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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 11TH JUNE 2026

AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE COMMITTEE - PARKSIDE

MEMBERS: Councillors S. J. Baxter, S. M. Evans, E. M. S. Gray,
C.A. Hotham, K.J. May, S. T. Nock and J. Robinson

AGENDA

1. **Election of Chairman for the 2026/27 Municipal Year**
2. **Election of Vice-Chairman for the 2026/27 Municipal Year**
3. **To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutes**
4. **Declarations of Interest**

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.

5. **To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Matters Committee held on 19th January 2026 (Pages 5 - 8)**

6. **Establishment of a Working Group to Consider Future Local Governance Arrangements** (Pages 9 - 20)
7. **Community Governance Review - Finstall Parish** (Pages 21 - 30)
8. **To consider any urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting**

J. Leach
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

3rd June 2026

**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
Sarah Woodfield**

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might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or
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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

MONDAY 19TH JANUARY 2026, AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors C.A. Hotham (Chairman), E. M. S. Gray (Vice-Chairman), S. M. Evans, K.J. May, S. T. Nock, J. Robinson and K. Taylor

Officers: Mr D. Whitney and Ms M. Bassett

23/25

ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2025/26 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Vice-Chairman thanked to Councillor S. Ammar for her input on the Committee and welcomed the new Committee Member Councillor K. Taylor.

Due to a change in membership of the committee the Vice-Chairman asked for nominations for Chairman. Councillor C. Hotham was proposed by Councillor J. Robinson and seconded by Councillor K. May.

As the Vice-Chairman had been elected as Chairman, he now requested nominations for the position of Vice Chairman for the 2025/26 municipal year. Councillor E. Gray was nominated by Councillor K. May and seconded by Councillor C. Hotham.

There being no further nominations, it was

RESOLVED that

- 1) Councillor C. Hotham be appointed Chairman of the Electoral Matters Committee for the 2025/26 Municipal year.
- 2) Councillor E. Gray be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Electoral Matters Committee for the 2025/26 Municipal year.

24/25

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES

There were no apologies for absence.

25/25

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors K. May and S. Nock declared other disclosable interests in respect of Minute Number 26/25 - Minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Matters Committee held on 7th November 2025 - in their capacity as Ward Councillors for Belbroughton and Romsley District Ward.

Councillor S. Evans declared an other disclosable interest in respect of Minute Number 27/25 - Community Governance Review – Finstall Parish in his capacity as Worcestershire County Councillor for Bromsgrove East.

26/25

TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE HELD ON 7TH NOVEMBER 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2025 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7th November 2025 be approved as a correct record.

27/25

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - FINSTALL PARISH

The Electoral Services Manger introduced the report confirming the areas the Community Governance Review (CGR) covered. Further information on the initial request from Finstall for a review was introduced for the benefit of Councillor K. Taylor who had been recently appointed to the Committee.

The Electoral Services Manager presented the Terms of Reference of the CGR which were confirmed to be based on the standard model and included the timetable for the review.

It was noted that the relevant Ward Councillor was content with the CGR to go ahead.

Members were asked to consider the form of consultation with interested parties for the CGR. It was noted the Parish would have items for their notice board(s) and that there would be a dedicated webpage on the Bromsgrove District Council website. Members discussed the merits of different forms of communication, and it was agreed it was important to contact as many electors as possible.

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19th January 2026

There was further discussion regarding parish precepts and likelihood of other CGRs taking place.

It was confirmed that if letters were sent to all electors, the cost would be found within the service. Finally, it was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Councillor E. Gray that a letter drop be undertaken to contact all affected electors with information on the consultation proposals. This was agreed by the Committee. Officers were tasked to prepare suitable consultation letters.

Members then considered the timetable for the CGR and agreed the stages whilst noting actual dates would depend on the Council's Meeting Timetable.

There was further discussion on the second recommendation regarding delegations for amendments to Terms of Reference and the timetable. Following these discussions, recommendation one and two as amended were proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Councillor J. Robinson.

Subject to the preamble above, on being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED that

- 1) The Terms of Reference of the Finstall Parish Review be agreed.
- 2) Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services in consultation with Chairman/Vice-Chairman to make minor amendments to the Terms of Reference, including the timetable for the review, if required.
- 3) That a letter drop be undertaken to contact all affected electors with information on the consultation proposals.

The meeting closed at 5.29 p.m.

Chairman

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Establishment of a Working Group to Consider Future Local Governance Arrangements

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen May, Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
Report Author	Melissa Bassett Job Title: Senior Electoral Services Officer Contact email: melissa.bassett@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 587014
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Electoral Matters Committee **RESOLVE** that:-

- 1) A cross-party working group be established, comprised of the Electoral Matters Committee together with any other interested members, to undertake preparatory work in relation to future local governance arrangements within Bromsgrove District Council
- 2) The proposed indicative timetable set out in appendix 1 be approved as the basis for the working group's preparatory work
- 3) That a request be made to the relevant body for provision to be included for the appointment of Charter Trustees, to allow for the safeguarding of historic civic regalia and other historic items in the event that no parish or town council is in place for the Bromsgrove area on the reorganisation date.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the Annual Council meeting held on 20 May 2026, Council resolved to establish a cross-party working group to undertake preparatory work

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in relation to future local governance arrangements within Bromsgrove District.

- 2.2 The motion was brought forward in the context of Local Government Reorganisation. Subject to the final statutory arrangements, Bromsgrove District Council is expected to be replaced by a new unitary authority in 2028. This means that the current district tier of local representation and service delivery will no longer exist in its present form.
- 2.3 This creates a need to consider how local governance should operate for communities across Bromsgrove in the future. The preparatory work will therefore look at the options available, the issues that matter to residents and stakeholders, and whether there is a case for taking forward any formal changes to parish governance.
- 2.4 One possible route for considering changes to parish governance is a Community Governance Review (CGR). A CGR is the statutory process through which a principal council may review and make recommendations about parish governance. This can include the creation, alteration, grouping or abolition of parishes, the creation of parish or town councils, and changes to parish electoral arrangements.
- 2.5 The Council has not, at this stage, resolved to commence a formal CGR. The work of the cross-party working group is preparatory in nature and is intended to help inform whether any further action should be taken. This will include undertaking an engagement exercise to seek the views of residents, stakeholders and local organisations on future local governance arrangements, including whether there is support for a potential CGR.
- 2.6 The findings from the engagement exercise will be considered by the working group before it prepares its conclusions and recommendations. These will then be reported back to the Electoral Matters Committee, before any recommendations are considered by Full Council.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The establishment of a working group will allow Members to lead a structured engagement exercise with residents, stakeholders and local organisations before any decision is made on whether to commence a formal CGR.

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- 3.2 This preparatory stage is important because any future changes to local governance, including the possible creation of a new town or parish council, could have practical, financial and democratic implications for residents, elected Members, existing parish councils and any successor authority.
- 3.3 The purpose of the preparatory work is to help develop a clearer understanding of what future local governance could look like in Bromsgrove following Local Government Reorganisation. This includes understanding the views of residents and stakeholders, the level of support for any potential changes, and the issues that would need to be considered before any formal CGR is commenced.
- 3.4 It is proposed that the working group's preparatory work will include a engagement exercise. The engagement material will need to give residents enough information to respond meaningfully. This is likely to include clear information on what parish and town councils can do, how they are funded, indicative precept implications, possible benefits and limitations, how Local Government Reorganisation may affect local governance, and how any local arrangements could sit alongside a future unitary authority.
- 3.5 The working group's preparatory work is expected to include the following areas:
- Agreeing and undertaking the engagement exercise, including engagement material, survey questions, maps and explanatory information
 - Analysing engagement responses and wider evidence
 - Reviewing existing parish, ward and community boundaries
 - Identifying unparished areas and any neighbouring parish areas where boundary tidying may need to be considered
 - Reviewing examples of town and parish council models, including different levels of function, service delivery and precept requirement
 - Considering alternative forms of neighbourhood level governance and how these may operate in the context of Local Government Reorganisation
 - Consider the broad financial and resource implications of any potential options

Before compiling the working group's findings and reporting back to electoral Matters Committee before taking recommendations to Full Council.

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- 3.6 The working group will be advisory and will not itself make final decisions on whether to commence a CGR or approve any final governance recommendations. Its role will be to lead the engagement exercise, review the evidence, compile findings and report back to the Electoral Matters Committee.
- 3.7 Following consideration by the Electoral Matters Committee, any recommendations requiring a formal Council decision would be reported to Full Council. This would include any recommendation to commence a formal CGR.
- 3.8 To assist with scheduling and Member availability, meetings of the working group may take place online where appropriate. This will support flexibility in arranging meetings and help ensure that the group can progress the preparatory work within the indicative timetable.
- 3.9 The timetable at Appendix 1 is indicative. It has been prepared on the basis that the working group will undertake an engagement exercise and evidence gathering during 2026, before reporting its findings to Electoral Matters Committee and then Full Council.
- 3.10 If Full Council later resolves to commence a formal CGR, a separate statutory timetable will be required. This would need to allow sufficient time for terms of reference, public consultation, analysis of representations, draft recommendations, further consultation where required, final recommendations and the production of resulting Reorganisation of Community Governance Order.

Appointment of Charter Trustees

- 3.11 As part of the preparatory work for the Structural Changes Order, The Council has the opportunity to provide input into its contents, including a provision for the appointment of Charter Trustees.
- 3.12 As we are unable to predetermine the outcome of any future Community Governance Review, the appointment of charter trustees would provide a mechanism for safeguarding civic regalia, such as the Chairman's chain, together with any other relevant historic items, in the event that no parish or town council is in place for the Bromsgrove area on the reorganisation date.
- 3.13 The Charter Trustees Regulations 2009 state "Charter trustees may acquire, or accept gifts of, and hold historic or ceremonial property (other than land and buildings) and, in particular, charters, insignia and plate, relating to the charter trustee area and may execute any work

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(including works of maintenance or improvement) incidental to or consequential on the acquisition, acceptance or holding.”

3.10 Charter Trustees are usually councillors of the successor authority elected to represent the area of the predecessor local government area.

3.11 If as the result of a Community Governance Review, any Town or Parish council is created, the Charter Trustees are dissolved automatically.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no significant direct financial implications arising from the establishment of the working group or the undertaking of preparatory work at this stage.

4.2 The main resource implication will be officer time in supporting the working group, preparing engagement material, reviewing evidence, analysing engagement responses and preparing reports for consideration by the Electoral Matters Committee and Full Council.

4.3 Limited costs associated with the engagement exercise can be met from within the existing Electoral Services budget. This may include costs such as targeted social media advertising, the production of engagement material, mapping information, or other reasonable measures to support public awareness and engagement.

4.4 If the working group recommends that a formal Community Governance Review should be commenced, any further financial implications will need to be considered as part of a separate report to Full Council. This would include any additional consultation costs, officer resource requirements, legal input, mapping work, implementation costs and any financial implications associated with the creation or alteration of parish governance arrangements.

4.5 Any ongoing financial implications for residents, including any potential parish or town council precept, would be considered as part of the evidence and consultation material. No decision on the creation of a new parish or town council, or any associated precept, is being made as part of this report.

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5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The establishment of the working group and the undertaking of preparatory engagement exercise do not, in themselves, commence a formal Community Governance Review (CGR).
- 5.2 The engagement proposed at this stage is preparatory and non-statutory. It is intended to inform the working group's consideration of future local governance arrangements and whether there is a basis for recommending that a formal CGR should be commenced.
- 5.3 Care will need to be taken to ensure that the engagement material is clear about the status of the exercise and does not imply that the Council has already decided to commence a CGR or to create, alter or abolish any parish or town council arrangements.
- 5.4 Any future recommendation to commence a formal CGR would require a further report to Full Council. At that stage the proposed terms of reference, statutory timetable, consultation requirements, decision-making process and any resulting Order would need to comply with The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The proposal is directly linked to Local Government Reorganisation. Subject to the final statutory arrangements, Bromsgrove District Council is expected to be replaced by a new unitary authority in 2028. The preparatory work will help Members consider what local governance arrangements may be appropriate for communities in Bromsgrove in that context.
- 6.2 The working group will consider how future local governance arrangements could operate alongside a new unitary authority. This may include consideration of parish and town council arrangements, the position of currently unparished areas, possible boundary issues, and alternative forms of neighbourhood-level governance.
- 6.3 The work will not determine the governance arrangements of the future unitary authority. Any arrangements such as neighbourhood area committees, or other structures established by the new authority, would be a matter for the successor authority and any relevant statutory framework. However, the engagement exercise can help gather local

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views on the type of neighbourhood-level representation and engagement that residents and stakeholders consider important following reorganisation.

- 6.4 The timing of any future CGR will need to be considered alongside the wider Local Government Reorganisation timetable. If a shadow authority is established before or during any formal CGR process, it may be appropriate to consult or engage with the shadow authority before final recommendations are made, particularly where the outcome of a CGR could have implications for future local governance arrangements, local representation, assets, services, or the relationship between parish and town councils and the new unitary authority.
- 6.5 The preparatory work undertaken by the working group and any subsequent work on a CGR will therefore need to remain flexible and take account of any further statutory guidance, implementation arrangements or transitional governance requirements arising from Local Government Reorganisation. This will help ensure that any future recommendation to commence a CGR is timed appropriately and is capable of being considered in the context of the emerging unitary arrangements.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.6 Work on local governance arrangements supports all the Council's current priorities.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.7 There are no direct climate change implications arising from the establishment of the working group or the undertaking of preparatory engagement exercise.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.8 The engagement exercise will need to be designed so that residents and stakeholders have a fair opportunity to take part. This will include consideration of accessibility, digital exclusion, language needs where relevant, and the need to ensure that engagement material is clear and understandable.
- 6.9 Officers intend to work with the Council's Engagement and Equalities Officer when developing the engagement material and approach. This

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will help ensure that any engagement is accessible, inclusive and designed to support meaningful engagement from a broad range of residents and stakeholders.

- 6.10 The working group will need to consider whether any particular communities or groups may be affected differently by potential changes to local governance arrangements. This will be particularly relevant if any future recommendations relate to the creation of new parish or town council arrangements, changes to boundaries, or changes to local representation.
- 6.11 Any future report recommending the commencement of a formal Community Governance Review, or any specific governance changes, would need to consider equalities implications in more detail and, where appropriate, be supported by an equality impact assessment.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The main risks are that the engagement exercise is misunderstood as the start of a formal Community Governance Review, or that expectations are raised about outcomes that have not yet been agreed.
- 7.2 These risks will be managed by ensuring that engagement material is clear about the preparatory nature of the exercise, the role of the working group, and the decision-making route through the Electoral Matters Committee and Full Council.
- 7.3 There is also a risk that engagement responses are not representative of the wider community. This will be mitigated by using a range of engagement methods, including online engagement, targeted communications and appropriate support from the Council's Engagement and Equalities Officer.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Indicative Timetable for Working Group engagement exercise and Reporting

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen May, Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling	
Assistant Director	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services	28/05/2026
Financial Services	Deb Goodall	
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings	29/05/2026

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Agenda Item 6

Appendix 1 – Indicative Timetable for Working Group Engagement Exercise and Reporting

Stage	Indicative date	Purpose / activity
Electoral Matters Committee	11 June 2026	Report considered by the Electoral Matters Committee, including approval of the proposed approach and indicative timetable.
First meeting of Working Group	11 June 2026	Initial meeting of the working group. The meeting would confirm the group's remit and proposed approach, review the draft engagement exercise material and communications plan, and agree any amendments or further work required before final sign-off by the end of June.
Finalisation of engagement exercise material and communications plan	By end of June 2026	Final engagement exercise material and communications plan to be agreed, allowing the engagement exercise to launch in July.
Engagement period	July to mid-August 2026	Six-week public engagement exercise with residents, stakeholders, parish councils, local organisations and other interested parties. The exercise will gather views on future local governance arrangements, local identity, priorities, potential parish arrangements, and whether there is support for a formal Community Governance Review.
Engagement period ends	Mid-August 2026	Engagement exercise ends. Responses to be collated and analysed.
Working Group meeting to consider responses and preparatory work	Late August 2026	Working group to consider the responses alongside wider preparatory work, including existing parish and ward boundaries, unparished areas, examples of town and parish council models, possible financial considerations, alternative forms of neighbourhood-level governance and any implications for the possible scope of a formal CGR

Agenda Item 6

Appendix 1 – Indicative Timetable for Working Group Engagement Exercise and Reporting

Working Group meeting to consider findings and recommendations	Mid-September 2026	Working group to consider whether there is a basis for recommending further action, including whether a formal Community Governance Review should be commenced and, if so, the possible scope of that review.
Electoral Matters Committee	Late September 2026	Working group findings and proposed recommendations reported to the Electoral Matters Committee for consideration.
Full Council	14 October 2026	Final recommendations considered by Full Council, including any recommendation on whether to commence a formal Community Governance Review.

Note: This timetable is indicative and relates to the preparatory engagement exercise and reporting process only. If Full Council resolves to commence a formal Community Governance Review, a separate statutory timetable would be required. The timing of any formal CGR would also need to take account of the wider Local Government Reorganisation timetable, including the establishment of any shadow authority and whether engagement with that authority would be appropriate before final recommendations are made.

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Community Governance Review – Finstall Parish

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor May, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
Report Author	Job Title: Electoral Services Manager, Darren Whitney Contact email: darren.whitney@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881650	
Wards Affected		Tardebigge
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		Yes
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		N/A
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to RESOLVE

- 1) To note the results of the consultation undertaken.**
- 2) One of the following options as detailed in this report for the Community Governance Review Draft Recommendations to be further consulted upon:**
 - i) OPTION 1: One or both the changes in the review be adopted; or**
 - ii) OPTION 2: no change be undertaken; or**
 - iii) OPTION 3: That an alternative proposal from the Committee be adopted.**
- 3) The consultation method on the Draft Recommendations.**

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2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The report sets out the results of the initial consultation which closed on 17 April 2026 regarding the Community Governance Review (CGR) for Finstall Parish and on the basis of these asks for draft recommendations be drawn up for further consultation.
- 2.2 Finstall Parish Council asked Bromsgrove District Council if they would review the parish boundaries of Finstall Parish. The decision to go ahead with the CGR for Finstall was made at the Electoral Matters Committee's meeting held on 7 December 2025.
- 2.3 The review covers two possible changes requested by the Parish Council:
 - a) Field View House: to support re-drawing of the parish boundary so that it runs alongside the railway line to the south of Field View House, thereby placing Field View House to the north of the parish boundary. The change affects 22 electors who have no contact with the rest of Finstall Parish.
 - b) Rutherford Road area (otherwise known as Hazelcroft): to seek to move the parish boundary northwards to run alongside the railway line, to incorporate Hazelcroft within Finstall parish. This change relates to a whole polling district (TAE – Gambolds). The area is currently unparished so would just be a matter of moving the parish boundary to incorporate that polling district.
- 2.4 The Terms of Reference were agreed by this Committee at its meeting held on 2 February 2026.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 A webpage was set up on the District Council's website for the CGR providing consultees relevant information and included maps of the areas under review, which can be found at:
<https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/council/elections/community-governance-reviews/community-governance-review-for-finstall-parish/>

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To make it easier to consider the areas under review they were referred in the consultation questionnaire as being East and West of the railway line which reflects better on the maps.

- 3.2 Consultation opened 16 February and letters to all electors of the parish were sent out on 24 February. The letters directed the elector to the review webpage and informed them how they could respond to the consultation. At the close of the consultation 49 responses had been received.
- 3.3 The consultation was primarily through an online form which asked electors the following when responding:
- If and how they were affected by the review;
 - If they agreed with the area west of the railway line moving out of the Parish of Finstall;
 - If they agreed with the unparished area of the railway line moving into the Parish of Finstall; and
 - If they would like to make any further comments regarding the review

The consultation form was anonymous, but electors were asked for a postcode so officers could gauge where responses were coming from.

Consultation Results

- 3.4 The first question—following the request for a postcode—asked respondents to indicate the capacity in which they were completing the consultation. Eighty percent of responders indicated that they were electors directly affected by one of the proposals. Sixteen percent said they were electors of the parish but not directly affected. In addition, one Parish Councillor responded in that role and one person responded as “a citizen of Finstall”.
- 3.5 The second direct question asked: “Do you agree with the area west of the railway line moving out of the Parish of Finstall?” Over two thirds (68%) agreed with this statement. There were no direct comments regarding this area.
- 3.6 The following question asked: “Do you agree with the unparished area east of the railway line moving into the Parish of Finstall?” A majority of respondents (60%) disagreed with this proposal. Common concerns centred on the perceived lack of clear benefits and the potential impact on the parish. Several responses also questioned the underlying rationale for the proposed change.

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- 3.7 The final question asked for any further comments regarding the review. The full list of comments can be found in Appendix 1.

Draft Recommendations

- 3.8 Option 1 is to Recommend one or both requests made by the Parish Council.
- 3.9 Since there is broad support for the moving the boundary to exclude Field View House from the parish, it would make sense to include this in the draft recommendations.
- 3.10 If Members decide that the draft recommendation should include Polling District TAE becoming part of Finstall Parish there may be an argument to create a parish ward for this polling district which should be included in the second consultation.
- 3.11 Option 2 is for no change and keep both boundaries as they currently lie.
- 3.12 Option 3 is for the Committee to make an alternative draft recommendation based on the results of the initial consultation.

Second Consultation

- 3.13 The agreed timetable states the second consultation on draft recommendations is due to commence on 15 June until 1 October 2026. Members of the Committee are required to decide how the consultation should be carried out.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The initial consultation cost £1,310.34 and Subject to the Committee's decisions, there may be some further financial implications for the second consultation exercise which would be found within existing budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A CGR must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (Part 4) and the associated Dept. of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Guidance on Community Governance Reviews, the Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) Regulations 2008 and the

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Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The authority must have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State (s100 (4) of the 2007 Act) and must give consideration to the views of local people in reaching its decision.

- 5.2 Section 93 of the 2007 Act sets out the council's duties in undertaking a community governance review. In relation to deciding what recommendations to make, it provides that the council must have regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review:

- a) reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area, and
- b) is effective and convenient.

Section 93 (6) provides that the council must "take into account" any representations received in connection with the review as one element of these considerations.

- 5.3 Section 2 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 states that there is a duty on principal councils to promote understanding among local people, which extends to parish councils.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The change in paragraph 3.8 would mean moving the parish, district and divisional boundaries which would mean a more sensible electoral boundary when and if it becomes part of a new Unitary Council.
- 6.2 There could be other Community Governance Reviews in the near future so notice should be made of the potential of these in the draft recommendations.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.3 Work on CGRs supports all of the Council's current priorities.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.4 There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report.

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Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.5 In conducting a review the Council will ensure that electoral equality is taken into consideration.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 It would be beneficial that the CGR be completed in 2026 so that the changes, if any, can be introduced at the May elections in 2027.

7.2 There are risks linked to public engagement. A CGR requires extensive consultation, which may create expectations that changes will be made.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1: Further Comments made by respondents.

Background papers:

- DCLG Guidance
- Relevant Statutory provisions

Electoral Matters Committee 11 June 2026

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor May - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling	
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Claire Felton - Assistant Director Legal Democratic and Procurement Services	
Financial Services	Deb Goodall - Assistant Director - Finance and Customer Services	1 June 2026
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor (Governance)	

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ID	Would you like to make any further comments regarding the review?
1	<p>The document and the web site is not very explanatory, it does not give a rationale for the proposal nor does it specify the 22 properties identified to move out of the parish . Is my property one of those?</p> <p>Neither document explains where the 22 properties would move to, do they become unparished?</p> <p>If this is the case who represents these individuals?</p> <p>Why would the council spend all this time and money moving parish boundaries for 22 houses. Please explain why this is being done?</p> <p>I strongly object to this Proposal to move 22 houses out of the parish. My family have lived in the parish for nearly 50 years and have a Finstall address.</p> <p>I have no objection for the inclusion of Rutherford Road residents into the parish.</p> <p>To exclude 22 properties from the parish under this proposal is ludicrous and is a sheer waste of public time and money.</p> <p>I would appreciate a reply answering my queries.</p> <p>(Name and address redacted)</p>
5	The rutherford road estate is part of aston fields, they dont feel a part of finstall
6	What is the rationale for the request for a boundary change? It is difficult to answer the questionnaire without understanding the reason for the requested change. Thank you.
8	This boundary change would give more local people a further insight to questions they may have regarding the area in which they live and give them the chance to be more involved in local issues.
9	I'm unclear on the benefits for the extra cost that will be charged to me. Please can you articulate the benefit to impacted residents.
11	More information is needed on the proposed change. Why is it being proposed, other than to raise additional funds for the parish council? I object to paying additional council tax, being taken out of the boundary for Aston Fields, and presumably gaining chancery liabilities I don't currently have.
21	<p>Removing the small area west of the railway line from the parish appears very sensible to me, and I support that. However, I would very much like to know the reasoning behind the suggestion of adding the Rutherford Road area to the parish. My initial reaction is to strongly oppose that change because it would drastically affect the character of the parish. The parish is currently very low-density and semi-rural to rural in character, with most houses either adjacent to or very near agricultural land, while the Rutherford Road area is a much higher density housing estate. Adding this area to the parish would create a parish that is split between two groups having dramatically different environments, experiences, and interests. This would not be consistent with goals mentioned in the terms of reference for this review, such as being able to identify clearly with the parish and reflecting distinctive and recognisable communities of interest.</p>
23	This a complete waste of time and tax payers money. You've posted out a massive quantity of letters, some, 2 or 3 per household, wasted paper, postage and our time!!
26	The area around Rutherford Road has very little representation by it local councillor and this is the general feeling of the community. Its movement into the Finstall Parish would certainly help with its inclusion.
27	I agree entirely we need to be included to make our thoughts known.
28	I wasn't aware that Rutherford Rd etc was in an unparished area. I have lived there for over 30 yrs. Will this make any difference to where I can vote in elections?

Agenda Item 7

29	This is clearly a move by finstall parish Council to increase their income received from precept. The area under debate is and always has been aston fields there is no need for it to be moved.
31	Boundary change to support new, unwanted housing development should be described in such terms. Your proposal is presented in an underhand and misleading manner
32	Not needed no warranted and we dont want new housing developments
40	This seems like an attempt to prop up the existing parish with substantial additional funds for services which do not benefit the area that is being proposed to be moved into the parish. This area is a housing estate that is part of Aston Fields, not Finstall. Most residents use the pubs, restaurants and services in Aston Fields. Furthermore, considering that it is a housing estate, it has none of the things that are managed by a parish council that you have listed in your letter to residents. There are no allotments, burial grounds, bus shelters or open spaces, and we would not make the 30+ minute walk to the Finstall village hall. It very much seems like we would be paying money for nothing.
41	The inclusion of the wagon works housing development in Finstall parish would materially alter the nature of the parish. Currently, we are a village where we know our neighbours and have a positive community network. The inclusion of the large and totally separate new area of housing could totally subsume the wishes of the current smaller village.
42	Don't think I would get better services for the increased council tax.
44	Lots of information about regulations and process, very little about why the proposed changes are being suggested, the rationale behind them and the anticipated advantages for my area (Rutherford Road estate) if we were to come under Finstall Parish Council. Our area identifies with Aston Fields rather than Finstall. I'm unclear from the documentation what I and my neighbours would be getting for the additional precept. The uncertainty about the future of Worcestershire County Council and BDC is also an issue.
46	My knowledge of parish councils leads me to concern that such a move might not be in our interest.
49	Let's keep the village as a village, not for more houses which will be eventually built here