

**COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW: FAIRFIELDS AND WHITEHOUSE PARISHES**

Report Sponsor: Sarah Gonsalves (Director of Policy, Insight and Communications)  
Tel: 01908 253099

Author and contact: Heather Baker (Partnership Officer) - Tel: 01908 254597

**Executive Summary:**

A Community Governance Review for the Parish Meetings of Fairfields and Whitehouse to become a Parish Council / Parish Councils; consultation with residents was held during November and December 2018. The overwhelming outcome was for two new Parish Councils to be created namely Fairfields Parish Council and Whitehouse Parish Council.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 give full responsibility for Community Governance Reviews to principal councils in England. This responsibility includes the power to create new parish councils by Order.

This report recommends the creation of Fairfields Parish Council and Whitehouse Parish Council.

**1. Recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 That an Order be made creating two new parish councils, namely Fairfields Parish Council and Whitehouse Parish Council, in accordance with the **annexed** Order.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Located on the western edge of Milton Keynes, south-west of Watling Street and to the east of Stony Stratford lies the Western Expansion Area (WEA), totalling almost 900 Acres. Fairfields will be home to 2,200 residences, a local centre, a primary school, and open space and play areas. Whitehouse will be home to 4,400 residences with a range of employment uses and will have a secondary school, 3 primary schools, community uses, health facility, indoor sports and other leisure facilities, burial ground and open space and play areas.
- 2.2 There are now 740 registered electors in Fairfields and 618 in Whitehouse, with numbers rising as residents move to the area as houses are built. It was an appropriate time to engage with the parishes of Fairfields and Whitehouse to conduct a full review and their electoral arrangements.
- 2.3 There is a small group of active and committed residents who are keen improve local democracy, have greater community engagement and provide a better local service delivery, and as a parish meeting they requested that they now become parish councils.

- 2.4 The new parishes of Fairfield and Whitehouse were constituted as Parish Meetings on 24 February 2011.
- 2.5 Council agreed on 24 October 2018 (Minute CL 84 refers) to undertake a Community Governance Review of the Fairfield and Whitehouse Parish Meetings. During the consultation for the review, the Council received 128 responses from the residents of Fairfield and Whitehouse, and they expressed the following preferences
- (a) 120 for two parish councils;
  - (b) 3 for grouped parish council; and
  - (c) 5 for one parish council.
- 2.6 Given the overwhelming preference for two parish councils, the proposal is to create two new parish councils from the existing parish meetings.
- 2.7 It is also proposed that there will be seven parish councillors on each council. This is for a number of reasons as outlined below
- (a) There must be a minimum of five councillors in each council.
  - (b) Given that the expected population is to be approximately 5,500 (2,200 dwellings) in Fairfield and 10,825 (4,400 dwellings) for Whitehouse, it would be prudent to have more than five to support the intended population, and prevent having to do another future Community Governance Review.
  - (c) Seven would allow for some resilience to ensure a quorate for decisions and attendance at meetings.
- 2.8 Stakeholders have been advised of the results and proposals, and responses received were in agreement.
- 2.9 Work is currently underway with the parish meetings affected, and an order will be drawn up. These changes will be enacted after the parish council elections in May 2019.

### 3. Implications

#### 3.1 Policy

There are no major policy implications arising from this report

#### 3.2 Resources and Risk

Time taken by officer colleagues to support the consultation and collating information did not incur any additional resources.

N	Capital	N	Revenue	N	Accommodation
N	IT	N	Medium Term Plan	N	Asset Management

3.3 Legal

**Any Community Governance Review would be undertaken in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews (March 2010) provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government Boundary Commission for England.**

Under powers in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 the Council can create new parish councils by a Reorganisation Order of Council following a community Governance Review. The decision to make a Reorganisation Order is a decision for the Full Council.

3.4 Other Implications

None

N	Equalities/Diversity	N	Sustainability	N	Human Rights
N	E-Government	N	Stakeholders	N	Crime and Disorder

Background Papers:

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by Secretary State for Communities and Local Government published March 2010