

Appendix A

Ledston Parish Council Community
Governance Review

Responses to consultation

Response 1. Received 23 December 2022
From 1 resident in KMD (Ledston)

Dear Ms. Benton,

RE: Community Governance Review into the future of Ledston Parish Council Request for 'Views'

Whilst appreciating the sterling work that the current Parish Councillors have undertaken in keeping the Parish Council operating recently, in particularly challenging times both socially and financially, I would merely suggest (if they haven't already) that the Parish Councillors ensure that adequate consideration is given to:

- 1) Reducing the actual Parish Boundary (if possible): specifically to dispose of the area/ satellite settlement known as Ledston Luck. This is a quite separate settlement which is both socially and economically distinct and very separate from Ledston village itself. It presents the Parish Council and specifically the residents of Ledston village themselves with an unsustainable ongoing administrative, financial and maintenance burden for land holdings and facilities that are of absolutely no benefit or use by the residents of Ledston village itself. I'm sure (admittedly mainly subjectively) Ledston Luck would no doubt benefit from direct representation by the ward members themselves, who no doubt given the current political composition of all three members and the City Council itself are more in alignment with its population compared with them receiving representation and administration with Ledston village residents. A village which as a semi-rural agricultural settlement with predominantly prosperous retired residents and working commuters which Ledston Luck certainly is not and neither comparable, sympathetic or usefully aligned to much less administered jointly with.
- 2) I appreciate that discussions have been had with neighbouring parish councils to potentially combine the PC with but perhaps offering them the parish without Ledston Luck may be a better fit and a therein a more attractive proposition both economically and in terms of community cohesion with Ledsham PC, which is very similar to the extent that even the land in both parishes and a significant number of residential and farms/ commercial properties are held by the same Ledston Estate Trust. Apologies again for perhaps my oversight in not having read whether this is the case but have discussions been also had with Allerton Bywater PC too?
- 3) Potential re-invigoration of the PC through Impending population increase from the Ledston Hall development (if the current parish councillors could wait a while longer): it will shortly be tenanted with residents who will more likely have the necessary skill-set and hopefully a new enthusiasm for a village parish council, a development that also comes with a community space which could provide a focus to/ for an invigorated Parish Council. Perhaps the current councillors could perhaps try a last ditch but more direct, public facing and innovative recruitment drive for new members (photocopies pinned to a noticeboard are not always the most persuasive recruitment tools in the 21st

Century etc., especially when it's announcing the decision to try and wind the thing up!). This could also be more sincerely and proactively supported by both the three ward members and their ward officer/s utilising their resources and inherent expertise, one could hope could they may provide at least some temporary assistance with providing the Parish Council with Clerking support etc.? It would be refreshing to be reassured that the local and national taxation residents of a rural village have to contribute to facilitate and remunerate individual ward members to fulfill their desire to govern over us through their city/ urban metropolitan council system.

Once again I would like to reiterate that the current Parish Councillors are amazing and perhaps it is inevitable that the village will be subsumed by the City Council ward members. This is however a position that I would strongly caution the Parish Council against as in my working life as I regularly see rural satellite village settlements like Ledston which are located on the edge of historically northern left-wing controlled metropolitan borough council suffer through a lack of equality in terms of representation and funding. Ward members are naturally more focused and often whipped by their Executive to focus primarily on their metropolitan urban electorate and inner city/urban deprived that they vote chase and rely upon to maintain their support base, not the rural parishioners in places like Ledston (Ledston Luck excepted obviously). Seriously though the complete lack of equality of opportunity, representation and most importantly any attempt to secure a fair and equitable distribution and share of funding for people in settlements such as Ledston should be a major consideration and focus for the current Parish Councillors before they seek to dissolve the PC, the offer of a Village Committee is simply no substitute for a rural parish council in its vital role to check and challenge this system and give its residents a voice that can be heard.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this and apologise for the polemical tone at times.

Response 2. Received 12 January 2023
From 2 residents in KMI (Ledston Luck)

Hi, I am emailing you to express our concerns about the abolition of our parish council.

Firstly we are worried about our green area's won't be maintained as they are now or worse used for other purposes.

As a small village we have a lack of amenities and our green areas are plentiful and are very popular with families and children alike.

Secondly, as allotment holders we have concerns about the fee's rising at a time when allotment use is paramount.

Our biggest concern is that if we no longer have a parish council and just come under Leeds city council, that as resident's we would no longer have a voice in village matters.

Does the abolition of the parish council lay with the fact that there is a lack of interest in people joining it?

We look forward to hearing from you and allaying some of our concerns, thank you.

Response 3. Received 18 January 2023
From 2 residents in KMI (Ledston Luck)

Hi Susanna,

Having been a resident in the village since 1993 we have witnessed the good that it does to the community both in our village and Ledston.

Monies given have kept the village smart and a lovely place to live.

We funded our own play area and it is well kept and enjoyed unlike neighbouring villages.

The insurance on this has been upkept and all is safe.

The allotments and their fees are managed in-house and everyone is happy. All used and well presented.

Bi-annual skips bring people together to clear unused items especially useful for those who do not have transport to take to the refuse areas some miles away.

We have planted bulbs and funded the entrance to the villages improving our environment substantially and plant flowers in the summer. All this was with the Parish Councils blessing and help.

To be part of the main council would lose this community spirit and the loss of our freedom to have our say locally and know it will be acted upon if financially possible.

We pay for this service and are happy to do so even if the cost were to increase.

Villages like ours are small and close knit and want to stay that way.

Please consider our points made favourably and suggest that a poll of all residents in both villages be taken before a final decision is made.

We are happy to discuss further either personally or a village group meeting.

Response 4. Received 18 January 2023
From 1 resident in KMI (Ledston Luck)

Hi Susanna

I'm writing to inform you of my concern about the potential changes to Ledston Parish Council.

Ledston Luck is a small village with a strong community spirit. The services that have been provided to the village over the years have been vital in the regeneration of the village. The key areas where there is a risk of losing facilities should the Parish Council cease to exist are.

Village green spaces(mowing, insurance and tree maintenance) Childrens play area(funded through the work of village residents) insurance, inspection and repair. Allotments.

These are the only amenities in the village since the church hall was demolished.

There is an active residents Facebook group but no meeting place(unless the weather is nice) and this has meant that all parish meetings are held elsewhere, you will appreciate this isn't ideal and We've also lost our voting station now.

The threat to the village and its environment is very real should there not be some form of governance of these areas.

We ran a straw poll on the Facebook site, the main concerns were about green space and the play area. Around 40 people responded, not all residents are on Facebook.

I note that a number of residents commented that they would be willing to become councillors and several others were keen to be part of a residents community group (perhaps a residents association).

In short I think it's vital for Ledston Luck to maintain its environment and I'm sure that there will be active support for whatever new arrangements are made.

I would appreciate if the minutes of the meeting were emailed to me, I can post them to the Facebook group as the notice board is not seen by all.

Regards

Response 5. Received 19 January 2023
From 1 resident in KMI (Ledston Luck)

Dear Suzanna,

I'd like to register my concern at the possibility of winding up Ledston Parish Council.

I am a resident of Ledston Luck and the Parish Council own and have responsibility for a number of land assets which are vital for the village.

As it stands, local people have a very direct involvement in how the public open space and allotments are managed and I would like it to continue this way. If the Parish Council is wound up, these assets should transfer to a community trust rather than Leeds City Council, or if transferred to the Council, there should be a partnership arrangement.

With many thanks,