

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP - COMMUNITY
GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Your attendance is requested at a meeting to be held in the Walton Room
The Guildhall, St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE. on Friday, 12
October 2018 at 12:30 pm.

George Candler
Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. MINUTES
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
4. CGR - POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR CONSULTATION AND FURTHER ACTIONS

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP - COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Thursday, 6 September 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Nunn (Chair) Beardsworth, Larratt and Nunn and Oldham

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Kilbride who was substituted by Councillor Oldham. Further apologies were received from Councillors Stone and Birch.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st August 2018 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Councillors present declared a personal interest in Item 4 having previously declared the same interest at the Extraordinary Council meeting concerning the unitary proposal on the 29th August 2018.

4. SKELETON TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Solicitor highlighted the need for expediency and noted that initial discussions with Chairs of parish councils were due to begin in the following week. A suggestion was made to invite the Chair of NCALC to these discussions as a consultee.

The future of the Mayoralty was discussed and Members agreed that whilst it should be retained and shared across all of the town, financial implications would be highlighted through a risk assessment

It was noted that a town council encompassing all unparished areas would be among the largest in the country and the Borough Secretary advised that any changing of current parishes would be an onerous task.

It was agreed that consultation would need to be meaningful and take place across parished and unparished parts of the town.

The Solicitor explained that the skeleton terms of reference as set out in the report were subject to amendment; the group could add or remove consultation questions as they saw fit.

The group discussed similar town councils and their responsibilities and noted the good work that Northampton Parishes did maintaining their parks and open spaces, among other things.

RESOLVED:

2.1 That a CGR under Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 be undertaken in respect of the whole Borough area, rather than in respect of the unparished areas only;

2.2 That the draft Terms of Reference at Appendix 1 of the report be approved; and

- 2.3 That it delegates authority to the Working Group to determine the timetable for the Community Governance Review to be included in the Terms of Reference (including determining the date of commencement of the CGR).

5. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Date and time of the next meeting would be confirmed at a later date.

The meeting concluded at 3.10pm

Appendices: 3



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

12th October 2018

Report Title	Potential options for consultation and further actions.
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 Following the last meeting of the Community Governance Review ('CGR') Cross Party Working Group on 6th September 2018, it is now necessary for the Working Group to:
- a) consider proposed options to be taken forward for consultation in the CGR, including options for a proposed town council, with a view to making recommendations to Full Council; and
 - b) approve updated draft Terms of Reference for the CGR, including agreeing upon a proposed timetable for the CGR to be included in the Terms of Reference, to be referred to Full Council for approval.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Working Group recommend to Full Council at its meeting on 5th November 2018 that:
- a) it approves the updated draft Terms of Reference for the CGR attached at Appendix 3 and delegates to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group the power to make any necessary amendments to the Terms of Reference;
 - b) a minimum of three options, including options for a proposed town council, as set out in this report go forward for consultation as part of the CGR; and
 - c) it delegates to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group power to approve the appointment of appropriate contractors to carry out the consultation element of the CGR on behalf of the Council.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report background

- 3.1.1 The Council has agreed to undertake a CGR under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 in respect of the whole Borough area. As the report to Full Council on 9th July 2018 stated, the creation of a town council in Northampton could be one of the issues that the CGR process considers. (It should be noted that a town council is in law a parish council, with a different style).
- 3.1.2 In order to facilitate a CGR process it is considered helpful to put forward at least three options for consideration by communities and other consultees. Alternatively members of the Working Group can reject the suggested options and put forward alternative options to be presented to Full Council as possible options for consultation. Members of the Working Group will have extensive knowledge of their communities and may have valid reasons for proposing alternative options.

3.2 Option 1

- 3.2.1 Leaving the whole of the current unparished area as it is with no change and rejecting the idea of a parish council or parish councils (including a town council) for the unparished area. This option has to be included to ensure the validity of the consultation process under the CGR otherwise, it could be argued that there is no genuine choice and this argument could be sustainable in any judicial challenge.

3.3 Option 2 – Map 1 at Appendix 1

- 3.3.1 The second option includes a proposed town council for Members to consider as a possible option for the consultation exercise. This option is the creation of a town council covering the whole of the unparished area of the Borough of Northampton. This option is shown on Map 1 at Appendix 1. The unparished area, which in this proposal would become a town council, is shaded grey/blue on Map 1. (The existing parishes in the Borough are shaded green).
- 3.3.2 This option would have no effect on the existing parish councils in the Borough. The Mayoralty it is proposed would cover the whole of the existing Borough Council area which would include all existing parish councils.
- 3.3.3 This option if adopted would create a large town council with approximately 114,522 electors . This proposal would not involve any alteration of existing ward boundaries as this would both complicate and extend the CGR beyond April, 2019.
- 3.3.4 Option 2 would cover a wide area of the existing Borough Council, but this could have the advantage of being inclusive for all its communities and give the necessary identity to the town council. However, it would be a large town

council and would probably need an extensive range of services/functions to deliver to its communities in order to justify its creation.

3.4 Option: 3 – Map 2 at Appendix 2

Part A

3.4.1

This option proposes the creation of a new Council that covers broadly a similar area to the area of the parliamentary constituency of Northampton South (the area shaded yellow on map 2). It would include the town area of Northampton with a suitable mix of communities to give focus and support for such an option.

3.4.2

Such an option with an electorate size of approximately 59,000 could be a realistic option a sufficient size of population could give such a town council a voice in the new unitary authority. In addition, you would also have a balance between the urban and rural areas that would be included in such an option.

3.4.3

Again, this option would include the Mayoralty and not involve at this stage any change in ward boundaries. Also as with option 2 the Mayoralty could extend to the whole of the existing Borough area and have no effect on existing parish councils.

Part B

3.4.4

With this Option 3, the remainder of the unparished area is what amounts broadly to the parliamentary constituency of Northampton North. It is proposed that individual communities could be asked if they would like to consider the creation of new parish councils for their areas. Such parish councils (or community councils if they chose to adopt this alternative style) would also have a voice in the new unitary authority. It is proposed that existing borough ward areas could be used as a basis to form such parish councils to be considered as part of the CGR.

3.4.5

One possible example for the creation of new parish areas in the northern area of the borough is shown on Map 2 shaded purple and includes 6 proposed new parish areas.

3.4.6

The 6 proposed new parish council areas shown in the northern part of the town on Map 2 are only suggestions for possible combinations of areas to form parish councils and while these may not be acceptable there will certainly be other combinations coming forward from the communities, organisations etc. that will be consulted.

3.4.7

Initially, however it is the proposal for a town council which is the prime issue for the CGR and what area of the existing unparished area it will cover.

3.5 Choices

3.5.1

The CGR process is vital in producing a view from our communities which can be taken into account when the Council reaches a final stage in its

decision making as to what option will be adopted in relation to a future town council.

3.5.2 The CGR requires an option or options to be put forward for consultation and it may be that any options put forward by the existing Borough Council will be reflected by our communities and other options put forward. This will include alternative and/or new parish councils.

3.5.3 The Working Party is asked to consider the three enclosed options and decide whether these or an alternative option or options should be put forward for Full Council's attention and decision at its meeting on 5th November 2018.

3.6 Financial Implications

3.6.1 Parish Councils are able to charge a precept to council tax payers within their parish boundaries. Northampton Borough Council (NBC) is the billing authority for Northampton and will collect council tax on behalf of themselves and all preceptors, and will then pass on the precept amounts to the precepting bodies. Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) and the Northamptonshire Police & Crime Commissioner (NPCC) are also precepting bodies.

3.6.2 The council tax charged by NBC and the precepting bodies in Northampton in 2018/19 is as follows:

Area	2018/19 Council Tax for average band D property				
	NBC council tax	NCC council tax	NPCC council tax	Parish council tax	Total
Billing	219.40	1,236.35	221.04	56.82	1,733.61
Collingtree	209.21	1,236.35	221.04	38.63	1,705.22
Duston	213.45	1,236.35	221.04	84.61	1,755.45
Great Houghton	209.21	1,236.35	221.04	71.45	1,738.04
Hardingstone	211.60	1,236.35	221.04	49.69	1,718.68
Upton	209.21	1,236.35	221.04	14.61	1,681.21
Wootton	212.66	1,236.35	221.04	62.98	1,733.04
East Hunsbury	224.97	1,236.35	221.04	46.60	1,728.96
Hunsbury Meadows	209.21	1,236.35	221.04	29.07	1,695.67
West Hunsbury	215.55	1,236.35	221.04	10.91	1,683.85
Unparished	221.21	1,236.35	221.04	0.00	1,678.60

3.6.3 The charges above are for band D properties. Actual charges to residents will be adjusted to take account of the banding of their property, with the charge being factored down for properties of a lower banding, and factored up for properties of a higher banding.

3.5.4 Currently the unparished areas of Northampton do not pay any parish precepts, as no parish councils provide services in these areas. Under the "do nothing" option (Option 1) this would continue to be the case.

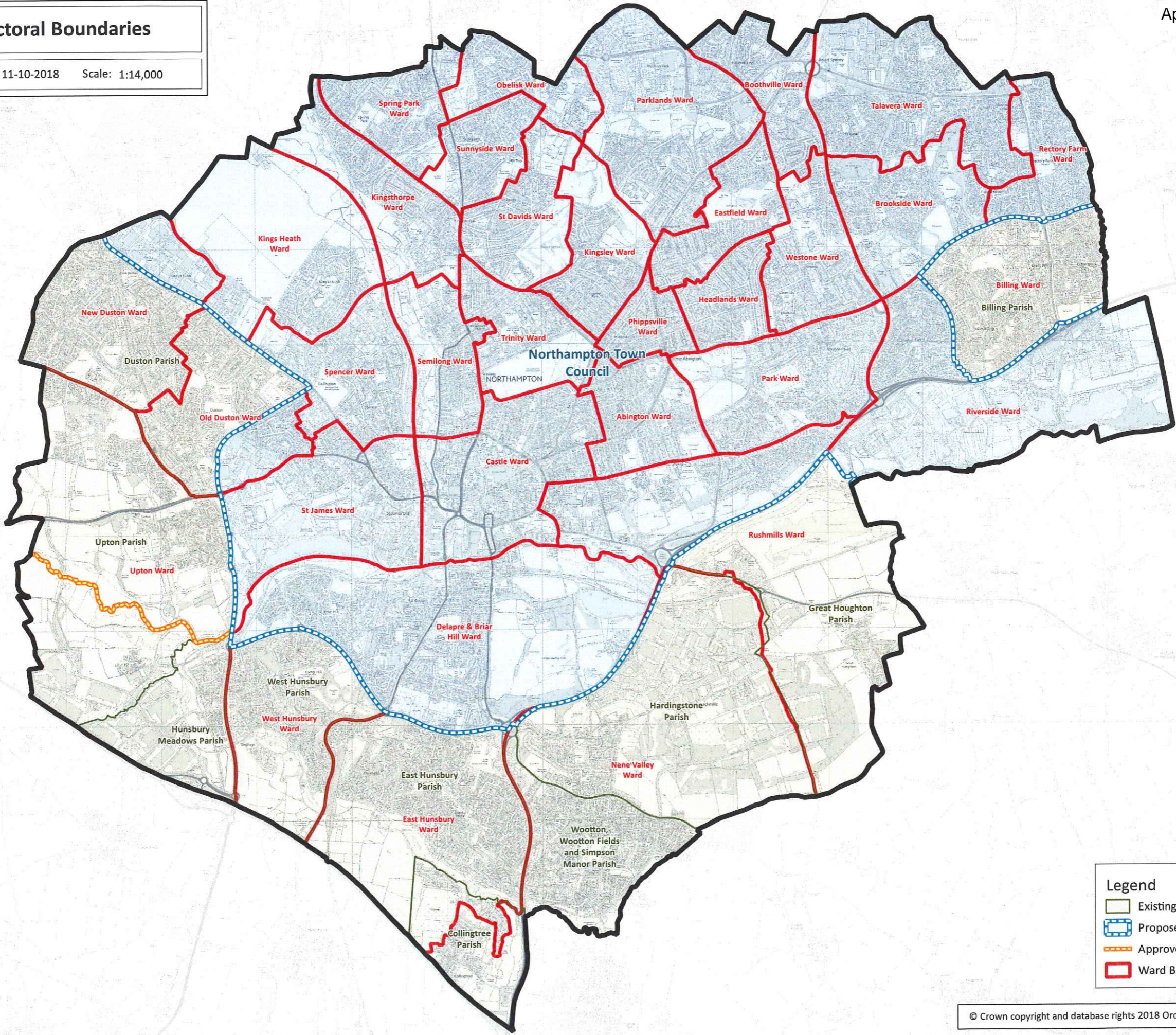
- 3.5.5 Under the Options 2 and 3 which include the possible creation of a Northampton Town Parish Council, and other parish councils, those areas covered by a new town/parish council would get a new parish precept charge in addition to the other elements of council tax that they would continue to be charged.
- 3.5.6 The new parish precept would be calculated by the new parish council. The parish council would need to calculate their net budget requirement (ie, the net cost of running the parish council and the services it provides). This net budget requirement would then be divided by the tax base of the parish area. The taxbase is the number of band D properties in the parish area that are eligible to pay council tax (this takes into account the different banding levels of different properties). This would then give the new parish precept that would be payable by those residents living in the new parish area.
- 3.5.7 It is not currently possible to calculate what the level of parish precept would be for a new town council or any other parish council created as part of the CGR. It would depend on the budget that the parish council set. A larger parish area would have a greater tax base to spread the costs of the parish over. However, it would be reasonable to expect the costs of a larger parish to be greater as it would be providing services over a larger area.
- 3.5.8 The average band D parish precept for England in 2018/19 was £64.05, as published by MHCLG:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/700668/Council_tax_levels_set_by_local_authorities_in_England_2018-19_revised.pdf
- 3.5.9 There are limits on how much NBC, NCC and NPCC can raise their council tax by each year without holding a referendum. There is currently no such limit for parish councils, but it is not known if this will remain the case.



Electoral Boundaries

Date: 11-10-2018 Scale: 1:14,000

Not for publication



Legend

- Existing Parish Boundaries
- Proposed Northampton Town Council
- Approved Parish Boundary Change
- Ward Boundaries

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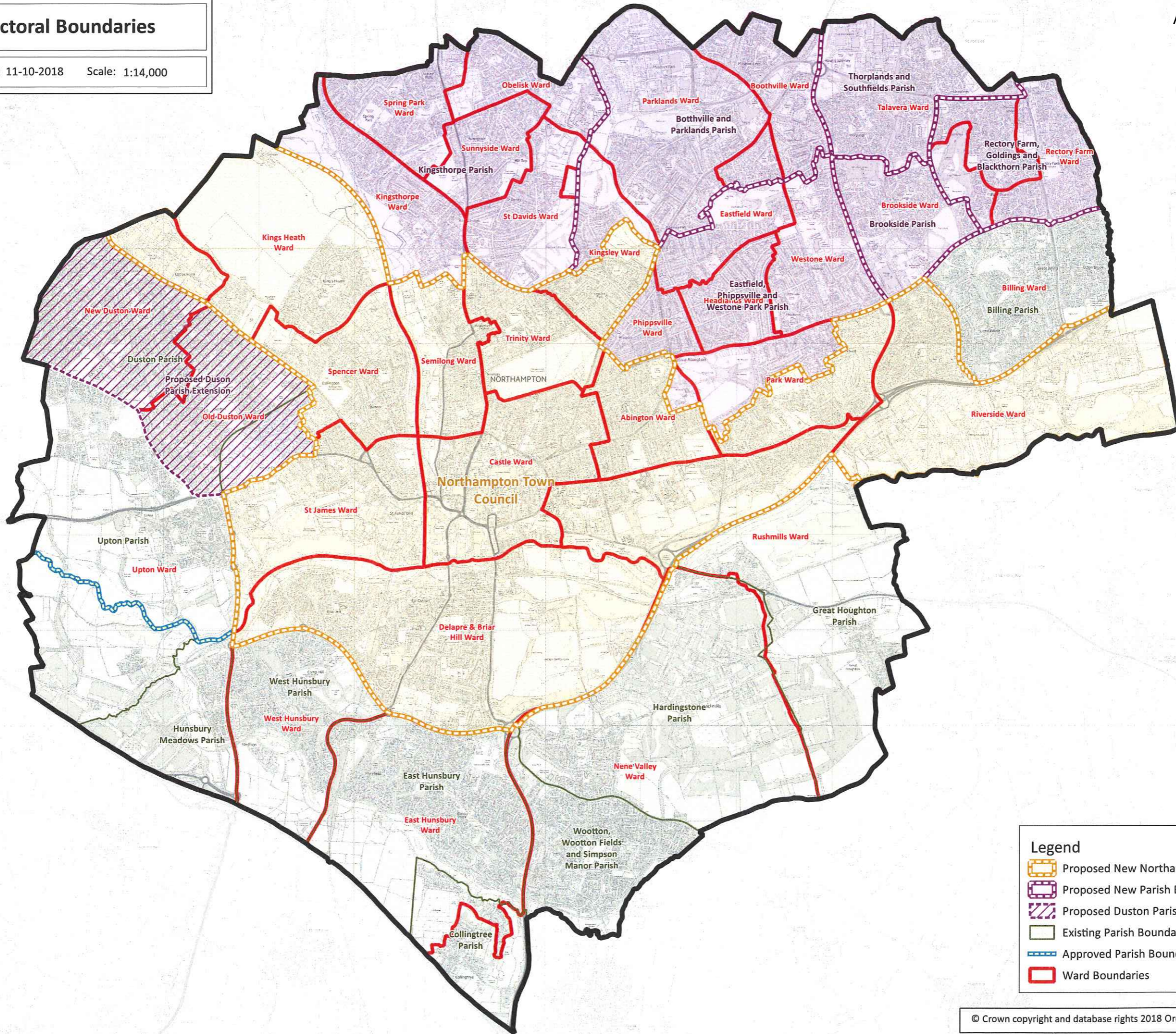


Electoral Boundaries

Date: 11-10-2018 Scale: 1:14,000

Appendix 2 - Option 3

Not for publication



Legend

- Proposed New Northampton Town Council Boundary
- Proposed New Parish Boundaries
- Proposed Duston Parish Boundary Extension
- Existing Parish Boundaries
- Approved Parish Boundary Change
- Ward Boundaries

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Draft Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review for the Borough of Northampton

Introduction

Northampton Borough Council currently has 10 parish councils and would like to consider whether to create any more, particularly for the town of Northampton. This is in the context of proposals being considered by the Secretary of State to merge Northampton Borough Council into a new unitary West Northamptonshire Council. To create a new Town or Parish Council the Borough Council must undertake a community governance review.

The community governance review will cover the whole of the Borough (ie. all of the parished and unparished areas) and will be carried out pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, and other relevant statutory provisions. It will aim to gather as wide a view as possible on the Council's proposals and also invite any further proposals

The review will have regard to the "Guidance on Community Governance Reviews" issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in 2010. The aim of the review is to ensure that the arrangements for community governance across the Borough reflect 'the identities and interests of the community in the area' and are 'effective and convenient'.

The review will be conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference set out below.

What is a community governance review?

A community governance review is the process used to consider whether existing parish arrangements should be changed in any way. This may include the following:

- Altering the boundaries of existing parishes
- Changing the names of existing parishes
- Creating a new parish or abolishing an existing parish
- Creating parish councils (which includes creating a town council, which is a type of parish council)
- Abolishing parish councils
- The electoral arrangements for parish councils (including the number of councillors and arrangements for parish warding)
- The grouping or de-grouping of parish councils (and consequential changes to their electoral arrangements)
- The "style" of a parish (enabling an area to be known as a town, community, neighbourhood or village rather than a parish).

The whole of the unparished area of the Borough of Northampton is included in the scope of this community governance review.

What is the Timeframe?

A proposed timeframe would be as follows:

Stage	Time allowed	Planned date
Council to consider Terms of Reference		Monday 5 November 2018
Terms of reference published		Tuesday 6 November 2018
1 st consultation period	8 weeks	Monday 12 November 2018 – Monday 7 January 2019
Consideration of submissions received – draft recommendations prepared	5 weeks	Tuesday 8 January 2019 - 11 February 2019
Special Council Meeting to consider initial draft recommendations		Mid- February 2019
Draft recommendations are published		February 2019
Second Stage consultation	8 weeks	February to April 2019
Consideration of submissions received – final recommendations to Council are prepared with draft Order	8 weeks	[] April 2019 - [] June 2019
Council Meeting to consider final recommendations	8 weeks	[] September 2019
Final recommendations are published – Review concluded		[] September 2019
LGBCE consent for parish warding arrangements and related alterations		[] September 2019
Make Reorganisation Order		[] September 2019
Related Alterations Order decisions		[] October 2019
Publish Electoral Register		[] December 2019
Reorganisation Order in force		[] April 2019
Parish elections		May 2020

How will the review work?

We will consult on plans to create a new Town Council for Northampton and potentially for other areas of the Borough where communities are interested in forming new town or parish councils.

The initial consultation that will help us to create our plans will take place from Monday 12 November 2018 to Monday 7 January 2019 and run for 8 weeks.

Following the close of the first period of consultation and consideration of the outcomes, the draft recommendations will be published in February 2019.

These draft recommendations will then be the subject of a second period of consultation, which will run for [8] weeks from the date of publication.

Following the end of the second period of consultation, all comments received will be considered against the draft recommendations. The final set of recommendations will then be submitted to full Council in June 2019.

It is intended that the final recommendations, which will include any changes to the current parish arrangements in Northampton, will be implemented in time for the May 2020 elections, when the first elections to the proposed new Unitary Council will be made.

The Council will make a Reorganisation of Community Governance Order in order to implement these recommendations. Such an Order may cover “consequential matters” required to give effect to the Order, such as the transfer of property or other assets, the setting of precepts for new parishes, and staffing matters.

The Council may recommend that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England make alterations to ward boundaries to reflect any changes made at a parish level. The Council notes that it will be for the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to decide if related alterations should be made as there will be a review of boundaries in connection with the creation of the new Unitary Council.

Who will we consult?

The Council is required to consult with local government electors living in Northampton Borough, as well as any other individuals and organisations (including local authorities such as parish councils) who “*appear to have an interest in the review*”.

The Council must properly consider all representations that it receives during the periods of consultation, and will make representations available for viewing by the public.

How will we consult?

We will write to all parish councils and identified umbrella organisations (including the National Association for Local Councils) and other organisations before the start of the first period of consultation, inviting them to submit their views. The same process will be followed with the second period of consultation.

We will also publicise the review on our website, through our internal communication channels and on our social media platforms to engage with residents, community groups and other stakeholders.

We will issue press releases from time to time and also make use of our relationships with the local media to inform and involve as broad an audience as possible.

What will the review focus on?

The final recommendations made at the end of the review will seek to reflect the statutory requirements to have regard to the need to secure that community governance across the Borough:

- Reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- Is effective and convenient.

When responding to the consultation on parish arrangements, you should ensure that your response to any proposal takes account of these two criteria.

The Council will also need to take into account other arrangements for community representation or engagement in the area.

In considering the electoral arrangements of the parishes in its area, the Council is required to consider any change in the number or distribution of electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day the review starts. In order to support those who wish to make a proposal, we will provide information on current parish arrangements (including maps), as well as current and projected future electorate figures for parishes. These are available to download by following the links below

We will need to consider the number of town and parish councillors that will be appropriate for each body. There is no provision in legislation that each parish councillor should represent (as nearly as possible) the same number of electors. However, the government guidance reiterates the Commission's belief that it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government to have significant difference in levels of representation between different wards in the same parish. Additionally, any recommendations made by the review must adhere to the legal minimum number of parish councillors for any parish council, which is five. There is no legal maximum number of parish councillors.

Documents [to be hyperlinked]

- Borough Map
- Details of existing parishes including: map; size; electors, councillors, functions etc
- Details of existing Council wards and population

How to submit your views

You can respond to the consultation in the following ways:

Complete our consultation form attached and submit electronically to: [\[cgr\]@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:cgr@northampton.gov.uk)

Write to:

Community Governance Review (Chief Executive's Office)
Northampton Borough Council
Northampton Borough Council
The Guildhall
St Giles Square
Northampton
NN1 1DE

Send an email to: [\[cgr@northampton.gov.uk\]](mailto:cgr@northampton.gov.uk)]

If you have any questions about the community governance review, please contact [] or call [].