



COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF DRAKELOW

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

1. In July 2023, South Derbyshire District Council received a valid petition signed by local electors from the parished area of Drakelow. The petition requested that a Community Governance Review was undertaken and sought the creation of a Parish Council for Drakelow covering the same area that is defined by the existing Parish Boundary. The petition that triggered the Review was signed by 271 local electors.
2. The District of South Derbyshire currently has 49 parishes represented by 31 Parish Councils and 18 Parish Meetings. Drakelow is currently represented by a Parish Meeting consisting of local government electors registered in the area. At the present time, Drakelow does not have elected parish councillors.
3. The Council considered and approved the Terms of Reference for this Community Governance Review on 2 November 2023. A copy of the Terms of Reference is available upon request. For ease of reference, the timetable for the Review is set out below.

Action	Dates
Terms of Reference agreed by Full Council	2nd November 2023
Publication of Terms of Reference	3rd November 2023
Consultation process – Invitation of initial submissions & Public Meetings	3rd November 2024 to 26th January 2024
Last date for submissions	26th January 2024
Analysis/evaluation of submissions and preparation of draft recommendations	27th January 2024 to 16th February 2024
Draft recommendations agreed by Full Council	28th February 2024
Publication of draft recommendations	8th March 2024
Consultation on draft recommendations & Public Meetings	8th March 2024 to 3rd May 2024
Last date for submissions	3rd May 2024
Analysis/evaluation of submissions and preparation of final recommendations	4th May 2024 to 10th June 2024

Action	Dates
Final recommendations agreed by Full Council	Date to be confirmed (anticipated July 2024)
Publication of final recommendations	Date to be confirmed (anticipated July 2024)
Preparation and publication of any Reorganisation of Community Governance Order	Date to be confirmed (anticipated August 2024)

4. The adopted Terms of Reference set out what would be considered during the Review. These questions are listed below and are addressed in turn at Section 3 of this report.
- Questions 1(a) & (b) - Whether or not a Parish Council should be constituted or any alternative and, if so;
 - Question 2 - What it should be named and the style that should be adopted,
 - Question 3 - Whether the area and boundaries should be altered to better reflect the local community,
 - Question 4 - How many Parish Councillors there should be,
 - Question 5 - Whether there should be Parish Wards reflecting changes in the local community, and if so, what the Parish Wards should be named,
 - Question 6 - The implementation dates and electoral arrangements that should apply.
5. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, consultation has been undertaken with the local community and relevant interested parties. The consultation process for the first stage of the Community Governance Review concluded on 26 January 2024. The results are set out below.

SECTION 2: RESULTS OF STAGE ONE CONSULTATION

6. Further to the Terms of Reference adopted by the Council on 2 November 2023, consultation was undertaken with the following parties:

- Residents of the parished area of Drakelow
- Ward Councillors for Drakelow and the adjoining Wards in South Derbyshire District
- Drakelow Parish Meeting and the neighbouring Parish Councils and Parish Meeting, including those neighbouring parishes in East Staffordshire Borough
- The Member of Parliament
- Derbyshire County Council and the County Councillors representing the relevant Electoral Divisions
- East Staffordshire Borough Council and the Ward Councillors representing the neighbouring parishes in East Staffordshire Borough
- Other interested parties, including Derbyshire Association of Local Councils, Linton Area Forum, a number of voluntary and community sector organisations based locally, Countryside Partnership (Developer), VitalEnergi (Waste Plant), Eon (proposed solar farm), East Midlands Airport and Water Supplier for Drakelow.

7. The consultation took the form of letters sent either by post or e mail at the beginning of November 2023 and replies were requested by 26 January 2024.

Public notices about the review were displayed in Drakelow. Notices were not published in the local press (newspapers or magazines) because there were no publications circulating in the area. Information about the Review was published on South Derbyshire District Council's website. The consultation was also the subject of a presentation and discussion at Drakelow Parish Meeting held on 21 November 2023.

8. The adopted Terms of Reference required a statistically significant level of support (5% or 33 electors) to be expressed for the creation of a Parish Council based on the existing area and boundaries of Drakelow Parish Meeting. If the threshold was reached or exceeded, supportive draft recommendations could be developed in accordance with requirements of the statutory Community Governance Guidance.
9. At the conclusion of the Stage One consultation, 49 local electors had responded. This represents a 7.59% response rate. Of those who responded, 48 local electors (or 7.44%) had expressed their support for the creation of a Parish Council for Drakelow and 1 local elector (or 0.15%) had indicated that they did not support this step. The identity of the electors was verified by the Council's Elections Team against the Electoral Register for September 2023. The 5% support threshold was met and exceeded.
10. Support for the proposed creation of a Parish Council was submitted by two District Councillors (Councillor Alistair Tilley, Ward Member for the Linton Ward and Chairman of the Linton Area Forum and Councillor Amy Wheelton, Ward Member for the neighbouring Seales Ward and Vice-Chairman of the Linton Area Forum). Additionally, three neighbouring Parish Councils expressed their support for the creation of a Parish Council in Drakelow: Overseal Parish Council, Rosliston Parish Council and Walton-on-Trent Parish Council.
11. 5 or 10.2% of respondents submitted detailed supplementary comments. 4 or 8.16% of these were supportive of the creation of a Parish Council for Drakelow. The supportive comments reflected local concerns associated with the planned growth of Drakelow and a desire to see the creation of a Parish Council "*to represent local views and ensure that identified concerns were acted upon*". The specific issues included access / footpath matters, vehicle speeds and concerns about road safety, infrastructure requirements and the growing local need for community facilities. The creation of a Parish Council was described as "*an opportunity to improve our community*" and as "*a convenient and effective way of representing the interests and identities of the growing community*".
12. One local elector (or 0.15% of the respondents) expressed support for the democratic process and the drive to reflect local wishes but did not support the

creation of a Parish Council for Drakelow at the current time. This was because they felt that the cost of a new council would “*place an additional financial burden on local residents, many of whom were already struggling to meet daily expenses*”. This elector did not consider that the benefits of creating a local council would justify the increased tax burden.

SECTION 3: ASSESSMENT AGAINST COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE GUIDANCE & DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

13. In carrying out this Review, the Council aims to ensure that decisions affecting community governance within the area of the Review meet the requirements of statutory Guidance. This means that the proposed future arrangements should:
 - (a) reflect the interests and identities of the communities in the area; and
 - (b) be effective and convenient.
14. Other important considerations are the impact on community cohesion and the size, population and boundaries of the area and what (if any) arrangements have been made already or could be made for the purposes of community representation or engagement in the review area.
15. The following assessment sets out each matter being reviewed (in relation to questions 1 to 6 as per the adopted Terms of Reference), the relevant considerations and proposes a corresponding draft recommendation for each.

Question 1:

Whether or not a Parish Council or any alternative should be constituted for the parished area of Drakelow?

Background

16. Drakelow is a parish with a rich history which has been inhabited for hundreds of years. It is essentially rural in character with a popular residential area overlooking meadows, woodland and the River Trent. For many years the area was also home to the Drakelow Power Station site which is now being redeveloped to become one of the largest population centres in South Derbyshire. The nearest towns are located at Swadlincote (South Derbyshire) and Burton on Trent (in East Staffordshire). Until relatively recently the area was a farming community with a small population, several agricultural businesses and a small industrial estate. A series of smaller scale housing developments were built approximately five years ago and at that point, the population started to grow.
17. Drakelow is currently represented by a Parish Meeting consisting of local government electors registered in the area. At the present time, Drakelow does not have elected parish councillors.

18. The District Council received a valid petition signed by local electors from the parished area of Drakelow. The petition requested that this Community Governance Review was undertaken and sought the creation of a Parish Council for Drakelow covering the same area that is defined by the existing Parish Boundary and currently represented by a Parish Meeting. A plan which shows the existing parished area of Drakelow and depicts the line of the boundary is set out at Appendix 2 of the report to the District Council.
19. In undertaking this Community Governance Review, South Derbyshire District Council wishes to ensure that electors should be able to identify clearly with the parish council area in which they are resident because it considers that this sense of identity and community lends strength and legitimacy to the parish structure, creates a common interest in local affairs, encourages participation in elections to the parish council, leads to representative and accountable government, engenders local leadership and generates a strong, inclusive community with a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride.

Evidence of Local Support for the Creation of a Parish Council

20. The petition that triggered the Review was signed by 271 supportive local electors. Local support for the creation of a Parish Council was further confirmed during the Stage One consultation when 48 or 7.44% of local electors wrote or sent e mails to the District Council expressing their support. Under the adopted Terms of Reference this level of local support is greater than 5% of the local electorate and it is sufficient to enable a positive draft recommendation to be developed for consideration.

Securing Community Governance that reflects the Identities and Interests of Local Communities and Promoting Community Cohesion

21. The District Council considers that parishes should reflect distinctive and recognisable communities of interest with their own sense of identity and that the feelings of the local community and the wishes of local inhabitants should be primary considerations. The District Council wishes to carefully balance the consideration of changes that have happened over time, or that are likely to occur in the near future, through population shifts or additional development, for example, and that may have led to different community identity or historic traditions in its area.
22. The District Council also notes the Government Guidance that community cohesion should be taken into account in the Review, as well as that it "expects to see a trend in the creation, rather than the abolition of parishes."
23. Parish Councils have an important role to play in the development of their local communities. They can help to create cohesive, attractive and economically vibrant places which are capable of fulfilling their own potential and overcoming their own difficulties. They can help communities respond to challenging economic, social and cultural trends, and to demographic change. They can be well placed to judge what is needed to build local

cohesion, promote effective partnership working and can provide strong and accountable local leadership.

24. Until recently, the settlement pattern in Drakelow was essentially rural in character and included a hamlet with a population of a few hundred people surrounded by numerous outlying farms. The area was dominated by industrial activity associated with a large electrical power station site located entirely within the existing boundaries of the parished area of Drakelow. This is now undergoing major redevelopment. Whilst the existing Parish Meeting is playing a critical role in supporting the community through this major change, the opportunities and challenges associated with rapid growth mean that local electors are seeking strengthened local governance arrangements with representation through the creation of a dedicated Parish Council.

Electorate Figures and Changes to the Size and Population of Drakelow

Current Parished Area	Polling District	Electorate 2022	Electorate 2023	Electorate 2028
Drakelow	LTC	593	645	905

25. The above electorate forecasts have been developed by South Derbyshire District Council's Electoral Services based on the assumption that the number of electors in Drakelow will increase at the same rate of increase as occurred between September 2022 and September 2023. The increase between these dates was 52 additional electors in one year. This is a conservative estimate and in practice, the actual rate of increase could be considerably higher and accelerate as new homes which have received planning consent are completed and become occupied.

26. The Local Planning Authority is currently expecting 200 new homes to be built per year under approved plans for the phased re-development of the 106.8 ha former power station site in Drakelow. This major re-development entails the construction of 2168 homes in addition to a retirement village of circa 70 individual units. By the 28 February 2024, it is envisaged that a total of 400 new homes will have been built.

27. Section 94 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires that if there are more than 1,000 local government electors in a parished area, the review must recommend that the parish should have a parish council. It further states that if there are 150 or fewer local government electors, the review must recommend that the parish should not have a council. Both the current and forecast electorate figures for Drakelow fall in between these thresholds and it therefore falls to South Derbyshire District Council to decide whether or not Drakelow should have a parish council.

28. The Drakelow electorate already benefits from the more direct participatory form of governance provided by an active Parish Meeting. The Parish Meeting provides a basic level of representation for the area on a range of issues, including those arising from the significant impact of development

activity affecting the community. The Parish Meeting already raises a precept annually, holds regular meetings, works with local partners on the challenges and opportunities in the area and provides locally important information services through notice boards and a developing website. Whilst this has been effective in reflecting the interests and identities of the established community, there is no doubt that the population of the area will continue to rise and diversify as over 2000 new homes are built and occupied over the next decade. This is likely to place increasing pressure on the Parish Meeting as it is currently constituted, both in terms of its representative capacity and ability to respond to growing local community needs and aspirations.

29. Parish Councils have two main roles; community representation and local administration. They are well placed to respond to emerging community needs and aspirations because they have a broader range of duties and powers to provide local facilities and services as the population changes. For both representative and administrative purposes it is desirable that a parish should reflect a distinctive and recognisable community of place, with its own sense of identity. The views of local communities and inhabitants are of central importance.

30. In Drakelow, the community has clearly articulated its desire to have a Parish Council (based on the existing boundaries) which can represent the area and provide local leadership on important matters of concern. This is already evident by:

- (a) the submission of a valid petition by Drakelow Parish Meeting with 271 signatures supporting the creation of a Parish Council and requesting that this Community Governance Review is undertaken.
- (b) the responses by 48 or 7.44% of local electors who expressed their support for the creation of a Parish Council further to the Review's Stage One consultation process.
- (c) the range of supplementary comments submitted by supportive respondents during the Review's Stage One consultation process. For ease of reference, these are summarised above at paragraph 11.

31. Parish Councils have an important role to play in the development of their local communities. The creation of a Parish Council for Drakelow will enable focused community governance of this growing area in a way that is more fully reflective of the identities and interests of the changing community. Drakelow was originally the size of a small hamlet with a few hundred people but it is now quickly growing into the size of a small town. A Parish Council will have greater capacity to promote opportunities for established and new residents to meet, interact and get to know one another as the phased development takes shape. This will help to develop community ties, a shared sense of place and build community cohesion over time. The phased provision of shared community infrastructure in Drakelow, such as a school,

health, care and indoor and outdoor facilities for leisure, community meetings and events will assist in this process.

Securing Effective and Convenient Local Government and Promoting Community Cohesion

32. The Guidance covering the conduct of Community Governance Reviews states that the effectiveness and convenience of local government is best understood in the context of a local authority's ability to deliver quality services economically and efficiently, and give users of services a democratic voice in the decisions that affect them. It indicates that local communities should have access to good quality local services, ideally in one place.
33. The Community Governance Review Guidance indicates that parish councils should be viable in terms of providing at least some local services and if they are to be convenient; they need to be in easy reach and accessible to local people.
34. At the current time, Drakelow residents travel into neighbouring areas for some important local services and facilities e.g. schools, GP practices and community halls. The delivery of the masterplan for the redevelopment of the former Drakelow power station site is supported by a detailed Section 106 Agreement. This specifies trigger points for the provision of important community infrastructure including a school, local centre and a health facility aligned to the new development.
35. Whilst there has been a significant shift towards more digital and remote accessibility of services since the Community Governance Review Guidance was written, it will be important for a new parish council to have access to local facilities for community meetings and events so that it can establish a visible presence in Drakelow "at the heart of the growing community". This will help the Parish to work in an inclusive way, build community cohesion and demonstrate that it represents the whole community.
36. The creation of a Parish Council could help to focus community and service development activity within Drakelow and in time, this has the potential to extend local service provision. A new Parish Council should be well placed to ensure that community views and priorities are effectively represented and as new community meeting facilities become available, provide governance that is more locally accessible, visible on the ground and convenient. The District Council recognises the importance of community meeting facilities and is actively working with the Parish Meeting to secure appropriate accommodation.
37. Drakelow Parish Meeting is already providing some basic local services within the scope that is afforded by the current precept level. A summary of recent figures is set out below:

Drakelow Parish Meeting	Year	Precept	Tax Base
	2022/23	£4700	318
	2023/24	£4250	342
	2024/25	£6700	519

38. The ability of the Parish Meeting to provide additional local services is influenced by its human and financial resources. As can be seen from the above figures, the cost of the precept has increased and the tax base (number of people liable to pay Council Tax) has also risen. The cost of the precept is met by a small part of the Council Tax that is gathered locally.
39. The population of Drakelow will continue to increase as new homes at the former power station site (now known as Dracan Park) are occupied. The local tax base will also increase (there will be more people to pay Council Tax) and, over time, this will make it easier for a local council in Drakelow to grow its capacity and afford additional local service provision. The gradual development of local council capacity is a well-trodden path and the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils (of which the existing Parish Meeting is already a member) is well placed to provide advice and support to any new Council undertaking this process. Both the growth of the tax base and the local availability of support and advice are factors which would help to promote the viability of a new Parish Council for Drakelow.
40. A Parish Council for Drakelow would be able to generate a precept annually based on the assessed Band D properties in Drakelow, which could be greater than the Parish Meeting precept as shown above. A typical budget would cover the following main headings: Parish Clerk (Hours per week / month), Insurance, Room hire, IT equipment, Training, Expenses, Subscriptions (e.g. typically for membership of the local Association of Town and Parish Councils) and would include a contingency figure and an amount for election costs. In terms of service costs and based on the services already provided by the current Drakelow Parish Meeting, the new Parish Council might, for example, provide notice boards and a website and / or some litter bins in a start-up phase.
41. The existing Parish Meeting is currently recruiting a paid Clerk and the employment costs associated with the role have been included within the precept figure for 2024/25. An appropriate level of provision for the employment costs would need to be included in the precept for the first year of a new parish council. It is important that a Clerk is appointed to assist with the administration of any transitional arrangements required if a new Parish Council is created.
42. In addition to employment costs, a new parish council would need to plan for proposed changes to the range of services it intends to provide over time and address the need for access to more local accommodation for community meetings and events. The financing and ownership of the proposed combined health and community centre and any associated liabilities for running costs

and maintenance are therefore potentially highly relevant to the viability of a new council. The Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008 cover matters including the transfer of staff, assets and liabilities etc. whilst The Local Government Finance (New Parishes) (England) Regulations 2008 deal with the budget requirements of new Parish Councils and the issue of precepts.

Alternative Local Governance Arrangements

43. The Local Government and Public involvement in Health Act 2007 states that principal authorities that are considering community governance recommendations about the creation or abolition of parishes must also take into account any other local governance arrangements (apart from those relating to parishes and their institutions) that have already been made, for the purposes of community representation or community engagement.
44. The parished area of Drakelow is part of South Derbyshire District Council's Linton Ward (which also includes other parishes and parish meetings). As a Parish Meeting within that Ward, Drakelow appoints a representative to serve on the Linton Area Forum. This Area Forum operates jointly with the neighbouring Seales Ward and the local councils from that area. The Forum operates as an advisory and consultative body in the interests of promoting improved service delivery and more efficient, transparent and accountable decision-making. As such it discusses relevant local issues and concerns and can make recommendations to the District Council's Policy Committee on matters regarding the delivery and performance of local services and the management of facilities, as well as policy issues and budgets that impact on the area. The Forum provides information and fosters close working relationships with Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Constabulary, Parish Councils and other relevant agencies. It provides an opportunity for discussion on matters of local interest across the broad area of the two Wards. The detailed Terms of Reference are set out at Article 9 of the District Council's Constitution.
45. The Area Forum assists in the effective local governance and co-ordination of matters affecting the Linton and Seales Wards but its remit does not include the dedicated focus and decision-making making functions available to the existing Parish Meeting or a potential parish council for Drakelow. The Area Forum is not constituted to fulfil that governance role and it does not have the same legal duties and powers that would be available to a local council representing and acting in the specific interests of Drakelow residents. A parish council provides the democratic opportunity for Drakelow to have directly elected councillors representing the area. The Area Forum, however beneficial for joint working purposes in the wider area, does not provide a suitable alternative governance mechanism.
46. Both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Linton and Seales Area Forum have expressed their support for the creation of a dedicated Parish Council which can better reflect the identities and interests of the rapidly growing Drakelow community. This locally focused body will be best placed to

understand and articulate the particular needs and aspirations of the community and work towards the provision of services that are more locally effective and convenient.

Draft Recommendations 1(a) & 1(b):

- 1(a) That the existing Parish Meeting for the parished area of Drakelow is abolished on 31 March 2025 and replaced by a Parish Council.**
- 1(b) That a Parish Council for the parished area of Drakelow is constituted with effect from 1 April 2025.**

Question 2

If so, what it should be named and the style that should be adopted?

Name of the Parish Council

47. The District Council will endeavour to reflect existing local or historic place names and will give a strong presumption in favour of names proposed by local interested parties. The District Council would wish to avoid composite names other than in exceptional circumstances where the demands of history, local connections or the preservation of local ties make a pressing case for the retention of distinctive traditional names.
48. The petition that was submitted by local electors sought the creation of a Parish Council for Drakelow. It is understood that Drakelow is a distinctive historical name that is derived from an area of land said to have been granted by King Edward in 942AD known as Dracan Hlawe or "Dragon's Mound". The name Drakelow is recognised locally and no other names have been suggested during the consultation process for this area. The District Council respects local wishes regarding the naming of a local council for this historic area.

Alternative styles of Local Councils

49. Parishes may have alternative styles to "parish". The alternative styles are "community", "neighbourhood" or "village". The use of the term "parish" in this document does not preclude one of the alternative styles of council being subsequently adopted by a newly formed council. Existing parishes in the District of South Derbyshire use the style of "parish council", the alternative styles having been introduced relatively recently in 2007. A consistent approach would help to avoid any initial confusion about the status of a newly created local council.
50. It is clear from the wording of the petition which triggered this Community Governance Review (signed by 271 local electors) and 48 expressions of support received from local electors during the Stage One consultation process, that there is strong local support for the creation of a parish council

in Drakelow. The District Council acknowledges that local electors would prefer that the proposed new council adopts the style of a parish council.

Draft Recommendation 2:

2. **That, in recognition of local wishes, the new Council for the parished area of Drakelow is styled as a parish council and constituted as “Drakelow Parish Council”**

Question 3:

Whether the area and boundaries should be altered to better reflect the local community?

51. The Community Governance Review Guidance indicates that the boundaries between parishes should reflect the “no-man’s land” between communities represented by areas of low population or barriers such as rivers, roads or railways. They need to be, and be likely to remain, easily identifiable.
52. A review of parish boundaries is an opportunity to put in place strong boundaries, tied to firm ground detail. It provides a chance to remove anomalous parish boundaries which can happen over time as, for example, communities expand with new housing developments.
53. It is desirable to review parish boundary issues at regular intervals because they are likely to be used to provide the building blocks for district ward, county division and parliamentary boundaries in future reviews.
54. The petition that was submitted by 271 local electors from Drakelow sought the creation of a parish council based on the same boundaries as the existing parished area of Drakelow. This position was checked during the Stage One consultation process of this review. Of the 49 local electors who responded to the consultation, no one identified any concerns regarding the suitability of the existing boundaries and no comments were received about any anomalies. In that regard, the District Council notes that the major redevelopment of the former power station site in Drakelow falls within the existing boundaries of the parished area of Drakelow. The approved housing development will not extend over the boundary.

Draft Recommendation 3:

3. **That the area and boundaries of Drakelow Parish Council remain the same as those on which the current Drakelow Parish Meeting is based (as indicated on the plan attached at Appendix 2).**

Question 4:

How many Parish Councillors there should be?

Council Size

55. As indicated in the Community Governance Review Guidance, “it is an important democratic principle that each person’s vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimate competing factors, when it comes to the election of Councillors”. By law (section 16 of the Local Government Act 1972), each Parish Council must have at least five Councillors and there is no specified maximum.

56. As guidance, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) suggests that the minimum number of Councillors for any Town / Parish should be seven and the maximum 25.

57. The former Aston Business School published the following indicative table for representation on Parish Councils:

Electorate	Parish Councillor Allocation
Less than 500	5-8
501 – 2,500	6-12
2,501 – 10,000	9-16
10,001 – 20,000	13-27
Greater than 20,000	13-31

58. By law, the District Council must have regard to the following factors when considering the number of Councillors to be elected for a Parish Council:

- the number of local electors
- any change in that number which is likely to occur in the period of five years from commencement of this review.

59. The table below sets out the number of electors in September 2023 and the estimated number of electors in September 2025 and 2028.

Current Parished Area	Polling District	Electorate September 2023	Electorate September 2025	Electorate September 2028
Drakelow	LTC	645	749	905

60. In September 2023, Drakelow had 645 electors. By September 2025, using the conservative estimate provided by the Elections Team, this number is expected to rise to 749 electors and by 2028, it is expected to increase to 905 electors. In practice, this will be subject to the speed with which new housing on the former power station site is built and occupied. There are some key factors, such as the economic climate and changes in mortgage interest rates during the next five years, which will influence the rate at which the number of electors increases.

61. Reference to the research undertaken by the former Aston Business School (HMSO, 1992) shows that a Parish Council in Drakelow would typically have between six and twelve Parish Councillors. The minimum number of Councillors that a Parish can have is five but, as indicated by current advice from the National Association of Local Councils, it would be more practical for there to be at least seven parish councillors to share the work involved in establishing a new parish council and to facilitate effective decision-making. This minimum would be appropriate if the number of local electors was stable at the level in September 2023 but, by the time any proposed new Council would be established and functioning (May 2025), the number of electors is likely to be higher (estimated at 749 by September 2025). A Parish Council made up of at least nine Parish Councillors from the expanding community in Drakelow would have better capacity to undertake the work involved in establishing a new parish and could also more effectively represent local views, articulate priorities and act as the democratic voice of this changing community regarding decisions that affect the area.
62. Whilst at the outset Drakelow Parish Council would be relatively moderate in size, it would be as well placed as other parish councils of a similar size to provide local services, albeit that in its formative stages the range might be more limited than those afforded by larger councils. This possible difference is not uncommon and often the range of services offered by a Parish Council evolves over time, with local circumstances and experience. There are numerous ways in which smaller councils can share resources (such as Parish Clerk, accommodation and printing facilities) and work with other neighbouring councils (e.g. through clustering, shared and joint arrangements) to provide services economically and efficiently.
63. The District Council recognises that, due to the scale of development impacting on the new Drakelow Parish area and the way in which the economic climate and changes in mortgage interest rates could influence the rate of growth in electorate numbers, it might become necessary to increase the size of the new Parish (i.e. the number of Councillors) quite quickly. For that reason, it is sensible to recommend that the number of Councillors is increased to eleven when the number of local electors reaches 905. This falls within the range identified by the former Aston Business School research on councillor numbers and provides some additional capacity without the need for a further Community Governance Review.
64. In terms of the impact on electoral ratios (the number of electors per parish councillor), the current and proposed positions are summarised below:

Parished Area & Polling District	Electorate	Number of Parish Councillors	Electoral Ratio (i.e. one Parish Councillor per how many electors)
Current Drakelow -	645 (September 2023)	0	Not applicable as Parish Meetings

Parish Meeting - LTC			do not have elected councillors
Proposed Drakelow Parish Council	749 (September 2025)	9	83.22

65. The average electoral ratio across South Derbyshire District's 31 Parish Councils (including both urban and rural parishes) is currently 189.5 based on 271 councillors for 51,356 electors. In parishes which are more urban in character, there are considerably more electors to each parish councillor. For ease of comparison, the current ratios of some neighbouring parishes are set out below:

Parish Name & Polling District	Electorate September 2023	Number of Parish Councillors	Electoral Ratio (i.e. One Councillor per how many electors)
Walton Upon Trent (Parish Council) SLF	635	8	79.3
Rosliston Parish Council (Parish Council) LTF	573	6	95.5
Cauldwell (Parish Meeting) LTB	81	0	Not applicable as Parish Meetings do not have elected councillors
Proposed Drakelow Parish Council	749 (September 2025)	9	83.22

66. The table shows that the proposed number of councillors for Drakelow provides a level of representation that is similar to the ratio currently achieved by near neighbours. However, this similarity is likely to change over time with growth in the number of electors predicted for Drakelow. The table below sets out the position that is predicted in 2028 and shows the effect of a draft recommendation to increase the number of Parish Councillors to eleven. The draft recommendation (if adopted) aims to restore the level of representation reflecting the growth envisaged.

67. By September 2028, some extra capacity would be beneficial to assist the proposed Parish at a time when it is experiencing rapid change and the challenges and opportunities associated with growth. This approach would provide an improved ratio of 82.27. An overview is set out in the table below.

Proposed Drakelow Parish Council	Electorate September	Number of Parish Councillors	Electoral Ratio (i.e. One Councillor per how many electors)
Drakelow Parish Council (when first created)	749 (in 2025)	9	83.22
Drakelow Parish Council (within five years or sooner)	905 (in 2028 or sooner)	11	82.27

Draft Recommendation 4:

4. That, Drakelow Parish Council has nine Parish Councillors when it is created and that this rises to eleven when the number of local electors reaches 905.

Question 5:

Whether there should be Parish Wards reflecting changes in the local community, and if so, what the Parish Wards should be named?

68. Parish warding is the division of the Parish Council area into appropriately sized wards for the purpose of electing Parish Councillors. Any Community Governance Review must examine the number and boundaries of Parish Wards, their names and the number of Councillors to be elected for each ward. In determining warding arrangements regard should be given to community ties in the area. In considering whether or not a Parish Council area should be divided into wards, the legislation requires that consideration is given to:

- a) whether the number, or distribution, of the local government electors for the Parish Council would make a single election of councillors impractical or inconvenient; and
- b) whether it is desirable that any area or areas of the Parish Council should be separately represented on the council.

69. There is a need to consider not only the size of the electorate in the area, but also the distribution of communities within it. The Community Governance Review Guidance indicates that "the warding of parishes in largely rural areas that are based predominantly on a single centrally located village may not be justified. Conversely, warding may be appropriate where the parish encompasses a number of villages with separate identities, a village with a large rural hinterland or where, on the edges of towns, there has been some urban overspill into the parish" Warding arrangements should be clearly and readily understood by and should have relevance for the electorate in the Parish Council area.

70. The District Council will be mindful of this Guidance. Each case will be considered on its merits and on the basis of information and evidence provided during the course of the Review. Any Parish Ward proposals should have merit in themselves. Not only should they meet the two tests laid down in the Act, as set out at a) and b) above, they should also be in the interests of effective and convenient local government. They should also not be wasteful of a Parish Council's resources.
71. The District Council will endeavour to reflect existing local or historic place names when naming any Parish Council Wards and there will be a strong presumption in favour of names proposed by local interested parties.
72. The District Council does not consider that the proposal to create a Parish Council for Drakelow based on the existing boundaries necessitates dividing the parished area into wards for the purposes of separate representation. It is considered more appropriate that, in the early stages of the new Parish Council, there is an emphasis on building local cohesion through a dedicated Council which can represent the priorities and aspirations of both the established and newer parts of the community. This will involve building a shared future vision and a strong sense of place and belonging. It should reflect what new and existing communities have in common whilst recognising the value of diversity.
73. Neither the petition that triggered this Community Governance Review, nor the comments received during the Stage One consultation process sought the creation of Parish Wards. Similarly, the discussion held at the Drakelow Parish Meeting on 21 November 2023 did not recognise Parish Wards as relevant arrangements for effective local governance of the area.
74. Further, the District Council does not believe that the number, or distribution, of the local government electors for the Parish Council would make a single election of councillors impractical or inconvenient.

Draft Recommendation 5:

- 5. That there will be no Parish Wards in Drakelow Parish Council's area.**

Question 6:

The implementation dates and electoral arrangements that should apply?

Electoral Arrangements

75. The next elections for all parishes in South Derbyshire District will be held in May 2027. If following the Community Governance Review, a Parish Council is created for Drakelow, and any amendments to parish arrangements are approved, these will come into existence from 1 April 2025, and elections will be held in May 2025. The initial term of office will be for the following two years ending with elections in May 2027. Elections will then be every fourth

year thereafter. This reflects the requirements of Community Governance Review Guidance and the local electoral cycle.

76. The implication of the above timetable is that, if the draft recommendation to create a Parish Council for Drakelow is approved, the existing Drakelow Parish Meeting would be abolished on 31 March 2025 with the new Council constituted on 1 April 2025.

Draft Recommendation 6:

6. That, in accordance with the statutory Guidance, Drakelow Parish Council is established with effect from 1 April 2025 and local elections are held in May 2025.

SECTION 3: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

77. The draft recommendations will be publicised on 8 March 2024 and the District Council will consult interested parties about the draft recommendations. This Stage Two consultation will be undertaken from 8 March 2024 to 3 May 2024. Interested parties will be invited to submit any further representations by no later than **3 May 2024**.

78. Analysis and evaluation of the submissions received will be undertaken from 4 May 2024 until 10 June 2024 and final recommendations will be prepared for consideration and decisions by a meeting of the District's Full Council in July 2024. If approved, this will be followed by the preparation and publication of a Reorganisation of Community Governance Order in respect of Drakelow. The recommended dates for implementation and local elections are set out in Draft Recommendation 6 above.

79. The Council will clearly publish the outcome of decisions taken as a result of the Review and the reasons behind those decisions, so as to conduct the process transparently, making local people and other interested parties aware of the decisions reached.

Level of Support from Local Electors

80. As indicated in the published Terms of Reference for this Review, the District Council would expect there to be a minimum number of supportive responses from local electors in Drakelow to trigger a final recommendation for changes to the existing governance arrangements. This number would be **10%** of the electors involved (65 local electors from Drakelow).

81. The District Council welcomes all representations from any persons or bodies with a local interest who may wish to comment or make proposals on any aspect of the matters under review.

82. Please send any representations to:

- drakelowcgr@southderbyshire.gov.uk or

- South Derbyshire District Council
Legal and Democratic Services Section
Community Governance Review
Civic Offices
Civic Way
Swadlincote
Derbyshire
DE11 0AH

83. If you have any queries relating to the Review, please contact us by e mail at democraticservices@southderbyshire.gov.uk or by telephone on 01283 595722 /01283 595848. The Terms of Reference and further information about the Review is available on the Council's website using the link below:

<https://www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/about-us/have-your-say/drakelow-community-governance-review>