

## **RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL 26 MARCH 2026 FROM THE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING ON 12 MARCH 2026**

### **Hilgay Community Governance Review - Next Steps**

The Monitoring Officer presented the report as included in the Agenda and drew the Committee's attention to the recommendations within the report. The Committee were required to make a recommendation to Full Council on the way forward.

Clive Joynes highlighted the responses received and the breakdown in responses between Hilgay and Ten Mile Bank residents, as included in the report. He acknowledged that smaller Parishes usually had less resources, smaller precepts and admin expenses could be higher.

Councillor Crofts commented on the low response rate and Clive Joynes commented that 6.5% response rate was considered significant and the Committee would have to make a judgement on what was best for the Communities.

Councillor Parish commented that often smaller Parishes shared a Parish Clerk to share costs. He also asked if now was the right time to proceed given Local Government Reorganisation.

Councillor Kemp made reference to the geographical size of the two areas and potential precepts.

Councillor Dickinson made reference to the population size of the two areas and felt that precepts should be split by actual tax payers rather than a percentage. Councillor Dickinson asked if further consultation could take place and was informed that there were strict procedures that needed to be followed. Councillor Dickinson commented that there were smaller Parishes in existence compared to the two proposed in this report.

Councillor Blunt referred to the Walpoles and that the Parish was split into three divisions and expenses were shared. He commented that Parishes could work together with separate divisions. He also raised concern that it could be difficult to encourage Parish Councillors to stand for election and ensure meetings were quorate.

Councillor Everett made reference to a duplication of resources should the Parishes be split, which could pass on additional costs to residents.

The Chair, Councillor Beales commented that there would always be a cost to democracy and provided information on comparative Parishes current precept levels. He referred to the responses to the consultation and that people had expressed a want for this.

The Committee discussed the current working arrangements of the Parish and the breakdown in relationships and asked if the Council could work with the Parishes to mediate.

Councillor Kemp proposed an amendment to Option 1, that help and support be offered to the Parish Council, should the decision be to not proceed with the Community Governance Review.

The Monitoring Officer set out the type of support that could be offered, including mediation and training.

Councillor Kemp's amendment was seconded, and after being put to the vote it was agreed that Option 1 in the recommendation be amended to read:

(Option 1):

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.

2. To request that the Monitoring Officer provide assistance to the Parish Council in terms of Governance and Decision Making.

The Committee then voted on which option they would be recommending to Full Council (with option 1, as amended). Four Members voted for Option 1 and three Members voted for option 2.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

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