

REPORT TO ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Open/Exempt				
Lead Member Cllr Alistair Beales Email: cllr.alistair.beales@west-norfolk.gov.uk				
Lead Officer: Andrew Barrett E-mail: andrew.barrett@west-norfolk.gov.uk			Other Officers consulted: Alexa Baker, James Arrandale, Rebecca Parker, Anthony Drown.	
Financial Implications NO	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications YES	Equality Impact Assessment req'd NO	Risk Management Implications NO

Date of Meeting: 4th November 2025

HILGAY COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – NEXT STEPS

RECOMMENDED:

1. To review the response(s) to the consultation carried out in accordance with the terms of reference for the Hilgay Parish Community Governance Review (attached as Appendix 1 and titled: 'Consultation Results and Analysis')
2. To agree and approve an EAC recommendation to Full Council based upon two options:

(Option 1): Hilgay Parish and Hilgay Parish Council to remain unchanged and continue to be a warded Parish Council, comprising of:

- Hilgay Ward &
- Ten Mile Bank Ward

This will formally close the Community Governance Review without the need to progress with a second consultation.

(Option 2): Hilgay Parish and Hilgay Parish Council in its current guise to be abolished and two new (separate) Parishes and Parish Councils to be created based on existing ward boundaries:

- Hilgay Parish (Council)
- Ten Mile Bank Parish (Council)

This will trigger a second consultation period, encompassing details including: councillor numbers, financial matters, asset allocations and election details etc.

These options / recommendations fulfil the Committee's Constitutional Terms of Reference:

- Reviewing responses received following consultation exercises
- Formulating recommendations to Full Council on governance changes

1 Background

Community Governance Reviews (CGRs) are the procedures in which governance arrangements for parish councils and areas are reviewed and changes can be proposed

The powers to carry out CGRs are exercised by principal councils (in this case, the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk), hereafter the Borough Council under Part 4, Chapter 3 of the *Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007* CGRs enable citizens and community groups the opportunity to address issues of democracy in community governance, for example where there have been changes to the number or makeup of a population, or to review boundary issues / anomalies following development.

The outcomes to CGRs can include:

- Changes to parish or area boundaries
- Merging or splitting parishes/areas
- Changing the number of councillors

Reviews may commence under four particular circumstances;

1. At the discretion of the Borough Council.
2. By decision of the Borough Council in response to a 'reasonable request'.
i.e. from a parish council.
3. In response to a valid Community Governance Application from a 'Neighbourhood Forum' (in which case a CGR is mandatory per Section 83(2) of the 2007 Act) or
4. In response to a valid Community Governance Petition (in which case a CGR is mandatory per Section 83(2) of the 2007 Act).

The Borough Council received a valid Community Governance Petition from the electors of Ten Mile Bank Ward of Hilgay Parish on 14 November 2024.

The change suggested in the petition requests that Hilgay Parish and its existing wards of Hilgay and Ten Mile Bank are reorganised into two separate parishes with respective councils, split along existing parish and ward boundaries.

The borough council have a statutory duty to conduct a review to assess and make a decision in response to this request.

Terms of Reference and a timetable for the review were duly agreed upon and published, inclusive of a consultation. BCKLWN must comply with the terms once agreed and published.

A consultation commenced on 10 March 2025 and terminated on 20 April 2025.

2 Options Considered

Reason for Decision / Giving EAC Options to consider:

Based on the current electorate (Hilgay Ward: 708 and Ten Mile Bank: 344) both meet requirements to form separate Parish Councils.

Other Parish Councils with an electorate of approx. 350 include: Thornham, Old Hunstanton, Syderstone, Bircham, Wretton, West Dereham and Nordelph.

There is no 'officer recommendation' as such, because both options meet the criteria required. It purely comes down to local feeling and what works best for both localities.

Potential advantages if the Parish were to split could include: Greater independence (prioritising local needs), greater control of localised finances and improved localised levels of democratic representation.

Potential disadvantages could include: concerns at perceived increase of costs/finance and potential increase in council tax precepts, added division amongst the community, added duplication of running costs and loss of heritage.

Please read the 'Consultation Results and Analysis' for responses in full.

When considering the options, Members are required to consider the following:

- Consultation Results and Analysis at Appendix 1
- Hilgay Parish Community Governance Review – Terms of Reference (attached as Appendix 2)
- The Statutory Guidance titled 'Guidance on community governance reviews' and is available here:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a78e983ed915d0422066530/1527635.pdf>

Under section 100(4) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the statutory guidance **must** be taken into account by the Council.

3 Policy Implications

None

4 Financial Implications

None

5 Personnel Implications

None

6 Environmental Considerations

None

7 Statutory Considerations

Section 83(2) *Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007* – BCKLWN must proceed with a Community Governance Review upon receipt of a valid Community Governance Petition.

BCKLWN must comply with the Terms of Reference once agreed and published, per Section 79 (2) of the *Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007*.

BCKLWN must consult the local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body that may have an interest in the review, per Section 93 (3) of the *Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007*.

BCKLWN in deciding what recommendations to make must take into account any other arrangements (apart from those relating to parishes and their institutions) that have already been made, or that could be made, for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in respect of the area under review, per Section 93 (5) of the *Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007*.

BCKLWN must take into account any representations received in connection with the review, per Section 93 (6) of the *Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007*.

8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Pre-screening report template – To follow

None

9 Risk Management Implications

None

10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

11 Background Papers