which suggested no change is necessary.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.43 **Grange Park**

5.7.44 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. There were no complete response to consultation and two incomplete responses suggesting a change should be made, but not specifying what that change should be.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.45 **Greatworth and Halse**

5.7.46 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation and there was no response to the consultation.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.47 **Guilsborough**

5.7.48 No specific proposal was made and there were no complete responses to the consultation. There was one incomplete response received suggesting a change should be made, but the response did not identify what that change should be.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.49 **Hannington**

5.7.50 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation and there was no response to the consultation.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.51 **Holcot**

5.7.52 During the pre-review consultation with parishes it was suggested to the Council that the parish boundary with Sywell be re-aligned with the route of the A43. However, it was noted this proposal would not align with the boundary between North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire and is not therefore resolvable via a Community Governance Review.

5.7.53 Three responses were received, two in favour of the proposed change. Holcot Parish Council submitted an incomplete response restating their previous position. One respondent indicated that they would expect the boundary between West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire to be altered accordingly. As noted above, this is not legally resolvable via a Community Governance Review. One respondent commented on the effectiveness of the parish council.

Recommendation: that the proposal to consider changing the boundary between Holcot and Sywell is not included in the Stage 2 consultation.

5.7.54 **Lampport and Hanging Houghton**

5.7.55 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. There were no complete responses to consultation and one incomplete response with no view expressed.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.56 **Naseby**

5.7.57 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. There was one response received from the Chair of the parish council proposing the movement of a small area of land from Clipston Parish into Naseby Parish. The land in question is otherwise separated from Clipston Parish by the A14. While there is a strong logic in pursuing such a proposal, the boundary between Clipston Parish and Naseby Parish has been used by the Local Government Boundary Commission as the boundary between the new Naseby WNC ward and the new Rural North-East WNC ward. As such, this change cannot be made without creating a parish ward. As the area in question is unpopulated, such a move would be unviable at this time.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.58 **Preston Capes**

5.7.59 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation. One comment was received about effectiveness of the parish council. There were no specific proposals for change.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.60 **Stowe Nine Churches**

5.7.61 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation and there was no response to the consultation.

Recommendation: no change.

5.7.62 **Shutlanger**

5.7.63 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation and there was no response to the consultation.

Recommendation: no change

5.7.64 **Warkworth**

5.7.65 No specific proposals were made prior to the formal consultation and there was no response to the consultation.

Recommendation: no change

5.7.66 **West Haddon**

5.7.67 No specific proposal was made, other than a suggestion the Parish Council would be willing to expand by taking on neighbouring areas. During the formal consultation no responses were received.

Recommendation: no change.

6 Implications (including financial implications)

6.7 Resources and Financial

6.7.1 Costs associated with undertaking consultation will be met from existing budgets. However, in cases where the Council is required to write to a large number of households, the cost may exceed the available budget.

6.8 Legal

6.8.1 The powers and duties of the Council to conduct a community governance review flow from the Local Government and Public Involvement and Health Act 2007 and associated secondary legislation and statutory guidance. At the conclusion of the review, the Council will be required to publicise the outcome in accordance with this legislation.

6.9 Risk

6.9.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

6.10 Consultation and Communications

- 6.10.1 The Council has made provision for periods of consultation within the review timetable. Consultation is undertaken in line with the applicable statutory guidance. The Council has widely promoted the CGR process and consultation opportunities through its communications channels, which has included social media, news releases and parish newsletter updates.
- 6.10.2 Early consultation took place with parish and town councils within West Northamptonshire. This period of consultation, which ended on 18 August, was designed to inform the draft terms of reference and aid the Council with its preparations for the review.
- 6.10.3 The first formal stage of consultation took place between the end of November 2023 and the end of January 2024. The results of the consultation have been analysed prior to recommendations being made to the Committee. A summary of consultation responses is appended to the report considered by the Democracy and Standards Committee earlier this month ([link below](#)).
- 6.10.4 All complete responses were reviewed and comments and answers reflected in the descriptions above. The incomplete data set was also reviewed in order to identify any incomplete responses that contained identifiable views. The vast majority of this data contained no

qualitative information in the sense that the respondents did not answer any of the questions, or indicated they thought a change was required but left no further response to indicate what that change might be or why.

6.11 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

6.11.1 None. A community governance review is a matter for the Council and, through delegation, the Democracy and Standards Committee.

6.12 Climate Impact

6.12.1 None specific. Climate implications do not form part of the statutory framework of CGRs, but any recommendations arising are unlikely to have significant climate impacts.

6.13 Community Impact

6.13.1 The outcome of the review will have an impact on communities in West Northamptonshire to the extent it will determine changes to parish boundaries or even the establishment of new parishes. The Council will undertake consultation on this impact prior to making final recommendations.

7 Background Papers

[Guidance on community governance reviews \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Report and minutes - Democracy and Standards Committee - 12 September 2023](#)

[Report and minutes – Full Council – 28 September 2023](#)

[Report and minutes – Democracy and Standards Committee – 11 March 2024](#)