

**South Oxfordshire District Council**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007  
COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

**DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Introduction**

The Council proposes to undertake a community governance review (CGR) pursuant to Part 4, Chapter 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 of the whole of the district of South Oxfordshire. The 2007 Act vested powers with the council to undertake such a review.

The Council will undertake the review in accordance with the Guidance on community governance reviews issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) in April 2008 (“the guidance”).

Currently, the council proposes to consider the following parish matters:

<b>Parish/Area</b>	<b>Matters to be considered</b>
Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe	Creating a single parish council to cover both parishes
Brightwell-cum-Sotwell	Moving land east of the Wallingford by-pass (but not bounded by the by-pass) into Wallingford parish
Didcot	Amending the boundary of the parish to incorporate that part of the Millbrook estate that is currently in East Hagbourne parish and parcels of land allocated for housing in Long Wittenham and West Hagbourne parishes
East Hagbourne	Creating a single ward parish
Goring	Reducing the number of parish councillors to 10 and renaming the parish Goring-on-Thames
Harpsden	Amending the boundary of the parish to include land south of Rotherfield Road, currently in Henley-on-Thames parish
Henley-on-Thames	Amending the boundary of the parish to include land north of Gillott’s Lane and land south of Greys Road,

	both areas currently in Harpsden parish
Rotherfield Peppard	Amending the boundary of the parish to include a triangle of land bounded by Peppard Road, Widmore Lane and Blounts Court Road, currently in Sonning Common Parish
Shiplake	Amending the boundary of the parish to include land south of Bolney Lane and land north of Woodland Road, both areas currently in Harpsden parish
Sonning Common	Amending the boundary of the parish to include Chiltern Edge school, currently in Kidmore End parish; reviewing the boundary with Rotherfield Peppard parish along Shiplake Bottom and Blounts Court Road; and making a minor adjustment to the boundary with Kidmore End and Eye and Dunsden parishes at the junction of Kennylands Road and Peppard Road.  Revising upwards the number of parish councillors
Wallingford	Amending the boundary of the parish to include land bounded by the Wallingford by-pass, currently in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell and Cholsey parishes  Moving land west of the by-pass along Hithercroft into either Brightwell-cum-Sotwell or Cholsey parish
West Hagbourne	Moving land forming part of the Great Western Park development (but not including the buffer zone) into Didcot parish
Wheatley	Amending the northern boundary of the parish to align with the A40, incorporating land currently in Holton parish
Whole district	Any other matters that the council considers warrant a review

The Council received requests to review all of the above matters in response to a letter sent to parish and town councils in April 2013.

That letter set out the items the review could cover as follows:

- altering the boundaries of a parish
- creating a new parish
- merging two or more parishes
- warding or de-warding a parish

- changing a parish name
- dissolving a parish council
- changing the number of councillors who sit on a parish council (the law states that the minimum number is five)
- grouping parishes under a common parish council

The letter also set out the factors that the council would take into account in making decisions:

- natural or man-made boundaries that help to define clearly one community from another
- housing developments that straddle parish boundaries, thereby resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours
- effective representation of local residents at parish level
- the LGBCE's proposals for the warding of South Oxfordshire for the purposes of district council elections
- the newly created county council electoral divisions
- views expressed in relation to any changes, particularly from those people directly affected

The council now proposes to add one further item to this list:

- the extent to which proposals reflect the identities and interests of the affected community

The council will decide the final list of matters for inclusion in the CGR once it has formally consulted on these draft terms of reference.

### **Why is the Council undertaking the review?**

The guidance states that it is good practice for principal councils (in this context that means this council) to undertake CGRs every 10-15 years. It is now more than 15 years since a district wide review took place. The LGBCE has also recently completed a review of district warding arrangements, which has resulted in widespread changes some of which cut across existing parish boundaries. For these reasons the council considers it timely to carry out a CGR now, in time for implementation of any changes at the next scheduled parish council elections in 2015.

### **Consultation**

The council is publishing these terms of reference in draft and seeking comments from interested parties by 30 September. It will then consider a report detailing responses and finalise the terms of reference at its meeting on 24 October.

Once it has finalised the terms of reference the council will make them available widely, including through circulation to parish and town councils and via its website. Where proposals involve moving properties from one parish to

another, the council will pay particular attention to making affected residents of such properties aware of the proposals and given them the opportunity to comment before it takes any decisions.

When the council publishes the terms of reference it will also publish the approximate number of properties and the electorate directly affected by proposals to change parish boundaries. It will do this for both 2013 and 2018, the latter figure based on known housing developments and their likely implementation dates.

**TIMETABLE FOR THE REVIEW**

The 2007 Act requires that a principal council must complete a CGR within 12 months of the date of publication of terms of reference. The proposed timetable below complies with the legal requirement.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
<b>Council considers responses to consultation and agrees final terms of reference</b>	<b>24 October 2013</b>
<b>Terms of reference published and consultation commences</b>	<b>1 November 2013</b>
<b>Initial consultation closes</b>	<b>31 January 2014</b>
<b>Council agrees draft proposals for consultation</b>	<b>20 February 2014</b>
<b>Further consultation closes</b>	<b>4 April 2014</b>
<b>Council agrees changes</b>	<b>24 April 2014</b>

**How to respond**

Please submit any comments on these draft terms of reference via email to [cgr@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:cgr@southandvale.gov.uk). The council does not require a hard copy of any submission. For those without access to email please send any submission to:

CGR  
 Legal and Democratic Services  
 South Oxfordshire District Council  
 Benson Lane  
 Crowmarsh Gifford  
 Wallingford  
 OX10 8QS

The council is particularly interested to hear comments on the following:

Are the factors that the council will take into account when coming to decisions the right ones? Are there others that it should add?

Should the council decline to consider any of the parish matters included in the table? If yes, for what reason?

Are there other parish matters that council should include in the final terms of reference? If yes, what are they?

Should you require any further information or need clarification on the review process, please contact:

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