

EC54: **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW- BURNHAM MARKET**

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The Electoral Services Officer presented the report on the Community Governance Review for Burnham Market. He explained to the Panel the request was for a reduction in Parish Councillors from 11 to 8 Members due to the declining population of Burnham Market. He added this was a formalised reduction through a Community Governance Review which was outlined in the explanatory notes included in the agenda. He added this was a discretionary decision to agree to the review which meant this was a Cabinet and Full Council decision. He referred to the recommendations and added the reason for conducting review was well reasoned and justified.

Councillor Sandell commented as this was within her Ward, she supported and understood the reasoning for the request for a reduction in number of Parish Councillors from 11 to 8. She added she was aware the Parish Council had difficulties with Parish Councillors sustaining on the Parish Council and the reduction in numbers was reasonable.

Councillor Kunes referred to his ward and that Terrington St John currently had two vacancies. He commented going forward this will be an ongoing problem and further request would be received and he supported this review. He added encouragement and advertisement was needed to obtain more Parish Councillors.

Councillor Devulapalli commented the importance of Parish Councils and as the principal body, she sought clarification on what was the minimum number of Parish Councillors which was needed.

The Electoral Services Manager confirmed there was a formula which provided an estimate on how many Parish Councillors were required and suitable for the Parish however this was a guideline. He added further requests from Parish Councils to add or reduce the number of Parish Councillors were to be considered in the future.

Councillor Sandell asked if it was possible to simplify the process and if other Parish Council's made requested it would cost the Borough Council time and money.

The Electoral Services Manager confirmed there had been discussions to conduct a wider Borough Council Review as there was ongoing issues with Parish Councillors not being able to fulfil the number of Parish Councillors

RESOLVED: The Environment and Community Panel supports the recommendations to Cabinet as set out below:

That Officers be requested to conduct a Community Governance Review in respect of Burnham Market Parish Council to potentially reduce parish councillor numbers.