

REPORT TITLE: COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - STAGE 2 REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

12 AUGUST 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Martin Tod, Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration. Contact Officer: Gareth John Tel No: 01962 848 135 Email gjohn@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL TOWN WARDS, THE WORTHYS

PURPOSE

The Stage 2 Public Consultation relating to the Community Governance Review (CGR) for the Winchester Town and Kings Barton areas has been completed. This report updates the Licensing and Regulation Committee with the results of the public consultation and presents the final recommendations of the review. The report seeks a recommendation to Full Council to make a Reorganisation of Community Governance Order to implement the recommended changes.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee:

1. Notes the responses received during the Stage 2 public consultation set out in this report and within the accompanying appendix 1.

That the Committee recommends to Full Council:

1. To establish a new parish council for the Winchester Town area (to be initially named Winchester Parish Council¹) as set out in paragraph 13 of this report and shown within the maps at Appendix 3.

¹ The name of the new council is to be determined, but for legal reasons it is expected to initially be called Winchester Parish Council until after it is established but would then be able to change its name by member resolution.

2. To establish a separate, unwarded parish council for Kings Barton (Kings Barton Parish Council) as set out in paragraphs 14 of this report and shown within the maps at Appendix 3.
3. To approve the consequential boundary alterations to adjust the Headbourne Worthy Parish Council boundary as set out in paragraph 14 of this report.
4. To make two Reorganisation of Community Governance Orders to implement these changes, with a Vesting Day of 1st April 2027.
5. To approve the transfer of the assets (current draft listed in Appendix 2 to this report) from Winchester City Council to Winchester Parish Council subject to completion of an appropriate service level agreement to be agreed by the Director (Legal) in consultation with the Cabinet Member to address future maintenance requirements.
6. To establish a Shadow Council for each new Council from 1 January 2027 for the purposes of recruiting respective Clerks and to deal with any other matters requiring resolution prior to implementation with the membership being as set out in paragraph 16 to this report.

IMPLICATIONS:

1. COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 1.1. The Council Plan 2025–2030 identifies “Listening and Learning” as a key priority. One of the actions under this priority is to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) to ensure a strong network of parish and town councils across the district, capable of operating within any future local government structures. This review directly delivers on that commitment
- 1.2. The stage 2 consultation has provided residents with the opportunity to make their views known about future governance arrangements for the Winchester Town and Kings Barton areas.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1. As noted in reports LR594, LR603 and LR606, undertaking a CGR is a resource-intensive process. Costs associated with consultation activities (such as mailings, venue hire for events, and online survey platforms) and ongoing project management will be met from the Council’s transitional reserves.
- 2.2. To ensure the review and its subsequent implementation are adequately resourced, it is prudent to allocate dedicated funding. Accordingly, at its budget-setting meeting [in February 2026, the Council approved a budget](#) for the Community Governance Review (CGR), including anticipated implementation costs.
- 2.3. The primary financial drivers for Stage 2 included costs associated with public consultation (printing, advertising, public meetings), and specialist legal drafting.
- 2.4. If the recommendations in this report are approved, the following changes will apply from 2027/28: in Winchester Town, the current “Special Expenses” charge of £94.58 for a Band D property will be abolished and replaced by the new parish precept; and in Kings Barton, the majority of properties will move from the Headbourne Worthy precept, currently £115.14 for a Band D property, to a new Kings Barton parish precept.

3. LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The legal framework for community governance reviews is set out in Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The Council must ensure that community governance reflects the “identities and interests of the community” and is “effective and convenient.” Failure to follow statutory guidance or consult adequately could result in Judicial Review.

- 3.2. Both consultation phases have complied with the principles set out in the [Terms of Reference](#) (ToR) to ensure the review is robust and legally compliant.
- 3.3. Any legal or specialist advice required, particularly regarding the preservation of Winchester's city status, will be procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 3.4. The Council, as the Principal Authority, retains statutory responsibility for overseeing the CGR and approving its final recommendations. The Reorganisation Orders, which legally implement the outcome of the CGR, must adhere strictly to the procedures defined within the Act.

4. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. Grounds maintenance services will continue to be managed and delivered by the Council and its contractor pursuant to a service level agreement for a period of three years following creation. Thereafter, the transition of services will be managed under TUPE regulations where applicable.

5. PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. A scoping exercise of potentially transferable assets within the areas to be covered by the new proposed parish councils has been undertaken and has been subject to review by the Member Working Group in July & August 2026. A final list of assets will be proposed and a draft list of these is attached at Appendix 2 to this report and will also form part of the Reorganisation Orders to be considered by Full Council on the 20 August 2026.
- 5.2. In relation to the Winchester Parish Council, any services currently undertaken by the Council in respect of assets being transferred will be subject to a service level agreement for a period of three years following the creation of new parish council. Thereafter there will be the opportunity for new parish councils to novate for the remaining duration of any existing arrangements with the council's contractors.

6. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1. The consultation strategy, outlined previously [within the ToR](#), was designed to be comprehensive and inclusive, utilising a mix of online and offline methods to reach all segments of the community and key stakeholders within the review area.
- 6.2. In addition to the formal public committee meetings briefings have been provided for affected parish Councils in June 2025, October 2025, March 2026 and July 2026.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1. Parish and town councils can play a significant role in promoting local environmental initiatives. The establishment of new parish councils could provide a platform for delivering local environmental priorities and contributing to the Council's "Greener Faster" ambitions.

8. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1. The consultation processes have been designed to be inclusive and accessible to all members of the community, ensuring compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

9. DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1. The consultation required the collection and processing of personal data. Responses were anonymous, but personal information was managed securely and in line with both the councils, and Public Perspectives published data protection / privacy policies.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
Financial Exposure. Risk of residents perceiving the precept as an additional tax.	Financial matters will be reviewed as the review develops to identify and mitigate any potential cost pressures. All residents of the proposed new councils already pay either a precept or Special Expenses payment.	Clear communication of the "Special Expenses replacement" mechanism. New council to set future precept in response to local priorities.
Exposure to challenge. Failure to conduct a legally compliant consultation process could lead to legal challenge.	The process is guided by the approved ToR and a clear timetable. The project team includes legal and democratic services expertise. External experts used to support the consultation process.	A well-managed, transparent, and comprehensive CGR process builds public trust and delivers a robust and defensible outcome.
Reputation.		

The review could be perceived as a 'done deal', leading to poor engagement or negative feedback.	The ToR and consultation materials are framed around open questions about the future of governance, not a pre-determined outcome. The cross-party Working Group ensures political consensus.	Successfully concluding the CGR and adapting recommendations to reflect stakeholder opinion will enhance the Council's reputation for listening to and empowering its communities, strengthening local democracy.
Achievement of outcome. The review does not conclude within the anticipated timeline.	The timeline and plan will be subject to constant review and is currently on track to deliver as planned.	
Community Support. If the consultation is not sufficiently inclusive, the outcome may not be seen to have the support of the local community.	A multi-channel communication and consultation plan is detailed in the ToR, targeting residents, businesses, and community groups through various means to maximise participation.	Strong public engagement will ensure the final recommendations are genuinely reflective of the community's identity and interests, leading to greater buy-in.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

11. Background and Context

- 11.1. This report presents the findings of the Stage 2 public consultation for the Council's Community Governance Review (CGR). The review was initiated in accordance with the approved [Terms of Reference \(ToR\)](#) and is being conducted under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (LGPIH Act 2007).
- 11.2. The LGPIH Act 2007 devolves the power to create parish councils to principal authorities. Following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper (December 2024) and the progression of the Hampshire devolution deal, the Council agreed to undertake a CGR. This is set out in detail within report LR603 - Community Governance Review: Winchester Town Area – Draft Terms of Reference (29 September 2025).
- 11.3. The ToR, which were published in November 2025, set out the scope of this review. The primary objective of the community governance review is to ensure “effective and convenient” local governance that reflects Winchester's distinct identity as an historic city.

11.4. The Stage 1 consultation was undertaken between 3 November and 22 December 2025. Public Perspectives was commissioned to support the consultation process and prepare an independent report on the findings. The consultation included engagement with key stakeholders, including all affected parish councils, and wider public engagement through a dedicated webpage, public notices, drop-in events and a promotional leaflet. A total of 1,415 questionnaire responses were received. In summary, the following proposals were taken forward for further consultation following the stage 1 consultation:

- a) To establish a new parish council for the currently unparished wards of Winchester Town.
- b) To establish a new parish council for the Kings Barton development area, including the unparished area of Kings Barton within St Barnabas ward.
- c) To reduce the area of Headbourne Worthy Parish Council by removing the proposed parished area of Kings Barton and the land west of Courtenay Road, as described above.

This is set out in detail in the report presented to the Licensing and Regulation Committee on the 17 March 2026.

12. Stage 2 Consultation Methodology

12.1. The Stage 2 consultation ran for six weeks in May and June 2026. It utilised online questionnaires, paper copies, and targeted mailings to households in affected areas. The Council commissioned an independent organisation – Public Perspectives to support the consultation process and report the results of the consultation, their full report is attached at Appendix 1. Broad public engagement was achieved through a dedicated web page, public notices, drop-in events, and widespread distribution of a promotional leaflet. In total, there were 337 responses to the Stage 2 consultation.

12.2. Whilst the [Stage 1 consultation](#) sought views on the principle of parishing the currently unparished area of Winchester Town, establishing a new Parish Council for Kings Barton and other potential boundary changes, the purpose of Stage 2 was to seek views on the specific proposals of doing so. The Council must give regard to the responses when deciding its next steps.

13. Winchester Town Area Parish Council Proposal

Stage 2 Consultation Proposal & Response

13.1. The consultation questionnaire (as set out in full in Appendix 1) sought views on a new parish council to represent the current unparished wards of the Winchester town area and W4 (land west of Courtenay Road), made up of 22 councillors and a precept to be determined which would replace the current “Special Expense” charge paid by residents.

- 13.2. Consultation responses showed strong support for the creation of a new parish council for the unparished area of Winchester town, reinforcing the view expressed during the stage 1 consultation. Overall, 72% of respondents supported the proposal, including 52% who strongly agreed, while 17% opposed it and 10% were neutral. Support was even stronger among residents of the unparished area, with 80% in favour, including 64% who strongly agreed; only 14% disagreed and 3% were neutral.
- 13.3. Support for the proposal was also expressed by several local organisations, including Cathedral Streets and Orams Arbour Residents' Associations, Winchester Business Improvement District, Friends of St Giles Hill Park, and Winchester Dramatic Society/Chesil Theatre. These organisations highlighted the importance of maintaining Winchester's city status, mayoralty, civic identity and local representation. The City of Winchester Trust supported the establishment of a Winchester Town Parish Council but raised concerns about the proposed boundaries.
- 13.4. Many respondents offered no further comments or considered both the proposed number of councillors and the introduction of a parish precept to be reasonable. A smaller number of respondents expressed concerns about the potential cost of the precept and whether a council comprising 22 councillors was necessary.
- 13.5. The full consultation report is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

Winchester Parish Council – Summary

- 13.1. Officers have carefully considered all the representations that have been made during the consultation. It is considered that the creation of a Winchester Town area parish council ² is a necessary step to address the imbalance in local governance, ensuring residents of Winchester Town benefit from the same level of representation, accessibility, and influence as those in neighbouring parished communities. The proposed council would provide a clearer, more direct voice for local people in decisions affecting their immediate area, enhance accountability, and support decision-making that reflects residents lived experiences. This will be particularly important after the move to a unitary mid Hampshire council in 2028 covering a significantly larger geography.
- 13.2. Furthermore, establishing parish councils would foster a stronger sense of community identity and encourage greater local participation in civic life. It would serve as a focal point for community activities and events, offer improved responsiveness to town-specific concerns, and enable residents to

² The name of the new council is to be determined but for legal reasons it is expected to initially be called Winchester Parish Council until after it is established but would then be able to change its name by member resolution.

have a greater say over local priorities, including funding and development matters. The new council would also play a significant role in safeguarding Winchester's civic identity and ensure clearer communication and coordination with other councils, ultimately strengthening the connection between the community and its local governance.

Proposed Changes Resulting from the Consultation. (Winchester Town Parish Area.)

- 13.3. Officers are not proposing any changes to the geography, warding and Councillor Numbers that were set out in the Stage 2 Consultation.

Winchester Town: Final Recommendations - Councillors and Warding

- 13.4. Councillor Numbers: The final recommendation carries forward the proposal for 22 councillors distributed as follows: St Barnabas (4), St Bartholomew (5), St Luke (3), St Michael (5), and St Paul (5). (The rationale for councillor numbers can be found in the previous committee report – [available here](#).)
- 13.5. The Parish Council will be warded based upon the 5 existing City Council wards. It will also include the area known as W4 (Land West of Courtenay Road) and will not include the area of Kings Barton that is unparished and is within the St Barnabas City Council ward. The area and wards are set out in detail within Appendix 3.
14. Kings Barton & Headbourne Worthy Parish Council Proposals

Consultation Proposals & Responses

- 14.1. The consultation questionnaire (set out in full in Appendix 1) sought views on a new parish council to represent Kings Barton, including the unparished area of Kings Barton currently within St Barnabas Ward. The proposal was for the council to be formed of 11 councillors, with a precept to be determined which will replace the Headbourne Worthy Parish Council precept which residents in Kings Barton currently pay.
- 14.2. Consultation responses indicated a mix of views on the creation of a new parish council for Kings Barton, although the overall opinion was in favour and support was strongest among residents of the area.
- 14.3. Overall, 46% of respondents supported the proposal, including 25% who strongly agreed, while 28% opposed it and 21% were neutral.
- 14.4. Among Kings Barton residents, 53% supported the creation of a new parish council, with 50% strongly agreeing, although 40% disagreed, including 37% who strongly disagreed. Responses from residents of the wider Headbourne Worthy parish area (excluding Kings Barton) were more supportive, with 88% in favour of the proposal and 71% strongly agreeing.

- 14.5. The Kings Barton Committee of Headbourne Worthy Parish Council supported the establishment of a Kings Barton parish council and proposed amendments to the parish boundaries. These included the incorporation of Barton Meadows, land alongside Andover Road to the Three Maids Roundabout, and the Welhouse Mews development, on the basis that these areas are closely linked to the Kings Barton community and its future growth.
- 14.6. The Headbourne Worthy Committee also supported the creation of a Kings Barton parish council but raised concerns regarding the long-term financial sustainability of the remaining Headbourne Worthy parish following separation and highlighted the potential financial implications of boundary decisions relating to Barton Meadows, the Park and Ride site and Well House Mews.
- 14.7. Whilst supporting the principle of a Kings Barton parish, boundary issues were also a prominent theme within the consultation survey responses. Respondents commented on the proposed geography of the parish, with the most common suggestions being to include Barton Meadows and Well House Mews within a Kings Barton parish. The consultation responses indicate that had Barton Meadows and Well House Mews been included within the proposed Kings Barton parish boundary, support for the creation of a Kings Barton parish council appears likely to have been higher.
- 14.8. Many respondents provided no further comments or considered the proposed number of councillors and the introduction of a parish precept to be reasonable. A smaller number raised concerns about the potential cost of the precept and whether a council of 11 councillors would provide an appropriate level of representation.
- 14.9. Residents of Well House Mews were written to specifically to ask if they had a preference regarding their properties being in Headbourne Worthy Parish or Kings Barton Parish. Two responses were received from the 6 properties, 1 favoured Headbourne Worthy and 1 favoured Kings Barton.
- 14.10. The full report from Public Perspectives is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

Kings Barton & Headbourne Worthy Parish Council Areas – Summary

- 14.11. Officers have carefully considered all the representations that have been made during the consultation and are recommending establishing a new Parish Council to represent the Kings Barton development area. A new parish council is considered appropriate for this growing part of the district because a distinct and increasingly self-contained community is forming, shaped by recent development and a shared local identity. Kings Barton is a major urban expansion, and it is considered that the scale and pace of change in the area supports the case for community governance arrangements that reflect this emerging identity.

- 14.12. Residents have described this area as having limited commonality with the long-established nearby villages and reflect different settlement histories and community patterns. Headbourne Worthy Parish Council serves an established community that forms part of the wider cluster of “Worthy” villages, with a character and community identity that differs from a modern, planned more urban neighbourhood such as Kings Barton.
- 14.13. Kings Barton is also expected to function increasingly as a relatively self-contained settlement, with on-site facilities intended to serve day to day community needs as delivery is completed. This strengthens the rationale for governance arrangements that reflect the area’s emerging identity and ensure local decision making remains focused on the requirements of a developing community, rather than being shaped primarily by the priorities of long-established settlements with different needs.
- 14.14. It is therefore considered that a dedicated parish council would provide the area with its own local voice, more focused representation, and stronger accountability for issues specific to Kings Barton as the development matures.

Proposed Changes Resulting from the Consultation. (Kings Barton & Headbourne Worthy Parish Area.)

- 14.15. Following a review of the Stage 2 consultation responses, officers are proposing the following changes to the proposal that was consulted upon.
- 14.16. Include the six properties at Well House Mews, Wellhouse Lane within the Kings Barton Parish Council area, to create a clearer and more legible northern boundary. Two responses were received from Well House Mews residents, expressing differing views; however, the Kings Barton Committee of the Parish Council strongly supported their inclusion in Kings Barton.
- 14.17. Having considered the written views of both Committees of Headbourne Worthy Parish Council and the views expressed through the consultation survey, officers are recommending including the area known as Barton Meadows within the Kings Barton Parish Council area.
- 14.18. The key points raised during the consultation regarding this were that Barton Meadows was seen as integral to the Kings Barton area and that residents have always understood it to be part of the wider Kings Barton community. Although the land is separated by the railway line, Barton Meadows is linked to the development by a tunnel, providing a reasonably clear and established connection.
- 14.19. Amend the Headbourne Worthy Parish boundary, accordingly, removing Well House Mews and Barton Meadows from that parish area as a result of the two changes above.

14.20. Increase the number of councillors from 11 to 12.

Kings Barton: Final Recommendations on Councillors and Warding

14.21. As described above and as set out in detail within the maps at Appendix 3.

14.22. Councillor Numbers: It is recommended the council comprise 12 councillors. (The rationale for councillor numbers can be found in the previous committee report – [available here](#).)

14.23. Warding: The parish will be unwarded.

14.24. Headbourne Worthy: The parish will be formally reduced to exclude the Kings Barton, Barton Meadow and W4 areas, preserving its status as a rural village authority as set out in detail in the map at Appendix 3.

15. Parish Council Precepts

15.1. Establishing a parish council comes with financial responsibilities. These are funded through a parish precept, which is an additional charge added to residents' Council Tax bills.

15.2. For several years, Council policy has been to charge a special expense to residents of the unparished town area, to meet the cost of services that benefit only the Winchester Town area. These are services which, in parished parts of the district, would normally be provided by parish councils.

15.3. For 2026/27, the total expenditure identified as special expenses for the Winchester Town area is £1,434,779. The Winchester Town Forum considered the draft budget on 22 January 2026 and recommended its approval, including a proposed 5% increase in the Town's special expense charge. This was subsequently agreed by [full Council on the 26 February 2026](#).

15.4. Consequently, the Band D Council Tax for Winchester Town special expenses for 2026/27 rose by 5% (£4.50) to £94.58. The equivalent average Parish Council precept across the district for 2026/27 is £126.51.

15.5. The establishment of a new council for the Town area will require a transition from the current Special Expenses (set by the City Council) to a separate Parish Precept, set by the elected parish councillors and reviewed annually. For a newly created parish, the principal council must calculate the first anticipated precept to include it in the Reorganisation Order which will be available for Full Council on the 20 August 2026.

- 15.6. The establishment of a new council for Kings Barton will also require an initial precept to be set. For a newly created parish, the principal council must calculate the first anticipated precept to include it in the Reorganisation Order which will be available for Full Council on the 20 August 2026. Subsequently, the level of the precept will be set by the elected parish councillors and reviewed annually.

16. Proposals for the Shadow Councils

- 16.1. It will be necessary to establish Shadow Councils to support the creation of the new parish councils. Their purpose will be to recruit the relevant clerks and determine any other matters requiring a decision before the new councils are formally implemented.
- 16.2. If this report is approved, the Shadow Councils will be asked to agree the recruitment process for their respective clerks, including the establishment of an appointments panel.
- 16.3. The Shadow Councils will comprise Winchester City Councillors whose wards fall wholly or partially within the boundary of the new parish councils. In the case of Kings Barton, it is proposed that the Shadow Council should include two Parish Councillors from Headbourne Worthy Parish Council, the three ward councillors from the Worthys ward and one ward councillor from the St Barnabas ward.
- 16.4. Officers will draft a Terms of Reference for the Shadow Councils to deal with quorum, election of a chairman etc. Officers from various service areas will be required to support the proposed Shadow Councils and the activities identified within the relevant workstreams.

17. Electoral Arrangements and Term of Office

- 17.1. It is proposed that the first elections for all seats on the two new councils be held on the ordinary day of local government elections in May 2027.
- 17.2. To ensure administrative efficiency and the effective synchronisation of local elections, it is recommended that the initial term of office for every councillor elected at this time be set at five years.
- 17.3. This would align the new councils with the broader Principal Council electoral cycle.
- 17.4. Following this initial transitional period, the councils will revert to the standard four-year electoral cycle as prescribed by the Local Government Act 1972 with the next election due in 2032.

18. Next Key Milestones

- September 2026: Final Reorganisation Order to be made.
- 1 January 2027: Shadow Councils established.
- 1 April 2027: Vesting Day; new councils legally established.
- May 2027: First elections for the new councils.

19. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 19.1. To not approve the draft recommendations for further consultation. This would halt the CGR process, contradicting the Committee's resolution of 16 June 2025, the formal request from the Winchester Town Forum, and the commitment made in the Council Plan. This option is not recommended.
- 19.2. It was noted in the report to the Licensing Committee on 17 March 2026 that it had been proposed to adjust the boundary of Compton and Shawford Parish Council so that the property known as Overcombe, St Cross Road would be included within the St Michael Ward of the proposed Winchester Parish Council.
- 19.3. Whilst it would be possible for this Community Governance Review to amend the parish boundary for parish council purposes, it would not be possible to amend the corresponding City Council ward or Hampshire County Council division boundaries. As a result, the property would remain within different principal authority electoral boundaries from its neighbouring properties.
- 19.4. Having considered the implications, officers recommend that the parish boundary should not be altered at this time. Instead, it is proposed that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England be requested to consider this as part of its post-Local Government Reorganisation electoral review, which would be able to examine and, where appropriate, align all relevant electoral boundary arrangements.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: -

Previous Committee Reports: -

- a) LR606 - Community Governance Review - Stage 1 Consultation Results and Next Steps
- b) LR603 - Community Governance Review: Winchester Town Area – Draft Terms of Reference (29 September 2025)
- c) LR594 - Community Governance Review: Winchester Town Area (16 June 2025)
- d) WTF339 - Response to the request of Winchester Town Forum for CGR (12 June 2025)
- e) WTF337 - Request for Governance Review (23 January 2025)

APPENDICIES

- a) Appendix 1: Report of Public Perspectives “Winchester Community Governance Review Consultation: Stage 2 Report June 2026
- b) Appendix 2: Report to the Winchester Town Forum: WTF345 Assets to Transfer to The New Town Council
- c) Appendix 3: Final Recommendation Maps
 - Winchester Parish
 - Kings Barton Parish
 - Headbourne Worthy Parish