

# Proposed Community Governance Review of Ledston Parish Council

Date: 14 December 2022

Report of: Chief Officer, Elections and Regulatory

Report to: General Purposes Committee

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

## What is this report about?

### Including how it contributes to the City's and council's ambitions

- Ledston Parish Council has requested that a Community Governance Review take place to consult publicly on the future of the Parish Council.
- The Council must consider this request and decide whether a Community Governance Review should take place.

## Recommendations

- a) Members of General Purposes Committee take a decision on whether a Community Governance Review to consider the future of Ledston Parish Council should be undertaken.
- b) Should the decision be taken to undertake a Community Governance Review, to approve the terms of reference and timetable for the review (Appendix A).

## Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 On 1 November 2022, the Council received a request from the Chair of Ledston Parish Council for a Community Governance Review to be carried out to consider the future of the Parish (Appendix B).
- 2 Ledston Parish Council sits within the Kippax and Methley Ward of Leeds City Council, polling districts KMD and KMI. A map can be found at Appendix C to this report.
- 3 The electorate of the Parish is 287, represented by 5 Parish Councillors.
- 4 As described in the request from the Chair of Ledston PC at Appendix B, the Parish Council has faced various difficulties over a period of approximately 7 years. These include poor governance, inability to attract and retain Councillors and a Parish Clerk, and an unsustainable financial position.
- 5 In addition to the information provided by the Chair at Appendix B, the Council has also experienced several issues. More information on these can be found in the timeline of issues at Appendix D to this report.
- 6 Under the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, the Council must now decide whether to proceed with a Community Governance Review.
- 7 If the Committee decide the Council should undertake a review, this will commence on 15 December 2022.
- 8 Should the outcome of the review be to approve the abolition of the Parish, the intention is for this to occur prior to the publication of notice of election for the all-out Parish and Town Council Elections on 27 March 2023.
- 9 As was the case at previous Community Governance Reviews, representations made during the consultation period outlined in Appendix A will be first be considered at the Councils Electoral Working Group (EWG) who are experienced in this role. EWG will make recommendations to General Purposes Committee for their consideration.
- 10 If the Committee do not approve the undertaking of a review, the Parish Council may opt to reapply, and do so by petition signed by a designated percentage of the electorate, which would then automatically trigger a review to take place.
- 11 Draft terms of reference for the review, if approved, are attached at Appendix A to this report, which includes a timetable for the review process.

## What impact will this proposal have?

**Wards Affected:** Kippax and Methley

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

- 12 Ward members have been largely consulted, both by Officers and the Parish Council over the past 7 years, and under the circumstances outlined in Appendix D agree that a Community Governance Review is a sensible course of action.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

13 Consultation will be undertaken if a review is approved. Please see the terms of reference and timetable contained within Appendix A to this report.

### **What are the resource implications?**

14 There are minimal resource implications for Electoral Services. There is no cost to the Service to undertake this review.

### **What are the legal implications?**

15 The Council must consider whether to undertake a review in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act.

16 Should a review take place, this will be conducted in accordance with the relevant regulations contained within the same Act.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

17 That the Parish Council continues to operate ineffectively, does not provide value for money to precept payers and is unable to deal with administrative procedures including the ability to field candidates at the parish council elections on 4 May 2023.

### **Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?**

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

18 Not applicable - no proposal is being made at this time.

### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

#### **a) What other options were considered?**

19 Please see Appendix D.

#### **b) How will success be measured?**

20 Not applicable.

#### **c) What is the timetable for implementation?**

21 A timetable can be found at Appendix A to this report.

### **Appendices**

22 Appendix A – Terms of Reference including timetable

23 Appendix B – Request for a Community Governance Review from Ledston Parish Council

24 Appendix C – Map of the Ledston Parish Council area

25 Appendix D – Timeline of issues

### **Background papers**

26 None.