



**COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF  
BARROW UPON TRENT, TWYFORD & STENSON AND STENSON FIELDS  
DRAFT PROPOSALS**

**Whether a parish council boundary should be altered to better reflect the local community?**

- a) That the Barrow upon Trent Parish Council and Stenson Fields Parish Council boundaries be revised as shown on the enclosed plan.**

Barrow upon Trent Parish Council wishes to divest itself of approx. 153.5 acres of land in the north-west area, as indicated on the enclosed plan, in favour of Stenson Fields Parish Council. Stenson Fields Parish Council has indicated its willingness to incorporate this land into its area.

Currently, the Barrow upon Trent parish area comprises 1,858.2 acres, which would reduce to 1,704.7 acres if the requested area of 153.5 acres, was transferred to the Stenson Fields parish, a reduction of 8.3% land area.

- b) That the Stenson Fields Parish Council and Twyford & Stenson unparished area boundaries be revised as shown on the enclosed plan.**

Stenson Fields Parish Council has stated its wish to incorporate approx. 197.1 acres of land in the south-west area, as also indicated on the enclosed plan, which currently sit in the unparished area of Twyford and Stenson.

The unparished area of Twyford and Stenson currently encompasses 1,662.5 acres, which would reduce to 1,465.4 acres if the requested area of 197.1 acres was transferred to the Stenson Fields parish, a reduction of 11.9% land area.

Stenson Fields parish currently covers 168.1 acres and would, if the areas of requested transfer proceeded, rise by 350.6 acres to 518.7 acres, a land area gain of 308.6%.

Where, as a result of an alteration to parish boundaries, a property moves from one parish to another, this may well have an impact on the overall level of Council Tax payable by the occupants of that property, as the amount of precept levied by different parish councils may vary, in addition to the charges levied by Derbyshire County Council, South Derbyshire District Council, the Police & Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire and Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Authority.

In the event that any final recommendation leads to the re-alignment of parish boundaries, it is likely to result in a precept adjustment to those properties already subject to a Council Tax precept and for those properties currently in the unparished area with no precept, to become subject to a Council Tax precept with effect from April 2017.

**Whether an unparished area should be constituted as a parish and have a parish council (or other body) created.**

The District Council will take account of the nature of the area subject to the Community Governance Review to determine whether the creation of a Parish Council for the area, rather than moving the boundaries of existing Parishes, would reflect the identities and interests of the community.

In considering whether to revise the existing parish boundaries, consideration needs to be given to the names of the parishes, whether there should be a new parish council and whether any new parish should be styled using one of the alternative names referred to in the Terms of Reference document agreed by, and distributed after, Council on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and referred to below in summary.

In relation to any future parish council in the area under Review, the electoral arrangements for that parish council must be the subject of a recommendation through the Review. It should be noted that in relation to Twyford & Stenson, the only unparished area subject to this Review, the population is currently 969, estimated to increase to 972 if the proposed boundary changes proceed, to 1,811 if they do not. Section 94 of the 2007 Act applies to these recommendations, in that it places principal councils under a duty to recommend that a parish should have a council in parishes which have 1,000 electors or more.

**What the name and style of any newly constituted parish should be?**

With regard to the names of Parish Wards, 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.

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 being adopted. The Council feels that the names of the existing parish councils takes into account the distinctive areas well known as Barrow upon Trent and Stenson Fields and that these names should be retained. However, given the proposed revised parish boundaries, consideration has to be given to any proposed name changes. Additionally, for any new parish council formed, a name would need to be determined.

Existing Parish Councils in the District use the style of 'parish council'. The alternative styles of 'village', 'neighbourhood' or 'community' council were introduced

in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and are therefore relatively new. It is felt that using one of these alternative styles in the establishment of any new parish council at this time would potentially lead to confusion of the status of the new council, which should be avoided.

**Whether the number of parish councillors on an existing parish council should be changed?**

The government has advised that “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, each Parish Council must have at least five Councillors and there is no specified maximum. As guidance, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) suggest the minimum number of Councillors for any Town / Parish should be 7 and the maximum 25.

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

| <b>Electorate</b>   | <b>Parish Councillor Allocation</b> |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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                               |

By law, the District Council must take the following factors into consideration when determining the number of Councillors to be elected for a Parish Council:

- The number of local government electors for the area.
- Any change in that number which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the Review starts.

Each area will be considered on its own merits, acknowledging its population, geography and the pattern of communities. In addition, a parish council’s budget and planned or actual level of service provision may be important factors in reaching conclusions as to the optimum number of Parish Councillors in any individual case.

For Stenson Fields in particular, if the boundary changes proceed, the current population of 4,162 is estimated to rise to 5,652 by 2021. Stenson Fields Parish Council currently has 11 Parish Councillor positions.

**Whether or not, as a result of the Review, the area of any other existing neighbouring parish should be retained, merged, altered or abolished?**

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.

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 be primary considerations in this Community Governance Review. The District Council wishes to balance carefully the consideration of changes that have happened over time, or are likely to occur in the near future, through population shifts or additional development, for example, and that may have led to a different community identity with historic traditions in its area.

The District Council also notes the government guidance that community cohesion should be taken into account in any Review, as well as that it “expects to see a trend in the creation, rather than the abolition, of parishes.” The Council considers that parish boundaries should, wherever possible, be easily identifiable. These barriers will be either natural or man-made features such as parks, railways, major roads – those barriers that oblige the residents of an affected area to have little in common with the remainder of the parish council are to which they may have been allotted. Therefore, in undertaking a Community Governance Review of the areas concerned, the Council must consider whether to retain Barrow upon Trent, Twyford & Stenson and Stenson Fields as three distinct areas, albeit with re-defined boundaries as proposed or to revise those areas by, for example, incorporating the unparished area of Twyford & Stenson in its entirety into either the parish of Barrow upon Trent or Stenson Fields.

### **Whether a parish council should be warded or whether existing parish wards should be altered to reflect changes in the local community?**

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 to each ward. In determining warding arrangements regard will 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 be 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.

There is a need to consider not only the size of the electorate in the area, but also the distribution of communities within it. Pursuant to government guidance, ‘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.

The Council will be mindful of all 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 given 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.

The Council does not consider that this proposal necessitates splitting the existing parish into wards or that the single election of councillors for the parish council would be impracticable or inconvenient. Nor does the Council consider that any areas of the existing parish councils should be separately represented on the Council.

### **Whether the name of a parish council should be changed?**

In relation to any existing parish, the Review must come to a conclusion whether an area should be altered or retained and whether the name of the parish should be changed. The Review must also make a recommendation on the future of the current Parish Council. The Council feels that the names of the existing parish councils takes into account the distinctive areas well known as Barrow upon Trent and Stenson Fields and that these names should be retained

### **Whether existing parish councils should be grouped?**

Section 91 of the 2007 Act provides for a Community Governance Review to recommend the grouping or degrouping of parishes by principal councils. In some cases it may be preferable to group together parishes so as to allow a common parish council to be formed. Such proposals are worth considering and may avoid the need for substantive changes to parish boundaries or the creation of new parishes. However, in the circumstances subject to this Review, the Council considers a grouping option inappropriate as it would result in an artificially large unit under a single parish council.