

Proposed Community Governance Review of Thorp Arch Parish Council

Date: 19 October 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

- A request to increase the number of Parish Councillors for Thorp Arch Parish Council has been received.
- The Council must consider this request and decide whether a Community Governance Review should take place with a view to increasing the number of councillors from 5 to 6.

Recommendations

- a) Members of General Purposes Committee take a decision on whether a Community Governance Review of Thorp Arch 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 12 July 2022, the Council received a request from Thorp Arch Parish Council, to increase the number of Parish Councillors from 5 to 6 (Appendix B).
- 2 Thorp Arch Parish Council sits within the Wetherby Ward of Leeds City Council, polling district WYD. A map can be found at Appendix C to this report.
- 3 The electorate of the Parish is currently 682, across 499 properties.
- 4 A large development within the Parish boundaries will see an additional 145 properties and an estimated 200 additional electors added to the Thorp Arch Parish Council register.
- 5 By way of comparison, neighbouring Walton Parish Council has an electorate of 173, represented by 7 Parish Councillors (24 electors per Councillor), and Clifford Parish Council has an electorate of 1414 represented by 9 Parish Councillors (147 electors per Councillor).
- 6 Guidance from the National Association of Local Councils on the number of Parish Councillors can be found at Appendix D.
- 7 An estimated electorate of approximately 900 shared between the proposed 6 Parish Councillors equates to 150 electors per Councillor.
- 8 The request was supported by all 5 of the existing Parish Councillors, who agreed to formally request an increase at their meeting of 11 April 2022.
- 9 Further support has been received by the 3 Leeds City Council Wetherby Ward Councillors, in which the Parish Council falls (Appendix E).
- 10 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.
- 11 If the Committee decide the Council should undertake a review, this will commence on 20 October 2022, and conclude in sufficient time for the new arrangements to take effect at the Parish Council elections to be held on 4 May 2023.
- 12 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.
- 13 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.
- 14 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: Wetherby

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 15 Ward members have confirmed their support of a review. See Appendix E to this report.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

16 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?

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

What are the legal implications?

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

19 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?

20 That the Parish Council does not have sufficient Councillors to represent their electorate.

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

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

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

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

22 Not applicable.

b) How will success be measured?

23 Not applicable.

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

24 A timetable can be found at Appendix A to this report. Any new arrangements would be effective for the 4 May 2023 all out parish council elections.

Appendices

25 Appendix A – Terms of Reference including timetable

26 Appendix B – Request for a Community Governance Review from Thorp Arch Parish Council

27 Appendix C – Map of the Thorp Arch Parish Council area

28 Appendix D – Guidance from NALC on parish councillor numbers

29 Appendix E – Letter of support from Wetherby Ward Councillors

Background papers

30 None.