

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 12 October 2026

Report Title

Community Governance Review Recommendations for Consultation

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

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Ward(s) Affected

Boroughwide

Report Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an overview of the first stage consultation responses and to set out draft recommendations for consideration and approval.

Subject to Cabinet's approval, a second stage of public consultation will be undertaken to seek views on the draft recommendations.

Following the conclusion of the consultation period, a final recommendations report will then be brought to Cabinet. It is a function of Council to approve the final recommendations arising from the review.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the retention of the existing community governance arrangements for the following parish, town and community councils and parish meeting, and agrees that no further consultation is required. These arrangements will therefore be carried forward to the Final Recommendations Report:
 - a) Anston Parish Council
 - b) Brampton Bierlow Parish Council
 - c) Catcliffe Parish Council
 - d) Harthill-with-Woodall Parish Council
 - e) Hellaby Parish Council
 - f) Maltby Town Council

- g) Thorpe Salvin Parish Council
 - h) Todwick Parish Council
 - i) Treeton Parish Council
 - j) Ulley Parish Council
2. Approves consultation with the affected parish councils and their electors to seek views on the revision of the number of council seats as outlined below:
 - a) Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council: An increase of three council seats from 15 to 18
 - b) Bramley Parish Council: An increase of one seat from 13 to 14
 - c) Brinsworth Parish Council: An increase of three seats from 11 to 14
 - d) Ravenfield Parish Council: An increase of two seats from 7 to 9
 - e) Thrybergh Parish Council: A decrease of four seats from 15 to 11
 - f) Thurcroft Parish Council: A decrease of five seats from 18 to 13
 - g) Wales Parish Council: A decrease of two seats from 15 to 13
 - h) Waverley Community Council: An increase of five seats from 7 to 12
 - i) Whiston Parish Council: An increase of three seats from 9 to 12
 - j) Wickersley Parish Council: A decrease of two seats from 16 to 14
 - k) Woodsetts Parish Council: A decrease of one seat from 9 to 8
 3. Approves consultation with electors at 605, 607, 609 and 611 Retford Road, together with Aston-cum-Aughton and Orgreave Parish Councils to seek views on the transfer of the properties from Aston-cum-Aughton West Ward of Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council to Orgreave Parish Council.
 4. Approves consultation with residents of the Poppy Fields development, together with Bramley Parish Council and Ravenfield Parish Council, to inform consideration of whether the current parish boundary remains appropriate or whether changes should be considered.
 5. Approves consultation with electors in the BWA polling district, together with Brinsworth Parish Council, to inform consideration of whether the Brinsworth Parish Council boundary should be extended to include the BWA polling district.
 6. Approves consultation with Dalton Parish Council and its electors to inform consideration of whether Dalton Parish Council should be renamed Dalton and Sunnyside Parish Council and the parish wards renamed to Sunnyside Ward, Dalton Ward, and Brecks Ward.
 7. Approves consultation with electors residing in the Penny Hill area, together with Dinnington St John's Town Council and Firbeck Parish Council, to inform consideration of whether the properties within the Penny Hill area should remain within the Dinnington Town Ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council or be transferred to Firbeck Parish Council.
 8. Approves consultation with electors within the Gildingwells Parish Meeting area regarding the future community governance arrangements for the parish. The consultation should seek views on the following options:
 - a) Re-establishing the Parish Meeting
 - b) Merging Gildingwells Parish Meeting with Letwell Parish Council;

- c) Merging Gildingwells Parish Meeting with Woodsetts Parish Council;
and
- d) Abolishing Gildingwells Parish Meeting

In addition, consultation should be undertaken with Letwell Parish Council and Woodsetts Parish Council to seek their views on the potential merger options and the implications for effective and convenient local governance.

9. Approves consultation with electors within the Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting area regarding the future community governance arrangements for the Parish. The consultation should seek views on the following options:
 - a) Re-establishing the Parish Meeting
 - b) Merging Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting with Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council;
 - c) Abolishing Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting

In addition, it is proposed that consultation is undertaken with Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council to seek their views on the potential merger options and the implications for effective and convenient local governance.

10. Approves consultation with electors residing in the Firsby area and within the Hooton Roberts parish area, together with Ravenfield Parish Council, to seek their views on a proposal to transfer the Firsby area from Hooton Roberts Parish Meeting to Ravenfield Parish Council, or to retain the existing parish boundary arrangements.
11. Approves consultation with electors residing in the Thurcroft South Ward (Laughton Common), together with Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council and Thurcroft Parish Council, to seek their views on the potential transfer of the Thurcroft South Ward of Thurcroft Parish Council to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council, or the retention of the existing parish boundary arrangements.
12. Approves consultation with the electors of 11, 38 and 40 Reresby Park Close, together with Dalton and Thrybergh Parish Councils, on the potential transfer of these properties from Thrybergh South Ward of Thrybergh Parish Council to Dalton North Ward of Dalton Parish Council.
13. Approves consultation with Wentworth Parish Council and parish electors, particularly those in Harley Ward, to seek their views on changing the name of Harley Ward to Harley and Hood Hill Ward.
14. Approves the commencement of a twelve-week public consultation on the draft recommendations set out in Recommendations 2-13 of this report.
15. Notes that a final recommendations report will be brought forward following the consultation on the draft recommendations. Cabinet will be asked to approve the final recommendations and recommend their adoption by Council in Spring 2027.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Terms of Reference
- Appendix 2 First Stage Consultation Responses
- Appendix 3 Maps of areas relating to consultation responses
- Appendix 4 Part A – Initial Equality Screening Assessment
- Appendix 5 Climate Impact Assessment CIA696

Background Papers

[Guidance on community governance reviews](#) [Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, March 2010]

[Community Governance Review Cabinet Report](#), 13 April 2026

[Community Governance Review Terms of Reference](#), 13 April 2026

[Community Governance Review Interim Report](#), 14 September 2026

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Community Governance Review Recommendations for Consultation

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has a duty to keep under review the arrangements of its parish, town and community councils through a statutory process known as a Community Governance Review, undertaken in accordance with Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 1.2 A Community Governance Review sets out the steps a principal council must follow to consult with those residing in the area, and other interested parties, on the most suitable ways of representing the people in the area identified in the review. This means making sure that those living in the area, and other interested groups, have a say in how their local communities are represented. The former Department of Communities and Local Government and the Electoral Commission have produced Guidance on Community Governance Reviews.
- 1.3 A Community Governance Review can consider one or more of the following:
- the creation, merger, alteration, or abolishment of a parish
 - the naming of a parish and the style of a new parish
 - the electoral arrangements for a parish (i.e. the ordinary year of election; council size; number of councillors to be elected to the council and parish warding)
 - the grouping or de-grouping of parishes; and
 - other types of arrangements including parish meetings.
- 1.4 Following approval by Cabinet on 13 April 2026, Rotherham Council commenced a Community Governance Review on 1 May 2026 as set out in the agreed Terms of Reference (Appendix 1).
- 1.5 An initial consultation took place between 1 May and 26 June 2026, providing residents, local councils, community groups, and other stakeholders with the opportunity to submit their views on existing governance arrangements and any potential changes they would wish the review to consider.
- 1.6 The consultation was accessible via the Council's consultation portal and in paper format at all Rotherham libraries. To support public engagement, seven outreach events were held at library locations across the borough, enabling residents to view maps, ask any questions, and submit a response.
- 1.7 The consultation received just under two hundred responses, representing views on existing parish, town, and community councils, together with interest in the establishment of new parish councils. The anonymised First Stage Consultation Responses are shown in Appendix 2.

- 1.8 An Officer Working Group has reviewed the consultation responses, together with the statutory criteria for community governance reviews and desktop review of boundaries and electorates, to inform the development of draft recommendations.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Responses outside of the scope of the review

- 2.1.1 Many responses to the Community Governance Review included concerns, comments and opinions relating to individual councillors or decisions taken by parish, town or community councils. Such matters are outside of the scope of a Community Governance Review.
- 2.1.2 Where electors are dissatisfied with the actions of individual councillors or with decisions made by a parish, town or community council, the electoral process provides an opportunity to seek change.
- 2.1.3 Any individual who meets the statutory eligibility requirements may stand for election as a parish councillor at the next scheduled election.
- 2.1.4 A casual vacancy occurs when a councillor leaves office before the end of their term, creating an unexpected vacancy on the council. Electors may request that the vacancy be filled through an election. If ten or more electors submit such a request, an election will be held, providing an opportunity for eligible individuals to stand as candidates.
- 2.1.5 Where an election is not requested, the vacancy may be filled by co-option. In these circumstances, interested and eligible individuals may apply to be considered for co-option by the parish, town or community council.

2.2 Guidance on the number of council seats

- 2.2.1 The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) is the national representative body for parish and town councils in England. It provides guidance, training, legal and policy support to local councils and promotes good governance across the sector. The majority of parish and town councils across the country are members of NALC and many adopt their model policies and guidance when developing their own governance and administrative arrangements.
- 2.2.2 Although NALC's guidance on parish council seats was first published in 1988, it remains the most widely recognised benchmark for determining councillor numbers and continues to be referenced in Community Governance Reviews. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has noted that the relationship between electorate size and council size appears to have stood the test of time and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, continues to support effective and convenient

local governance. Accordingly, the guidance provides an appropriate starting point when considering parish council representation, whilst taking account of local circumstances and community needs.

- 2.2.3 NALC's guidance on parish council seats is set out in the Community Governance Review Terms of Reference (Appendix 1, page 6).

2.3 Anston Parish Council

- 2.3.1 One response was received from an elector in the parish, suggesting the Dinnington Park Avenue ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council, except for Dinnington Cemetery, should move into Anston Parish Council, due to the area being part of the Anston & Woodsetts Borough ward.

- 2.3.2 Dinnington Park Avenue Ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council consists of the ANF polling district and has 213 properties and 360 electors. As part of Dinnington St John's Town Council, the Dinnington Park Avenue Ward is part of the Dinnington St John's Neighbourhood Plan area. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3: Map 1.

2.4 Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council

- 2.4.1 One elector from the parish responded to the consultation, stating that they did not believe any changes to the current electoral arrangements were required.
- 2.4.2 Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council currently comprises 15 councillors serving an electorate of 11,602. With the electorate projected to increase to 12,184 within the next five years, National Association of Local Councils (NALC) guidance suggests that a parish of this size would ordinarily be represented by 18 councillors.
- 2.4.3 From an examination of the existing governance arrangements, a potential boundary anomaly has been identified in relation to four properties, 605, 607, 609 and 611 Retford Road, which are currently situated within the AUD polling district of Aston-cum-Aughton West Ward. There are five electors across the four properties.
- 2.4.4 These properties are physically separated from the main residential area of the parish by the River Rother and an industrial estate. The nearest residential properties within Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council are located over 700 metres away, whereas the properties at 605-611 Retford Road adjoin the boundary with Orgreave Parish Council and are within approximately 200 metres of the nearest residential properties in Orgreave. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3: Map 2.

2.5 Brampton Bierlow Parish Council

- 2.5.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Brampton Bierlow Parish Council.

2.6 Bramley Parish Council

- 2.6.1 Nineteen responses were received in relation to Bramley Parish Council. The principal issue raised was the Poppy Fields development, with respondents divided on whether the development should remain within Bramley Parish Council or be transferred to Ravenfield Parish Council.
- 2.6.2 The Poppy Fields development is a new housing development currently under construction off Moor Lane South in the Bramley North Ward. As at September 2026, 149 electors were registered across 93 properties on the development. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3: Map 3.
- 2.6.3 Respondents supporting the Poppy Fields development remaining in Bramley Parish Council, including the Parish Clerk, Parish Councillors and local electors, cited existing links to local services, infrastructure and community identity. Conversely, several respondents, including residents of the development, stated that they identify more closely with Ravenfield and make greater use of facilities within that parish.
- 2.6.4 Further comments relating to the development were received under the consultation for Ravenfield Parish Council and are summarised in section 2.21.
- 2.6.5 Most respondents supported the retention of the current parish warding arrangements. However, two respondents questioned the value of parish wards, with one supporting their removal to simplify governance arrangements.
- 2.6.6 Responses regarding councillor numbers were predominantly in favour of maintaining the current level of representation.
- 2.6.7 Bramley Parish Council currently comprises 13 councillors serving an electorate of 5,965. With the electorate projected to increase to 6,528 over the next five years, NALC guidance suggests that a parish of this size would ordinarily be represented by 14 councillors.
- 2.6.8 A number of respondents raised concerns regarding the administration and operation of the Parish Council and therefore fall outside the scope of a Community Governance Review.

2.7 Brinsworth Parish Council

- 2.7.1 Twenty responses were received in relation to Brinsworth Parish Council, including submissions from parish electors, residents outside the parish, the Parish Clerk, Parish Councillors and Brinsworth Ward Borough Councillors.

- 2.7.2 The principal theme was support for extending the parish boundary to include the entirety of the Brinsworth Borough Ward. Currently the BWA polling district of Brinsworth Borough Ward, located north of Bawtry Road, falls outside the parish boundary and comprises 483 properties and 753 electors. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3: Map 4.
- 2.7.3 However, several respondents from the BWA polling district opposed their inclusion within the parish.
- 2.7.4 One respondent also proposed extending the parish boundary to include properties on Century View (even numbers 30 to 48), which are currently outside the parish. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3: Map 5.
- 2.7.5 There was strong support for retaining an unwarded parish structure.
- 2.7.6 While most respondents considered the current number of councillors to be appropriate, views on council size were mixed. Some respondents suggested a reduction in councillor numbers to improve efficiency and reduce vacancies, whereas others considered that additional seats may be required if the parish boundary were expanded.
- 2.7.7 Brinsworth Parish Council currently has 11 councillors representing an electorate of 6,605. The electorate is forecast to increase slightly to 6,688 over the next five years. NALC guidance indicates that a parish council serving an electorate of this size would typically be expected to have 14 councillors.

2.8 Catcliffe Parish Council

- 2.8.1 Three responses were received in relation to the Parish Council, comprising one response from a Parish Councillor and two from parish electors.
- 2.8.2 All respondents supported retention of the existing parish boundary arrangements. Two respondents considered that the parish should remain unwarded, while one respondent suggested that parish warding should be introduced, although no specific warding proposal was provided.
- 2.8.3 Views on councillor numbers were mixed. One respondent considered the current number of councillors to be appropriate, one felt there were too many councillors, and one suggested that additional councillors may be required. Catcliffe Parish Council currently has 9 councillors, which is in line with NALC guidance for a parish council serving a community of its size.

2.9 Dalton Parish Council

- 2.9.1 Three responses were received in relation to Dalton Parish Council, including one from a parish councillor and two from parish electors.
- 2.9.2 Two respondents considered that the current parish name does not fully reflect the communities served by the council. One respondent suggested that the council could be renamed Dalton and Sunnyside Parish Council.
- 2.9.3 The two electors, representing the Brecks area in Dalton South Ward and the Sunnyside and Flanderwell area in Dalton East Ward, expressed concerns that they felt disconnected from Dalton. Both suggested that their areas could either be incorporated into a neighbouring parish council or form part of a separate parish council arrangement.
- 2.9.4 Dalton Parish Council currently has 16 councillors representing an electorate of 7,711, which is forecast to increase to 7,888 over the next five years. NALC guidance indicates that a parish with this electorate would typically be expected to have 15 councillors.
- 2.9.5 A potential boundary anomaly has been identified on Reresby Park Close. Three properties are currently situated within Thrybergh Parish Council despite being located on a cul-de-sac that is otherwise within Dalton Parish Council. Further details are set out in paragraph 2.23.3.

2.10 Dinnington St John's Town Council

- 2.10.1 Five responses were received in relation to Dinnington St John's Town Council. Two were submitted directly in response to the consultation on the Town Council. A further response from an elector within the Town Council area was submitted under Firbeck Parish Council, and two additional responses were submitted in relation to neighbouring parish councils but proposed changes that would affect the Dinnington St John's Town Council area.
- 2.10.2 Two responses were received from electors residing in the Penny Hill area, who stated they identified more closely with Firbeck Parish Council and proposed that their property be transferred from Dinnington St John's Town Council to Firbeck Parish Council.
- 2.10.3 This view was supported by Firbeck Parish Council, which proposed that several properties close to the parish boundary, including those in the Penny Hill area, should transfer from Dinnington St John's Town Council to Firbeck Parish Council. Further details are set out in paragraph 2.11
- 2.10.4 One elector expressed support for the current electoral arrangements within Dinnington St John's Town Council and, in particular, considered that the existing name should be retained as it reflects the local community.

- 2.10.5 A response received in relation to Anston Parish Council proposed that the Dinnington Park Avenue Ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council, with the exception of the cemetery, should form part of Anston Parish Council. Further details are set out in paragraph 2.3.1.
- 2.10.6 It should be noted that a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted for, and applies across, the whole of the Dinnington St John's Town Council area.
- 2.10.7 A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document prepared by a parish, town or community council (or a neighbourhood forum in unparished areas) that allows local people to help shape how their area develops in the future. It can include policies on housing, employment, transport, community facilities, green spaces and the design of new development. Once approved, following a referendum, it becomes part of the statutory development plan and must be considered when planning applications are decided.
- 2.10.8 Where a parish, town or community council has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, any proposed governance or boundary changes may have implications for the designated neighbourhood area and associated planning policies. While this does not prevent changes being made through a Community Governance Review, any such implications should be considered as part of the decision-making process.

2.11 Firbeck Parish Council

- 2.11.1 Three responses were received in relation to Firbeck Parish Council, one of which was submitted under Dinnington St John's Town Council.
- 2.11.2 The Parish Clerk of Firbeck Parish Council proposed that several properties currently within the neighbouring Dinnington St John's Town Council and Maltby Town Council areas should be transferred to Firbeck Parish Council. The proposal was based on the proximity of the properties to Firbeck and the perceived affiliation of residents with Firbeck Parish Council.
- 2.11.3 The properties identified for transfer from Dinnington St John's Town Council to Firbeck Parish Council are those at Thwaite House Farm and Lingodell Farm in the Penny Hill area. The proposal would affect eight properties and 15 electors. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3: Map 6.
- 2.11.4 Two electors residing in the Penny Hill area of Dinnington St John's Town Council also supported this proposal. Further details are set out in paragraph 2.10.2.
- 2.11.5 The properties identified for transfer from Maltby Town Council to Firbeck Parish Council are those at Beckridge Farm, Four Lane Ends and Yews Farm. The proposal would affect 25 properties and 41 electors. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3: Map 7.

- 2.11.6 It should be noted that both Dinnington St John's Town Council and Maltby Town Council have adopted Neighbourhood Plans that cover the entirety of their respective parish areas. A summary of neighbourhood plans and the implications of neighbourhood planning for Community Governance Review proposals is provided in Section 2.10.7 and 2.10.8.

2.12 Gildingwells Parish Meeting

- 2.12.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Gildingwells Parish Meeting.
- 2.12.2 It has not been possible to determine whether Gildingwells Parish is meeting its statutory requirement to hold at least two meetings each year, including the Annual Parish Meeting, which must take place between 1 March and 1 June.

2.13 Harthill-with-Woodall Parish Council

- 2.13.1 One response was received in relation to Harthill-with-Woodall Parish Council, submitted by the Parish Clerk. The respondent indicated that they were satisfied with the current electoral arrangements and did not consider any changes to be necessary.

2.14 Hellaby Parish Council

- 2.14.1 Twenty responses were received in relation to Hellaby Parish Council from parish electors, Hellaby Parish Councillors, and three respondents who did not specify the capacity in which they were responding.
- 2.14.2 All respondents supported retaining the current electoral arrangements for Hellaby Parish Council.
- 2.14.3 Several respondents expressed concerns regarding a potential merger with neighbouring Maltby Town Council, citing the importance of maintaining a separate parish council to preserve their community identity.

2.15 Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting

- 2.15.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting.
- 2.15.2 It has not been possible to determine whether Hooton Levitt Parish is meeting its statutory requirement to hold at least two meetings each year, including the Annual Parish Meeting, which must take place between 1 March and 1 June.

2.16 Hooton Roberts Parish meeting

- 2.16.1 Two responses were received in relation to Ravenfield Parish Council from electors residing within the Hooton Roberts Parish area. Both

respondents supported the transfer of the Firsby area from Hooton Roberts Parish Meeting to Ravenfield Parish Council. One respondent stated that Firsby had previously formed part of Ravenfield Parish Council, is geographically closer to Ravenfield, and considered that being represented by a parish council rather than a parish meeting would provide residents with a stronger voice in local matters. A map of the area is shown in Appendix 3: Map 8.

2.16.2 The Frisby area contains six properties and eight electors.

2.17 Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council

2.17.1 Two responses were received in relation to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council, one from the Parish Clerk and one from the Chair of the Parish Council. A related response was also received from the Chair of Thurcroft Parish Council.

2.17.2 The Parish Clerk and Chair of Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council stated that residents of Laughton Common have a strong affiliation with Laughton-en-le-Morthen and regularly use facilities and amenities within the parish, including play areas, schools and allotments. As a result, they propose that consideration is given to amending the parish boundary to transfer Laughton Common from Thurcroft Parish Council to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council, provided it would not be detrimental to either Parish Council.

2.17.3 The Chair of Thurcroft Parish Council, responding on behalf of the Parish Council, stated that they would not oppose consideration being given to transferring Laughton Common to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council. Further details are set out in paragraph 2.24.3.

2.17.4 Laughton Common currently forms the Thurcroft South Ward of Thurcroft Parish Council. The area comprises of the DIB polling district and contains 902 properties and 1,454 electors. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3: Map 9.

2.17.5 Views were divided on the electoral arrangements that should apply if Laughton Common were transferred to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council. The Chair considered that the parish should become warded, whereas the Parish Clerk supported retaining the existing unwarded arrangement.

2.17.6 The Parish Clerk also proposed that the number of parish council seats should increase by two if Laughton Common were transferred to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council.

2.18 Letwell Parish Council

2.18.1 Two responses were received from electors in the parish. One respondent supported retaining the existing parish boundary

arrangements, although they considered five parish council seats to be excessive given the size of the electorate.

- 2.18.2 The second respondent questioned the long-term viability of the Parish Council due to the small size of the village and suggested a merger with either Firbeck Parish Council or Gildingwells Parish Meeting. Firbeck Parish Council was identified as the preferred option, reflecting the existing connection between the communities through the local church.

2.19 Maltby Town Council

- 2.19.1 A total of 82 responses were received in relation to Maltby Town Council from electors, Town Councillors, Borough Councillors, the Town Clerk and the Parish Clerk acting on behalf of the Town Council. Responses demonstrated strongly differing views on the future governance arrangements for Maltby, particularly in relation to the existing parish warding arrangements and proposals for the creation of a separate Maltby West Parish Council.
- 2.19.2 A recurring theme across the responses was whether Maltby Town Council should continue to operate with two parish wards.
- 2.19.3 A total of 25 responses (30.5%) supported retaining the existing Maltby Town Council boundary and parish warding arrangements, whereas 32 responses (39%) argued that Maltby should be treated as a single community and that the existing parish wards should be removed, citing concerns that the current arrangements create division within the town and prevent residents from influencing decisions affecting the wider parish.
- 2.19.4 Conversely, 22 respondents (26.8%) supported the creation of a separate parish or town council for Maltby West, in some cases incorporating Hellaby. These respondents generally argued that Maltby West does not receive an equitable share of resources, investment, facilities or activities and considered that a separate council would provide stronger local representation and greater control over local priorities and expenditure. Several respondents suggested that any new parish should broadly align with the existing Maltby West and Hellaby borough ward area.
- 2.19.5 A number of respondents proposed alternative arrangements whereby Maltby would remain a single parish council but operate with revised warding arrangements or a more equal distribution of councillors between the East and West areas.
- 2.19.6 Views regarding council size were mixed. Whilst many respondents considered that the current number of councillors is appropriate for a parish the size of Maltby, others suggested that the number of councillors should be reduced, citing difficulties in recruitment, the number of vacancies and the efficiency of decision-making. A smaller number of

respondents considered that additional councillors were required to improve representation. Several respondents suggested that, if warding arrangements are retained, councillor representation should be more evenly balanced between the existing wards.

- 2.19.7 The majority of respondents considered that the name 'Maltby Town Council' continues to reflect the community it serves.
- 2.19.8 In addition to the comments on governance arrangements, approximately one-third of respondents raised concerns regarding the operation and administration of Maltby Town Council. Such matters fall outside the scope of a Community Governance Review, as principal councils have no statutory powers over the administration or decision-making of parish, town or community councils.
- 2.19.9 A small number of respondents suggested that the Town Council should be abolished.
- 2.19.10 A response was received under Firbeck Parish Council proposing the transfer of properties at Beckridge Farm, Four Lane Ends and Yews Farm from Maltby Town Council to Firbeck Parish Council. Further details are set out in paragraph 2.11.5.
- 2.19.11 It should be noted that a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted for, and applies across, the whole of Maltby Town Council area. A summary of neighbourhood plans and the implications of neighbourhood planning for Community Governance Review proposals is provided in Section 2.10.7 and 2.10.8.

2.20 Orgreave Parish Council

- 2.20.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Orgreave Parish Council.
- 2.20.2 A potential boundary anomaly has been identified in relation to four properties on Retford Road. The properties are currently situated within Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council but are geographically separated from the main residential area of the parish and adjoin the boundary with Orgreave Parish Council. Further detail is set out in paragraph 2.4.3.

2.21 Ravenfield Parish Council

- 2.21.1 Eleven responses were received in relation to Ravenfield Parish Council, comprising six responses from electors living within the parish, two from electors residing in the Bramley Parish Council area, two from electors residing in the Hooton Roberts Parish area, and one response from the Parish Clerk on behalf of Ravenfield Parish Council.
- 2.21.2 The principal issue raised through the consultation related to changing the parish boundary. Eight respondents supported transferring the Poppy Fields development from Bramley Parish Council to Ravenfield Parish

Council. Respondents stated that the development had been marketed as being in Ravenfield, that properties have Ravenfield postal addresses, and that residents primarily use facilities and services within Ravenfield, including schools, medical facilities, shops and community amenities. Several respondents noted that residents identify more closely with Ravenfield than Bramley and considered that the current parish boundary does not reflect the community they belong to.

- 2.21.3 The Parish Council, through its Parish Clerk, also supported amending the parish boundary to include the Poppy Fields development, citing the area's physical relationship with Ravenfield and its identification as part of the village.
- 2.21.4 It should be noted that, shortly before the commencement of this review, Ravenfield Parish Council submitted a petition requesting a Community Governance Review to consider extending the parish boundary to include the Poppy Fields development. Although the petition did not meet the statutory threshold required to trigger a review, it was supported by 124 valid signatures, demonstrating a significant level of local support for the proposal.
- 2.21.5 Additional representations both in favour of and in opposition to the transfer of the Poppy Fields development were received in relation to Bramley Parish Council and are summarised in section 2.6.
- 2.21.6 The majority of respondents supported retaining the existing unwarded arrangements, and all respondents who commented on council size considered that the current number of councillors is appropriate. Similarly, most respondents considered that the parish name continues to reflect the community it serves.
- 2.21.7 One respondent raised concerns regarding the administration and operation of the Parish Council. However, such matters relate to the conduct and management of the council and therefore fall outside the scope of a Community Governance Review.
- 2.21.8 Two responses were received from electors residing within the Hooton Roberts Parish area who supported the transfer of the Firsby area to Ravenfield Parish Council. Further details are set out in paragraph 2.16.1.
- 2.21.9 Ravenfield Parish Council currently has 7 councillors representing an electorate of 2,321. The electorate is forecast to increase to 2,500 within the next five years. NALC guidance indicates that a parish of this size would typically be expected to have 9 councillors.

2.22 Thorpe Salvin Parish Council

- 2.22.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Thorpe Salvin.

2.23 Thrybergh Parish Council

- 2.23.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Thrybergh Parish Council.
- 2.23.2 Thrybergh Parish Council currently has 15 councillors representing an electorate of 2,964. The electorate is forecast to increase to 3,001 within the next five years. NALC guidance indicates a parish of this size would typically be expected to have 10 councillors.
- 2.23.3 From an examination of the existing governance arrangements, a potential boundary anomaly has been identified in relation to properties 11, 38 and 40 Reresby Park Close. Whilst these properties are located within the DAC polling district of Thrybergh South Ward, Thrybergh Parish Council, the remainder of Reresby Park Close, including the access road, lies within the DAD polling district of Dalton North Ward, Dalton Parish Council. This arrangement results in properties on the same cul-de-sac being divided between two parishes, which may not reflect the most readily identifiable boundary or local community ties. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3, Map 10. Any potential boundary change would affect three properties and two electors.

2.24 Thurcroft Parish Council

- 2.24.1 Four responses were received in relation to Thurcroft Parish Council, including submissions from the Parish Council Chair, a Parish Councillor, an elector and one respondent who did not specify the capacity in which they were responding.
- 2.24.2 In addition, responses were received from the Chair and Clerk of Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council, who proposed that the Laughton Common area of Thurcroft Parish Council should be transferred to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council. Further details of this proposal are set out in paragraph 2.17.2.
- 2.24.3 The Chair of Thurcroft Parish Council responding on the Parish Council's behalf, stated they have had discussions with Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council about the possibility of transferring the Laughton Common area of Thurcroft Parish Council to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council. Whilst open to the proposal, Thurcroft Parish Council would need to fully assess the impact before supporting such a change.
- 2.24.4 One respondent stated they were satisfied with the current electoral arrangements and did not consider any changes to be necessary.
- 2.24.5 Another respondent expressed satisfaction with the current parish boundary arrangements and the existing number of parish council seats. However, their response indicated a misunderstanding of the current warding arrangements, suggesting that the parish should be divided into two wards covering Thurcroft and Laughton Common respectively. This arrangement is already in place. The apparent confusion arises from the

Thurcroft North Ward, which covers the Thurcroft area, being divided into two polling districts (THB and THC) to accommodate the size of the electorate.

- 2.24.6 A Parish Councillor considered the current number of councillors to be appropriate, noting that a larger council could make decision-making less effective. However, they felt that council seats should be distributed equally between the two parish wards to avoid a perceived north-south divide.
- 2.24.7 The Parish Councillor also suggested that councillors should reside within the parish ward they represent and that local councils should be granted greater powers in relation to policing within their parish areas. However, neither issue falls within the scope of this review.
- 2.24.8 The qualifications required to stand for election as a parish councillor are prescribed in legislation, principally the Local Government Act 1972. Similarly, principal councils have no statutory powers over the governance or decision-making of parish councils. Any changes to these legislative arrangements would require amendment by Parliament.
- 2.24.9 The Chair of Thurcroft Parish Council proposed reducing the number of council seats from 18 to 13, stating that this would be more appropriate for the size of the electorate and would reflect the difficulties experienced in filling all available seats.
- 2.24.10 Thurcroft Parish Council currently has 18 councillors representing an electorate of 5,894. The electorate is forecast to increase to 6,016 within the next five years. NALC guidance indicates a parish of this size would typically be expected to have 13 councillors.

2.25 Todwick Parish Council

- 2.25.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Todwick Parish Council.

2.26 Treeton Parish Council

- 2.26.1 One elector from the Parish responded, stating that they did not believe any changes to the current electoral arrangements were required.

2.27 Ulley Parish Council

- 2.27.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Ulley Parish Council.

2.28 Wales Parish Council

- 2.28.1 Two responses were received from electors in the parish. One elector supported retaining the existing governance arrangements.

- 2.28.2 The other elector considered that the parish had an appropriate number of council seats but suggested that the parish warding arrangements should be removed, stating that residents regard the parish as a single community.
- 2.28.3 The respondent also raised concerns regarding the operation and administration of the Parish Council. Such matters fall outside the scope of a Community Governance Review, as principal councils have no statutory powers over the administration or decision-making of parish, town or community councils.
- 2.28.4 Wales Parish Council currently has 15 councillors representing an electorate of 5,682. The electorate is forecast to increase to 6,170 within the next five years. NALC guidance indicates a parish of this size would typically be expected to have 13 councillors.

2.29 Waverley Community Council

- 2.29.1 Eight responses were received in relation to Waverley Community Council, including six from electors in the parish, one elector who works in the parish and one from the Parish Clerk on behalf of Waverley Community Council.
- 2.29.2 There was broad support for retaining the existing parish boundary arrangements and for the parish remaining unwarded, with seven respondents supporting the current arrangements. One respondent suggested that the parish should be divided into parish wards, although no further rationale was provided.
- 2.29.3 Views on council size were mixed. Three respondents considered the current number of councillors to be appropriate, two felt there were too many councillors, and one considered that additional councillors were required to improve representation and transparency. The response submitted on behalf of Waverley Community Council stated that the current council size of seven councillors remains appropriate, citing the history of uncontested elections, a relatively high turnover of councillors and the challenges associated with recruiting parish councillors within a community predominantly comprising young families and working professionals.
- 2.29.4 Opinions were similarly divided regarding the parish name. Four respondents considered that the name 'Waverley Community Council' appropriately reflects the community it serves, whilst three respondents disagreed, citing concerns regarding the performance, visibility and community engagement of the Council. One respondent suggested that the authority should instead be known as 'Waverley Council'.
- 2.29.5 Several respondents expressed concerns regarding the operation and administration of the Parish Council. Such matters fall outside the scope of a Community Governance Review, as principal councils have no

statutory powers over the administration or decision-making of parish, town or community councils.

2.29.6 Two respondents suggested that the Council should be abolished.

2.29.7 Waverley Community Council currently has 7 councillors representing an electorate of 3,391. The electorate is forecast to increase to 5,284 within the next five years. NALC guidance indicates a parish of this size would typically be expected to have 12 councillors.

2.30 Wentworth Parish Council

2.30.1 Seven responses were received in relation to Wentworth Parish Council, including responses from the Chair of the Parish Council, four electors in the parish, and a Borough Councillor.

2.30.2 The Chair of Wentworth Parish Council stated that the Council plays an important role in representing local residents and supporting community development through its involvement in matters such as planning, environmental initiatives and public spaces.

2.30.3 The majority of respondents supported the retention of the existing parish boundary, warding arrangements, council size and parish name. Two electors specifically highlighted the importance of retaining Trafford Place within Wentworth Parish Council and the Hooper Ward, noting that these arrangements had been in place for many years.

2.30.4 One respondent suggested that the name of Harley Ward should be changed to Harley and Hood Hill Ward.

2.30.5 One elector raised concerns regarding the operation and administration of the Parish Council. However these matters fall outside the scope of this review.

2.30.6 The Borough Councillor proposed changing the parish boundary so that an area of park and green space, known as Thorpe Hesley Recreation Ground, was removed from the Parish. However, no further details or justification were provided for this suggestion. A map of the area is provided in Appendix 3: Map 11.

2.31 Whiston Parish Council

2.31.1 Responses were received from the Parish Clerk and two electors in the parish, all of whom expressed support for retaining the existing governance arrangements.

2.31.2 One elector felt the Parish Council should provide additional services. However, decisions regarding the services provided by a parish council are a matter for the parish council itself and fall outside the scope of this review.

- 2.31.3 Whiston Parish Council currently has 9 councillors representing an electorate of 3,798. The electorate is forecast to increase to 4,423 within the next five years. NALC guidance indicates a parish of this size would typically be expected to have 12 councillors.

2.32 Wickersley Parish Council

- 2.32.1 There were three responses for Wickersley Parish Council, one from a Parish Councillor and two from electors in the Parish.
- 2.32.2 One elector supported maintaining the existing governance arrangements.
- 2.32.3 The second elector also supported retaining the current parish boundary and warding arrangements. However, they suggested that the number of council seats should be reduced to 12, based on NALC guidance.
- 2.32.4 The Parish Councillor suggested that the existing parish wards should be removed, although no reason was provided. Whilst they considered the current council size of 16 councillors to be appropriate, they noted that recruiting and retaining councillors was becoming increasingly difficult.
- 2.32.5 The Parish Council raised concerns that the Wickersley community is currently split across two borough wards. They consider this arrangement does not reflect the community effectively and suggest that a single borough ward, aligned with the existing parish boundary, should be considered.
- 2.32.6 It should be noted that changes to borough ward boundaries are outside the scope of a Community Governance Review. Principal councils do not have the power to alter their own electoral boundaries, as responsibility for reviewing and amending borough ward boundaries rests with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). Consequently, aligning the Borough boundaries with the Parish cannot be considered as part of this review.
- 2.32.7 Wickersley Parish Council currently has 16 councillors representing an electorate of 6,331. The electorate is forecast to increase to 6,410 within the next five years. NALC guidance indicates a parish of this size would typically be 13 councillors.
- 2.32.8 It should be noted that a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted for, and applies across, the whole of Wickersley Parish Council area. A summary of neighbourhood plans and the implications of neighbourhood planning for Community Governance Review proposals is provided in Section 2.10.7 and 2.10.8.

2.33 Woodsetts Parish Council

- 2.33.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Woodsetts Parish Council.

- 2.33.2 Woodsetts Parish Council currently has 9 councillors representing an electorate of 1,395. The electorate is forecast to increase to 1,412 within the next five years. NALC guidance indicates a parish of this size would typically be expected to have 8 councillors.

2.34 Requests for new parish council in the Rawmarsh area

- 2.34.1 Three responses were received supporting the creation of a parish council for Rawmarsh. Respondents cited a perceived decline in local amenities, investment and community influence and considered that parish governance could strengthen local representation, increase community involvement in decision-making and help secure improvements to local facilities and services.
- 2.34.2 Views varied on the extent of any new parish area, with suggestions ranging from Rawmarsh alone to a wider parish incorporating neighbouring communities.
- 2.34.3 A parish council covering the whole of Rawmarsh would broadly align with the existing Rawmarsh East and Rawmarsh West Borough Wards and would have an electorate of approximately 13,700.
- 2.34.4 One respondent suggested that Rawmarsh could be divided into two separate parishes, reflecting the current borough ward boundaries. Under this arrangement, a parish covering the Rawmarsh West area would have an electorate of approximately 6,700, while a parish covering the Rawmarsh East area would have an electorate of approximately 7,000.

2.35 Requests for new parish council in the Wath area

- 2.35.1 Four responses were received supporting the creation of a parish council for the Wath upon Dearne area. Respondents cited a need for stronger local representation, increased accountability and more locally focused decision-making, particularly in light of ongoing housing and business growth.
- 2.35.2 A common theme was the feeling that existing governance arrangements do not adequately reflect local needs. Respondents expressed a desire for a stronger local voice, greater resident involvement in decision-making and governance arrangements that build upon the area's strong community identity, active voluntary sector and community assets.
- 2.35.3 Suggested parish boundaries varied, ranging from Wath upon Dearne alone to a wider parish including Manvers, Newhill and West Melton. Overall, respondents considered that a parish council would strengthen community representation, improve local accountability and provide a more effective mechanism for influencing decisions affecting the area.

- 2.35.4 Based on the current Wath upon Dearne Borough Ward, a parish council would have an electorate of approximately 6,700. This would increase to approximately 11,500 electors if the Manvers, Newhill and West Melton areas were included.

2.36 General comments received

- 2.36.1 Both Greasbrough Ward Borough Councillors responded to the consultation and indicated that they did not support the creation of a parish council covering the Greasbrough Ward.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Anston Parish Council

- 3.1.1 The proposal to transfer the Dinnington Park Avenue Ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council, excluding Dinnington Cemetery, to Anston Parish Council was raised by one respondent. The Dinnington Park Avenue Ward contains approximately 360 electors, and no other responses were received in support or of a similar nature to this proposal.
- 3.1.2 The proposal would create a less coherent parish boundary by leaving Dinnington Cemetery isolated from the remainder of Dinnington St John's Town Council. This could give rise to administrative anomalies and practical difficulties, particularly as access to the cemetery would be through the area of Anston Parish Council.
- 3.1.3 Regard must also be given to Dinnington St John's Town Council's adopted Neighbourhood Plan, which covers the whole of the Town Council area. Altering the parish boundary could require consequential changes to neighbourhood planning arrangements and may create unnecessary complexity.
- 3.1.4 Whilst the proposal would predominantly align the parish and Borough Ward boundaries, given the limited support for the proposal and the potential adverse impact on the effective governance of Dinnington St John's Town Council, it is recommended that the existing governance arrangements for Anston Parish Council are retained and that no further consultation is required.
- 3.1.5 Such a proposal may be better suited to consideration when the Local Government Boundary for England next review the Borough ward boundaries.

3.2 Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council

- 3.2.1 As identified in paragraph 2.4.3, four properties on Retford Road are separated from the main residential area of Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council by significant physical barriers, namely the River Rother and an industrial estate. The properties also have a closer geographical relationship with neighbouring properties in Orgreave Parish Council.

- 3.2.2 Given the physical barriers and their proximity to properties in Orgreave Parish Council, it is proposed that consultation be undertaken with electors at 605, 607, 609 and 611 Retford Road, together with Aston-cum-Aughton and Orgreave Parish Councils, to seek their views on the potential transfer of the properties from Aston-cum-Aughton West Ward of Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council to Orgreave Parish Council.
- 3.2.3 As set out in paragraph 2.4.2, Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council currently comprises 15 councillors, however, when considering the current and projected electorates, NALC guidance suggests that a parish of this size would ordinarily be represented by 18 councillors.
- 3.2.4 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council and its electors to seek views on increasing the number of council seats by three to 18 seats.
- 3.2.5 Based on the projected electorate, the distribution of the council seats across the three parish wards would be:
- Aston-cum-Aughton North: An increase of one seat to six
 - Aston-cum-Aughton South: An increase of two seats to nine
 - Aston-cum-Aughton West: The number of seats to remain three

3.3 Bramley Parish Council

- 3.3.1 Consultation responses received in relation to Bramley Parish Council and Ravenfield Parish Council demonstrated differing views regarding the community identity of the Poppy Fields development, which is located within Bramley North Ward of Bramley Parish Council.
- 3.3.2 Residents and representatives responding under both parish councils expressed differing views as to whether the development should remain within Bramley Parish Council or become part of Ravenfield Parish Council. When considered alongside the Community Governance Review petition submitted by Ravenfield Parish Council earlier in the year, these responses demonstrate a significant level of local interest and justify further consultation with affected electors and parish councils before a final recommendation is reached.
- 3.3.3 It is therefore recommended that consultation be undertaken with residents of the Poppy Fields development, together with Bramley Parish Council and Ravenfield Parish Council, to inform consideration of whether the current parish boundary remains appropriate or whether changes should be considered in relation to the development.
- 3.3.4 Whilst the majority of responses relating to council seats favoured retaining the existing arrangement, consideration of NALC guidance in relation to the current and projected electorate indicates that a council size of 14 members would be more closely aligned with recommended levels of representation.

3.3.5 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Bramley Parish Council and its electors to seek views on increasing the number of council seats by one to 14 seats.

3.3.6 Based on the projected electorate, the distribution of the council seats across the three parish wards would be:

- Bramley North: An increase of one seat to seven
- Bramley South: The number of seats to remain four
- Bramley West: The number of seats to remain three

3.4 Brampton Bierlow Parish Council

3.4.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Brampton Bierlow Parish Council. It is therefore recommended that the existing governance arrangements are retained and that no further consultation is required.

3.5 Brinsworth Parish Council

3.5.1 There was significant support for the Parish boundary to incorporate the BWA polling district, which would align the Parish boundary with Brinsworth Borough Ward. However, a small number of electors from the BWA polling district opposed their inclusion. With differing view, direct consultation with those electors is therefore appropriate.

3.5.2 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with electors in the BWA polling district, together with Brinsworth Parish Council, to inform consideration of whether the Brinsworth Parish Council boundary should be extended to include the BWA polling district.

3.5.3 As set out in 2.7.4, one respondent suggested the Brinsworth Parish Council boundary be amended to include the even number properties from 30 to 48 Century View. Century View is built over the boundary between Rotherham Council and Sheffield City Council. Most of the properties on Century View are within Rotherham, but the even numbers from 30 to 48 are within the Sheffield City Council boundary.

3.5.4 The legislation governing Community Governance Reviews assumes that a parish council is located within one principal council area, given that the principal council is responsible for the parish and its governance. In practice, Rotherham Council has no powers to expand a parish boundary into a neighbouring principal council area or to amend the principal council boundary between Rotherham and Sheffield. Therefore, it is not possible to consider this proposal.

3.5.5 Whilst the majority of responses relating to council seats favoured retaining the existing arrangement of 11, consideration of NALC guidance in relation to the current and projected electorate indicates that a council size of 14 members would be more closely aligned with recommended levels of representation.

- 3.5.6 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Brinsworth Parish Council and its electors to seek views on increasing the number of council seats by three to 14 seats.

3.6 Catcliffe Parish Council

- 3.6.1 All respondents supported the retention of the existing parish boundary arrangements. Whilst views differed regarding parish warding and the number of councillors, no clear or consistent case for change was identified.
- 3.6.2 It is recommended that no changes are made to the current community governance arrangements for the parish and that no further consultation is undertaken. The consultation responses did not identify a clear justification for changes to the parish boundary, warding arrangements or council size, and the existing number of parish councillors remains in line with NALC guidance.

3.7 Dalton Parish Council

- 3.7.1 From the three responses received the common theme relates to feelings of disconnection from Dalton. There were suggestions to rename the Parish Council to better reflect the communities it serves, as well as areas of the Parish forming separate parish councils or being merged with neighbouring parishes.
- 3.7.2 When considering the governance structure of the Parish, it is set up to allow proportionate representation across the area. Dalton Parish Council is divided into three parish wards, with Dalton East, Dalton North and Dalton South.
- 3.7.3 Dalton East Ward, comprising Sunnyside and Flanderwell, has the largest electorate of 4,299 and consequently the highest level of representation on the Parish Council, with nine councillor seats. Dalton North Ward, covering Dalton and Dalton Magna, has an electorate of 2,577 and is represented by five councillors, whilst Brecks Ward has the smallest electorate of 835 and is represented by two councillors.
- 3.7.4 Given the limited support for such significant changes to the governance arrangements, and taking into account that the existing warding arrangements provide fair and proportionate representation across the parish, there is insufficient justification to pursue proposals for the creation of new parish councils or the transfer of areas to neighbouring parishes.
- 3.7.5 However, given the concerns raised regarding community identity and representation, consideration should be given to whether the name of the Parish Council continues to adequately reflect the communities it serves. A proposal submitted by a Dalton Parish Councillor suggested that the Parish Council be renamed Dalton and Sunnyside Parish Council. It is therefore recommended that consultation be undertaken with the Parish

Council and parish electors to seek their views on a potential change of name.

- 3.7.6 In addition, to complement the proposed consultation on a change to the Parish Council's name, consideration should be given to whether the existing parish ward names appropriately reflect the communities they represent. The consultation should therefore also seek views on renaming Dalton East Ward to Sunnyside Ward, Dalton North Ward to Dalton Ward, and Dalton South Ward to Brecks Ward.
- 3.7.7 A boundary anomaly has been identified on Reresby Park Close, which is in Dalton North Ward of Dalton Parish Council, with the exception of numbers 11, 38 and 40, which are in Thrybergh South Ward of Thrybergh Parish Council. A recommendation is set out under Thrybergh Parish Council to consult with the affected electors and both parish councils on the potential transfer of these properties from to Dalton North Ward. Further details are set out in Section 3.21.
- 3.7.8 Whilst NALC guidance indicates that the current and projected electorate could support a reduction from 16 to 15 councillors, the electorate falls between the recommended bands for 15 and 16 seats. Taking into account the concerns raised regarding representation, it is not recommended to reduce the number of seats.

3.8 Dinnington St John's Town Council

- 3.8.1 A proposal was submitted under Anston Parish Council to incorporate the Dinnington Park Avenue Ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council, with the exception of Dinnington Cemetery, into Anston Parish Council. Given the limited support for the proposal and its potential impact on the effective and convenient governance of Dinnington St John's Town Council, no change is recommended. Further details are set out under Anston Parish Council, in section 3.1.
- 3.8.2 Firbeck Parish Council and two respondents from the Penny Hill area of Dinnington Town Ward, Dinnington St John's Town Council, proposed that the Penny Hill area be transferred to Firbeck Parish Council.
- 3.8.3 It is recommended that further consultation be undertaken on this proposal. Full details of the proposal, supporting evidence and recommendation are set out under Firbeck Parish Council in Section 3.9.

3.9 Firbeck Parish Council

- 3.9.1 The Parish Clerk of Firbeck Parish Council proposed that several properties currently within the neighbouring Dinnington Town Ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council and the Maltby East Ward of Maltby Town Council areas should be transferred to Firbeck Parish Council. The proposal was based on the proximity of the properties to Firbeck and the perceived affiliation of residents with Firbeck Parish Council.

- 3.9.2 The properties identified for transfer from Dinnington Town Ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council to Firbeck Parish Council are those at Thwaite House Farm and Lingodell Farm in the Penny Hill area. Two electors in the Penny Hill area submitted responses supporting the proposal to transfer their properties to Firbeck Parish Council.
- 3.9.3 Dinnington St John's Town Council has adopted a Neighbourhood Plan which covers the whole of the Town Council. Should the properties be transferred to Firbeck Parish Council, any parish boundary change would not automatically amend a designated neighbourhood area or the coverage of an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, consequential neighbourhood planning action would need to be considered separately.
- 3.9.4 Given the support from 25% of the registered electors impacted by the proposal and that part of Thwaite House Farm land is already within Firbeck Parish Council, it is recommended that consultation is undertaken with electors in properties in the Penny Hill area, alongside Dinnington St John's Town Council and Firbeck Parish Council to seek their views on a proposal to transfer the properties in the Penny Hill area from Dinnington Town Ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council to Firbeck Parish Council.
- 3.9.5 When considering the final recommendation linked to this proposal, regard will need to be given to the impact of the Dinnington St John's Town Council Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.9.6 The properties identified for transfer from Maltby East Ward of Maltby Town Council to Firbeck Parish Council are those at Beckridge Farm, Four Lane Ends and Yews Farm.
- 3.9.7 The current boundary between Firbeck Parish Council and Maltby Town Council also forms the boundary between the Dinnington and Maltby East Borough Wards. Firbeck Parish Council lies within the Dinnington Ward, the properties in the proposal within the Maltby East Ward. The proposed transfer would therefore create a less coherent set of parish boundaries and could result in confusion between parish and borough ward boundaries.
- 3.9.8 In addition to the administrative boundary, Firbeck Dike provides a distinct physical feature separating Firbeck Parish Council from the properties identified in the proposal. As such, the existing boundary follows a more readily identifiable and coherent geographic feature.
- 3.9.9 Regard must also be given to the adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Maltby Town Council, which covers the whole of the Town Council area, including the properties subject to the proposal. Any alteration to the parish boundary may require consequential consideration of neighbourhood planning arrangements and could introduce additional complexity.

- 3.9.10 A further consideration is the absence of support from electors residing within the properties proposed for transfer. Whilst the proposal was put forward by Firbeck Parish Council, no consultation responses were received from residents of the affected properties in support of the change.
- 3.9.11 Taking into account the potential for less coherent administrative boundaries, the presence of a clear physical boundary, the lack of demonstrated support from affected electors, and the implications for the adopted Neighbourhood Plan, there is insufficient evidence to justify progressing the proposal further as part of this review.

3.10 Gildingwells Parish Meeting

- 3.10.1 No responses were received in relation to Gildingwells Parish Meeting and it cannot be evidenced that meetings are being held, as required by law.
- 3.10.2 As the abolition of a parish is generally regarded as a measure of last resort, and would require the approval of the Secretary of State, it is important that electors are first given the opportunity to consider alternative community governance arrangements that would continue to provide local representation and governance for the area.
- 3.10.3 Given the uncertainty as to whether Gildingwells Parish Meeting is currently fulfilling its statutory functions, it is recommended that further consultation be undertaken with electors in the parish. The consultation should seek views on whether efforts should be made to re-establish the Parish Meeting, whether the parish should be merged with a neighbouring parish council, namely Letwell Parish Council or Woodsetts Parish Council, or whether the abolition of Gildingwells Parish Meeting should be considered.

3.11 Harthill-with-Woodall Parish Council

- 3.11.1 One consultation response was received in relation to Harthill-with-Woodall Parish Council, which was supportive of the existing governance arrangements. It is therefore recommended that the existing governance arrangements are retained and that no further consultation is required.

3.12 Hellaby Parish Council

- 3.12.1 Whilst 20 responses were received for Hellaby Parish Council, all were supportive of retaining the current governance arrangements. There was particular concern about the loss of community identity, should a merger with Maltby Town Council be considered.
- 3.12.2 It is therefore recommended that the existing governance arrangements are retained and that no further consultation is required.

3.13 Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting

- 3.13.1 No responses were received in relation to Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting and it cannot be evidenced that meetings are being held, as required by law.
- 3.13.2 Given the uncertainty as to whether Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting is currently fulfilling its statutory functions, it is recommended that further consultation be undertaken with electors in the parish. The consultation should seek views on whether efforts should be made to re-establish the Parish Meeting, whether the parish should be merged with a neighbouring parish council, namely Laughton-en-le-Morthen, or whether the abolition of Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting should be considered.
- 3.13.3 A merger with Maltby Town Council should not be taken forward for consultation because the available evidence does not demonstrate that this would reflect the rural character, identity or community connections of Hooton Levitt.
- 3.13.4 As the abolition of a parish is generally regarded as a measure of last resort, and would require the approval of the Secretary of State, it is important that electors are first given the opportunity to consider alternative community governance arrangements that would continue to provide local representation and governance for the area.

3.14 Hooton Roberts Parish Meeting

- 3.14.1 Two electors in the Firsby area of Hooton Roberts Parish felt they had more affiliation with Ravenfield Parish Council due to their geographical proximity and better reflecting their local community identity and interests.
- 3.14.2 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with electors in the Firsby area, all electors within the Hooton Roberts parish area, and Ravenfield Parish Council to seek their views on a proposal to transfer the Firsby area from Hooton Roberts Parish area to Ravenfield Parish Council.

3.15 Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council

- 3.15.1 Both the Parish Clerk and Chair of Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council considered that residents of Laughton Common have strong community ties with Laughton-en-le-Morthen and make regular use of facilities and amenities within the parish. On this basis, they proposed that consideration be given to transferring Laughton Common, which currently forms the Thurcroft South Ward of Thurcroft Parish Council, into Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council.
- 3.15.2 The Chair of Thurcroft Parish Council, responding on behalf of Thurcroft Parish Council, provided support for this proposal to be explored.

- 3.15.3 Both Parish Councils indicated that, should the proposal be considered further, they would wish to review its viability, particularly the financial implications, before deciding whether to support its implementation.
- 3.15.4 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with the electors in the Thurcroft South Ward (Laughton Common), together with Laughton-en-le-Morthen and Thurcroft Parish Councils, on the potential transfer of the Thurcroft South Ward of Thurcroft Parish Council to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council.
- 3.15.5 It should be noted that, should the proposal be implemented, a number of consequential changes may need to be considered for Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council, including:
- An increase in the parish electorate to approximately 2,500.
 - Any Thurcroft Parish Council assets in the Thurcroft South Ward would be transferred to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council.
 - A review of the number of parish councillor seats, with NALC guidance indicating that a council of this size would typically comprise between nine and ten councillors.
 - Consideration of parish warding arrangements. Given the distinct settlements of Laughton-en-le-Morthen and Laughton Common, it may be appropriate to establish two parish wards to provide effective and convenient local governance.
- Should parish wards be introduced, the allocation of councillor seats between the wards would need to reflect the distribution of electors to ensure fair and proportionate representation across the parish.
- 3.15.6 Given the uncertainty regarding whether Hooton Levitt Meeting is currently able to fulfil its statutory functions, it is considered appropriate to consult electors within the Hooton Levitt Parish area on a range of alternative community governance arrangements. One option is a merger with a neighbouring parish council, including Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council. Any consultation would therefore include electors in Hooton Levitt and the neighbouring parishes that could be affected by the proposals, including Laughton-en-le-Morthen. Further details are provided in Section 3.13.

3.16 Letwell Parish Council

- 3.16.1 The two responses received in relation to Letwell Parish Council expressed differing views. One respondent was satisfied with the current governance arrangements, whilst the other considered that five councillors was excessive for a parish of Letwell's size and suggested that a merger with Firbeck or Gildingwells should be explored.
- 3.16.2 Whilst the electorate in Letwell is relatively small, the Parish Council is represented by five councillors, which is the statutory minimum prescribed by Section 16(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 3.16.3 There is no evidence arising from the review to suggest that a merger involving Letwell Parish Council is necessary. However, a potential merger with Letwell forms one of the options being considered as part of the recommendations relating to Gildingwells Parish Meeting.
- 3.16.4 Given the uncertainty regarding whether Gildingwells Parish Meeting is currently able to fulfil its statutory functions, it is considered appropriate to consult electors within the Gildingwells parish area on a range of alternative community governance arrangements. One option is a merger with a neighbouring parish council, including Letwell Parish Council. Any consultation would therefore include electors in Gildingwells and the neighbouring parishes that could be affected by the proposals, including Letwell. Further details are provided in Section 3.10.

3.17 Maltby Town Council

- 3.17.1 Whilst a significant number of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with individual councillors and decisions made by Maltby Town Council, these concerns relate primarily to the administration of the Council rather than the appropriateness of the current community governance arrangements. Such matters fall outside the scope of a Community Governance Review and do not, in themselves, provide sufficient justification for altering parish boundaries, electoral arrangements or the existence of the Town Council.
- 3.17.2 Although 22 respondents (26.8%) proposed dividing Maltby Town Council into separate East and West parish councils, a substantially larger proportion of respondents (57 respondents, 69.5%) supported retaining Maltby Town Council as a single authority, albeit with differing views regarding the retention of parish warding. The evidence therefore indicates broad support for maintaining Maltby as a single parish.
- 3.17.3 The creation of separate parish councils would raise a number of practical issues, including the division of assets and liabilities, the future operation of the neighbourhood plan, and the potential impact on effective and convenient local government. Given that the majority of Town Council assets are located within Maltby East Ward, there is a risk that a division of the parish could result in an inequitable distribution of resources and financial responsibilities.
- 3.17.4 Furthermore, the existence of a single neighbourhood plan covering the whole town demonstrates that Maltby has previously been regarded as a coherent community for neighbourhood planning purposes. There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the creation of separate parish councils would better reflect community identities or improve local governance arrangements.
- 3.17.5 In relation to parish warding, whilst 32 respondents (39.0%) favoured the removal of parish wards, parish warding can play an important role in ensuring representation for distinct communities and can reduce the cost of administering any future Town Council by-elections by limiting polls to

the affected ward rather than the whole Town Council area. No evidence has been presented to demonstrate that the current warding arrangements are preventing effective and convenient local government.

- 3.17.6 On balance, there is insufficient evidence to justify either the division of Maltby Town Council into separate parish councils or the removal of the existing parish warding arrangements. It is therefore recommended that the current governance arrangements for Maltby Town Council remain unchanged and that no further consultation is undertaken on these proposals.
- 3.17.7 In line with National Association of Local Councils (NALC) guidance, Maltby Town Council's current complement of 18 councillor seats remains appropriate for a parish of its size. Whilst a number of respondents expressed concerns regarding the distribution of seats between the two parish wards, representation is broadly proportionate to the electorate in each ward. Maltby East Ward has an electorate of 6,631 represented by ten councillors, while Maltby West Ward has an electorate of 5,511 represented by eight councillors.
- 3.17.8 Forecast electorate growth over the next five years does not indicate a need to alter the overall number of councillor seats. NALC guidance would continue to support a council size of 18 members, and the councillor-to-electors ratios across both wards would remain broadly comparable. In Maltby East Ward, the ratio is forecast to change from one councillor per 663 electors to one per 746 electors, whilst in Maltby West Ward the ratio is forecast to change from one councillor per 689 electors to one per 698 electors. Accordingly, the existing ward representation arrangements continue to provide a broadly equitable level of representation across the Town Council.
- 3.17.9 A proposal was submitted by Firbeck Parish Council to transfer properties at Beckridge Farm, Four Lane Ends and Yews Farm from Maltby East Ward of Maltby Town Council to Firbeck Parish Council. The rationale was based on their proximity and perceived affiliation to Firbeck Parish Council.
- 3.17.10 Taking into account the potential for the creation of a less coherent administrative boundaries, the presence of a clear physical boundary, the lack of demonstrated support from affected electors, and the implications for the adopted Neighbourhood Plan in Maltby Town Council, there is insufficient evidence to justify progressing the proposal further as part of this review. Further detail on the proposal and considerations are set out under Firbeck Parish Council in section 3.9.

3.18 Orgreave Parish Council

- 3.18.1 As detailed in paragraphs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, four properties on Retford Road are situated within Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council but are geographically isolated from the remainder of the parish and lie adjacent to Orgreave Parish Council.

3.18.2 As set out in paragraph 3.2.3, it is recommended that consultation is undertaken with the electors of 605, 607, 609 and 611 Retford Road, together with Aston-cum-Aughton and Orgreave Parish Councils, on the potential transfer of these properties from Aston-cum-Aughton West Ward of Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council to Orgreave Parish Council.

3.18.3 No responses were received in relation to Orgreave Parish Council during the consultation. Therefore, pending the outcome of the consultation proposed above, it is recommended that the existing governance arrangements for Orgreave Parish Council are retained and that no further consultation is undertaken in respect of the parish, other than that associated with the proposed boundary review of the four Retford Road properties.

3.19 Ravenfield Parish Council

3.19.1 As set out in paragraphs 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, consultation responses received in relation to Bramley Parish Council and Ravenfield Parish Council demonstrated differing views regarding the community identity of the Poppy Fields development and whether it should remain within Bramley Parish Council or become part of Ravenfield Parish Council.

3.19.2 The responses received, together with the Community Governance Review petition submitted by Ravenfield Parish Council earlier in the year, demonstrate a significant level of local interest in the governance arrangements affecting the development.

3.19.3 Given the differing views expressed and the potential implications of any parish boundary change, it is considered appropriate to undertake further consultation with affected residents and both parish councils before a final recommendation is reached. Further details are set out under Bramley Parish Council in section 3.3.

3.19.4 Two electors in the Firsby area of Hooton Roberts Parish felt they had more affiliation with Ravenfield Parish Council due to their geographical proximity and better reflecting their local community identity and interests. It is therefore recommended that consultation is undertaken on this proposal. Further details are set out under Hooton Roberts Parish Meeting in section 3.14.

3.19.5 Whilst the majority of responses relating to council seats favoured retaining the existing arrangement of seven seats, consideration of NALC guidance in relation to the current and projected electorate indicates that a council size of nine seats would be more closely aligned with recommended levels of representation.

3.19.6 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Ravenfield Parish Council and its electors to seek views on increasing the number of council seats by two to nine seats.

3.20 Thorpe Salvin Parish Council

- 3.20.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Thorpe Salvin Parish Council. It is therefore recommended that the existing governance arrangements are retained and that no further consultation is required.

3.21 Thrybergh Parish Council

- 3.21.1 A boundary anomaly exists between Thrybergh and Dalton Parish Councils. Three properties on Reresby Park Close (11, 38 and 40) are situated within the Thrybergh South Ward of Thrybergh Parish Council but are physically isolated from the remainder of the parish, whilst the rest of the cul-de-sac falls within Dalton North Ward of Dalton Parish Council. This arrangement may not provide the most effective governance structure and results in an unclear parish boundary.
- 3.21.2 It is therefore recommended that consultation is undertaken with the electors of 11, 38 and 40 Reresby Park Close, together with Dalton and Thrybergh Parish Councils, on the potential transfer of these properties from Thrybergh South Ward of Thrybergh Parish Council to Dalton North Ward of Dalton Parish Council.
- 3.21.3 Thrybergh Parish Council currently has 15 council seats. When considered against NALC guidance, a parish of this size would typically be expected to have around 10 councillors. However, to maintain effective representation across the parish's two wards, a council size of 11 seats would provide a more proportionate distribution of representation.
- 3.21.4 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Thrybergh Parish Council and its electors to seek views on decreasing the number of council seats by four to 11 seats.
- 3.21.5 Based on the projected electorate, the revised warding arrangements would comprise:
- Thrybergh North: reduction of two seats to six.
 - Thrybergh South: reduction of two seats to five.
- This would bring the overall council size more closely into line with NALC guidance whilst continuing to provide fair and effective representation across both parish wards.

3.22 Thurcroft Parish Council

- 3.22.1 A proposal has been put forward by Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council to transfer the Laughton Common area, currently comprising the Thurcroft South Ward of Thurcroft Parish Council, into Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council. The rationale for the proposal is that Laughton Common residents are considered to have strong community links with Laughton-en-le-Morthen and regularly access facilities and amenities within the parish.

- 3.22.2 The proposal has received support from the Chair of Thurcroft Parish Council confirming the Parish Council's support for the matter to be considered as part of this review.
- 3.22.3 Both Parish Councils indicated that, should the proposal be considered further, they would wish to review its viability, particularly the financial implications, before deciding whether to support its implementation.
- 3.22.4 It is recommended that consultation on the proposal to transfer Thurcroft South Ward of Thurcroft Parish Council to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council is undertaken. Full details of the proposal and recommendation are set out under Laughton-en-le-Morthen in section 3.15.
- 3.22.5 It should be noted that, should the proposal be implemented, a number of consequential changes may need to be considered for Thurcroft Parish Council, including:
- A decrease in electorate in the parish to approximately 4,500.
 - A review of the number of parish councillor seats, with NALC guidance indicating that a council of this size would typically comprise of twelve councillors.
 - If the Thurcroft South Ward was transferred to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council, Thurcroft Parish Council would no longer have parish wards.
 - Any Thurcroft Parish Council assets in the Thurcroft South Ward would be transferred to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council.
- 3.22.6 An elector and a Parish Councillor both expressed satisfaction with the current number of councillor seats for Thurcroft Parish Council. However, the Parish Councillor suggested that representation should be evenly distributed between Thurcroft North and Thurcroft South parish wards to help promote balanced representation across the parish and avoid perceptions of a divide between the two wards.
- 3.22.7 An equal distribution of seats between the two wards would not be appropriate given the significant difference in electorate size. Thurcroft North Ward, which covers the main Thurcroft settlement, has an electorate approximately three times larger than Thurcroft South Ward, which covers Laughton Common. In accordance with the principle of electoral equality, councillor representation should be broadly proportionate to the electorate while also having regard to local geography and community identities.
- 3.22.8 The Chair of the Parish Council has proposed that the number of council seats is reduced from 18 to 13, stating it is more appropriate for the size of the Council and due to difficulty recruiting.

- 3.22.9 Whilst difficulty in recruiting Councillors is not a strong reason to reduce the number of council seats, NALC guidance in relation to the current and projected electorate is 13 seats.
- 3.22.10 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Thurcroft Parish Council and its electors to seek views on decreasing the number of council seats by five to 13 seats.
- 3.22.11 Based on the projected electorate, the distribution of the council seats across the two parish wards would be:
- Thurcroft North: A decrease of five seats to ten
 - Thurcroft South: The number of seats to remain three

3.23 Todwick Parish Council

- 3.23.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Treeton Parish Council. It is therefore recommended that the existing governance arrangements are retained and that no further consultation is required.

3.24 Treeton Parish Council

- 3.24.1 One consultation response was received in relation to Treeton Parish Council, which was supportive of the existing governance arrangements. It is therefore recommended that the existing governance arrangements are retained and that no further consultation is required.

3.25 Ulley Parish Council

- 3.25.1 No consultation responses were received in relation to Thorpe Salvin Parish Council. It is therefore recommended that the existing governance arrangements are retained and that no further consultation is required.

3.26 Wales Parish Council

- 3.26.1 Whilst one respondent was satisfied with the current governance arrangements, another proposed the removal of the parish warding arrangements on the basis that the parish functions as a single community. The respondent also sought the abolition of the Parish Council, citing concerns regarding the legality of decisions relating to the administration and operation of the council. Matters relating to the conduct and decision-making of the Parish Council fall outside the scope of this Community Governance Review and have therefore not been considered further.
- 3.26.2 The current parish warding arrangements for Wales Parish Council were introduced to address a history of frequent parish council by-elections and the associated costs, whilst ensuring representation for the distinct communities of Wales and Kiveton Park. As these factors continue to apply, the existing warding structure remains consistent with the objective of securing effective and convenient local governance.

- 3.26.3 Whilst the two responses relating to the Parish Council favoured retaining the existing arrangement, consideration of NALC guidance in relation to the current and projected electorate indicates that a council size of 13 members would be more closely aligned with recommended levels of representation.
- 3.26.4 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Wales Parish Council and its electors to seek views on decreasing the number of council seats by two to 13 seats.
- 3.26.5 Based on the projected electorate, the distribution of the council seats across the two parish wards would be:
- Kiveton Park: A decrease by two seats to five
 - Wales: The number of seats to remain at eight

3.27 Waverley Community Council

- 3.27.1 Whilst there were mixed views on the number of council seats for Waverley Parish Council, the electorate is predicted to increase significantly over the next five years, due to residential developments. Consideration of NALC guidance in relation to the projected electorate indicates that a council size of 12 members would be more closely aligned with recommended levels of representation.
- 3.27.2 Whilst the Parish Clerk has cited difficulties in retaining and recruiting councillors, this should not outweigh the need to ensure that electors are afforded an appropriate level of democratic representation. The number of council seats should reflect the size and characteristics of the electorate, regardless of whether vacancies may arise from time to time.
- 3.27.3 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Waverley Community Council and its electors to seek views on increasing the number of council seats by five to 12 seats.

3.28 Wentworth Parish Council

- 3.28.1 The majority of respondents supported the existing arrangements.
- 3.28.2 A proposal was received from a Keppel Ward Borough Councillor to remove Thorpe Hesley Recreation Ground from the parish area. The Recreation Ground is situated within the Harley Ward of the parish and lies at the edge of the existing parish boundary. However, the site is not an asset of the Parish Council and is owned and managed by Rotherham Council.
- 3.28.3 No rationale or supporting evidence was provided to justify the proposed boundary change. Furthermore, implementation of the proposal would result in a less coherent parish boundary and create a small area of unparished land surrounded by the parish on three sides. In the absence of a clear justification and given the potential to create an anomalous

governance arrangement, there is insufficient evidence to support the proposed change.

- 3.28.4 One elector proposed that the Harley Ward be renamed the Harley and Hood Hill Ward. No rationale was provided in support of the proposal. However, it is noted that Harley and Hood Hill are the principal populated settlements within the ward, and the proposal may reflect a view that the ward name should better recognise both communities.
- 3.28.5 It is recommended that consultation be undertaken with Wentworth Parish Council and parish electors, particularly those in Harley Ward to seek their views on the name of Harley Ward changing to Harley and Hood Hill Ward.

3.29 Whiston Parish Council

- 3.29.1 The three responses for Whiston Parish Council all supported the current governance arrangements.
- 3.29.2 Whiston Parish Council currently has 9 councillors. Consideration of NALC guidance in relation to the projected electorate indicates that a council size of 12 members would be more closely aligned with recommended levels of representation.
- 3.29.3 It is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Whiston Parish Council and its electors to seek views on increasing the number of council seats by three to 12 seats.

3.30 Wickersley Parish Council

- 3.30.1 The consultation responses demonstrate limited support for significant changes to the current governance arrangements. One respondent, a Parish Councillor, proposed the removal of the parish wards. However, no rationale or supporting evidence for such a change was provided.
- 3.30.2 Two respondents felt the current number of council seats, 16, was appropriate, although one stated it was becoming increasingly challenging to recruit and retain councillors. The third proposed a reduction in council seats to 12, as this was more in line with national guidelines.
- 3.30.3 Wickersley Parish Council currently has 16 councillors. Consideration of NALC guidance in relation to the projected electorate indicates that a council size of 13 members would be more closely aligned with recommended levels of representation.
- 3.30.4 However, when considering a proportional split of seats across the two parish wards of Wickersley, 14 seats would be more effective. This is due to both wards having very similar electorates. Therefore, it is recommended that consultation is undertaken with Wickersley Parish

Council and its electors to seek views on decreasing the number of council seats by two to 14 seats.

3.30.5 Based on the projected electorate, the revised warding arrangements would comprise:

- Wickersley North: A decrease by two seats to seven
- Wickersley South: The number of seats to remain at seven

This would bring the overall council size more closely into line with NALC guidance whilst continuing to provide fair and effective representation across both parish wards.

3.31 Woodsetts Parish Council

3.31.1 Given the uncertainty regarding whether Gildingwells Parish Meeting is currently able to fulfil its statutory functions, it is considered appropriate to consult electors within the Gildingwells parish area on a range of alternative community governance arrangements. One option is a merger with a neighbouring parish council, including Woodsetts Parish Council. Any consultation would therefore include electors in Gildingwells and the neighbouring parishes that could be affected by the proposals, including Woodsetts. Further details are provided in Section 3.10.

3.31.2 Woodsetts Parish Council has nine seats, however, NALC guidance in relation to the current and projected electorate indicates that a council size of eight council seats would be more closely aligned with recommended levels of representation.

3.31.3 It is therefore recommended that consultation is undertaken with Woodsetts Parish Council and its electors to seek views on decreasing the number of council seats by one to eight seats.

3.32 Requests for new parish councils

3.32.1 Three responses proposed the creation of a parish council within the Rawmarsh area, with one respondent suggesting that two parish councils could be established. However, no consistent proposal was put forward regarding the geographical extent or boundaries of any new parish area. Based on the proposals submitted, the area under consideration would encompass an electorate of approximately 13,700.

3.32.2 Four responses proposed the creation of a parish council within the Wath upon Dearne area. However, the proposals varied considerably in terms of the geographical area that any new parish would cover, resulting in estimated electorates ranging from approximately 6,700 to 11,500.

3.32.3 Given the scale of the proposals, the differing views regarding the geographical extent of any new parish areas, and the relatively limited level of support demonstrated through the consultation, the responses received do not provide sufficient evidence of community support to justify undertaking further consultation on the creation of a new parish council in either Rawmarsh or Wath upon Dearne as part of this review.

- 3.32.4 The creation of a new parish council represents a significant change to local governance arrangements and would ordinarily require clear and demonstrable evidence of local support. In both cases, such evidence has not been provided.
- 3.32.5 Therefore, it is recommended that no further consideration be given to the proposal at this stage. Should respondents supporting the creation of new parishes wish to pursue the matter further, they may wish to identify and define the proposed parish area and demonstrate wider community support through a petition. Such a petition should meet the statutory threshold required to trigger a petition-led Community Governance Review, thereby enabling the proposal to be considered with evidence of broader local support.

3.33 Recommendations for Cabinet

- 3.33.1 The Community Governance Review draft recommendations are set out below, for approval by Cabinet.
- 3.33.2 **Recommendation 1:** That Cabinet approves the retention of the existing community governance arrangements for the following parish, town and community councils and parish meeting, and agrees that no further consultation is required. These arrangements will therefore be carried forward to the Final Recommendations Report:
- a) Anston Parish Council
 - b) Brampton Bierlow Parish Council
 - c) Catcliffe Parish Council
 - d) Harthill-with-Woodall Parish Council
 - e) Hellaby Parish Council
 - f) Maltby Town Council
 - g) Thorpe Salvin Parish Council
 - h) Todwick Parish Council
 - i) Treeton Parish Council
 - j) Ulley Parish Council
- 3.33.3 **Recommendation 2:** That Cabinet approves consultation with the affected parish councils and their electors to seek views on the revision of the number of council seats as outlined below:
- a) Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council: An increase of three council seats from 15 to 18.
 - b) Bramley Parish Council: An increase of one seat from 13 to 14.
 - c) Brinsworth Parish Council: An increase of three seats from 11 to 14.
 - d) Ravenfield Parish Council: An increase of two seats from 7 to 9.
 - e) Thrybergh Parish Council: A decrease of four seats from 15 to 11.
 - f) Thurcroft Parish Council: A decrease of five seats from 18 to 13.
 - g) Wales Parish Council: A decrease of two seats from 15 to 13.
 - h) Waverley Community Council: An increase of five seats from 7 to 12.
 - i) Whiston Parish Council: An increase of three seats from 9 to 12.

- j) Wickersley Parish Council: A decrease of two seats from 16 to 14.
- k) Woodsetts Parish Council: A decrease of one seat from 9 to 8.

- 3.33.4 **Recommendation 3:** That Cabinet approves consultation with electors at 605, 607, 609 and 611 Retford Road, together with Aston-cum-Aughton and Orgreave Parish Councils to seek views on the transfer of the properties from Aston-cum-Aughton West Ward of Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council to Orgreave Parish Council.
- 3.33.5 **Recommendation 4:** That Cabinet approves consultation with residents of the Poppy Fields development, together with Bramley Parish Council and Ravenfield Parish Council, to inform consideration of whether the current parish boundary remains appropriate or whether changes should be considered.
- 3.33.6 **Recommendation 5:** That Cabinet approves consultation with electors in the BWA polling district, together with Brinsworth Parish Council, to inform consideration of whether the Brinsworth Parish Council boundary should be extended to include the BWA polling district.
- 3.33.7 **Recommendation 6:** That Council approves consultation with Dalton Parish Council and its electors to inform consideration of whether Dalton Parish Council should be renamed Dalton and Sunnyside Parish Council and the parish wards renamed to Sunnyside Ward, Dalton Ward, and Brecks Ward.
- 3.33.8 **Recommendation 7:** That Cabinet approves consultation with electors residing in the Penny Hill area, together with Dinnington St John's Town Council and Firbeck Parish Council, to inform consideration of whether the properties within the Penny Hill area should remain within the Dinnington Town Ward of Dinnington St John's Town Council or be transferred to Firbeck Parish Council.
- 3.33.9 **Recommendation 8:** That Cabinet approves consultation with electors within the Gildingwells Parish Meeting area regarding the future community governance arrangements for the parish.

The consultation should seek views on the following options:

- Re-establishing the Parish Meeting
- Merging Gildingwells Parish Meeting with Letwell Parish Council;
- Merging Gildingwells Parish Meeting with Woodsetts Parish Council; and
- Abolishing Gildingwells Parish Meeting

In addition, consultation should be undertaken with Letwell Parish Council and Woodsetts Parish Council to seek their views on the potential merger options and the implications for effective and convenient local governance.

- 3.33.10 **Recommendation 9:** That Cabinet approves consultation with electors within the Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting area regarding the future community governance arrangements for the parish.

The consultation should seek views on the following options:

- Re-establishing the Parish Meeting
- Merging Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting with Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council;
- Abolishing Hooton Levitt Parish Meeting

In addition, consultation should be undertaken with Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council to seek their views on the potential merger options and the implications for effective and convenient local governance.

- 3.33.11 **Recommendation 10:** That Cabinet approves consultation with electors residing in the Firsby area and within the Hooton Roberts parish area, together with Ravenfield Parish Council, to seek their views on a proposal to transfer the Firsby area from Hooton Roberts Parish to Ravenfield Parish Council, or to retain the existing parish boundary arrangements.
- 3.33.12 **Recommendation 11:** That Cabinet approves consultation with electors residing in the Thurcroft South Ward (Laughton Common), together with Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council and Thurcroft Parish Council, to seek their views on the potential transfer of the Thurcroft South Ward of Thurcroft Parish Council to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Parish Council, or the retention of the existing parish boundary arrangements.
- 3.33.13 **Recommendation 12:** That Cabinet approves consultation with the electors of 11, 38 and 40 Reresby Park Close, together with Dalton and Thrybergh Parish Councils, on the potential transfer of these properties from Thrybergh South Ward of Thrybergh Parish Council to Dalton North Ward of Dalton Parish Council.
- 3.33.14 **Recommendation 13:** That Cabinet approves consultation with Wentworth Parish Council and parish electors, particularly those in Harley Ward, to seek their views on changing the name of Harley Ward to Harley and Hood Hill Ward.
- 3.33.15 **Recommendation 14:** That Cabinet approves the commencement of a twelve-week public consultation period on the approved draft recommendations set out in Recommendations 2-13 in this report.
- 3.33.16 **Recommendation 15:** That Cabinet notes that a final recommendations report will be brought forward following the consultation on the draft recommendations. Cabinet will be asked to approve the final recommendations and recommend their adoption by Council in Spring 2027.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Section 93 (3) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires that the principal council must consult the following:

- (a) the local government electors for the area under review.
- (b) any other person or body (including a local authority) which appears to the principal council to have an interest in the review.

4.2 A consultation on the draft recommendations approved by Cabinet will be available online via the Council's consultation portal and in paper format at all Rotherham libraries.

4.3 Targeted communications and local engagement events will also be undertaken to encourage participation from residents, parish, town and community councils and interested parties in the areas affected by the draft recommendations.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, consultation on the draft recommendations will commence on 26 October 2026. To maximise opportunities for engagement with the draft recommendations, the duration of the consultation period will be twelve weeks. Although the consultation will span the Christmas period, the timetable has been designed to provide additional opportunity for participation during January 2027 before the consultation closes.

5.2 Following the second consultation stage, final recommendations will be prepared by the Officer Working Group and reported to Cabinet in Spring 2027, before being referred to Council for approval.

5.3 Any approved changes would then be implemented through a Community Governance Order at the next scheduled elections in May 2028.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

6.2 The costs of staffing the Community Governance Review (CGR) and consultation process will continue to be absorbed within the existing Electoral Services budget.

6.3 As far as possible, consultation documents will be made available online, however some printing and posting will be required and the costs associated with this will depend on the scope of the consultation and representations received during the review. Any costs relating to the consultation will be absorbed within the Electoral Services budget.

6.4 The cost of parish elections is incurred by the Council but is recharged to the parishes where a contested election is held. As it is envisaged that any changes to electoral arrangements would be implemented at the scheduled elections in 2028, there should be no additional election costs arising from any agreed recommendations.

6.5 Any changes to the boundaries may affect the parish precept that residents affected by a boundary change will pay; any changes to precepts and council tax bills would be applied from the date the adopted recommendations from the review become effective. Any changes will be implemented on 1st April 2028, as set out in paragraph 14.5 of the Terms of Reference (Appendix 1).

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 The Council has the power and duty to undertake Community Governance Reviews under Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. As stated above a Community Governance Review enables the Council to consider the creation, alteration, abolition, grouping or de-grouping of parishes, together with associated electoral arrangements. The Council must conduct the review in accordance with the statutory requirements set out in the 2007 Act and have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

7.2 In undertaking the review, the Council must ensure that appropriate consultation is carried out, that representations received are properly considered, and that any recommendations are based on the statutory criteria, namely the need to secure community governance that reflects the identities and interests of local communities and is effective and convenient. The proposed continuation of public consultation and consideration of consultation responses supports compliance with those duties.

7.3 As stated above some of the proposals set out above may have implications for adopted Neighbourhood Plans. Where relevant, these implications will be assessed before final recommendations are brought forward.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no implications for Human Resources.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults arising from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 There are no implications for equalities and human rights arising from this report.

10.2 An Initial Equality Screening Assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix 4.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 The implications for CO2 emissions and Climate Change are low. A Carbon Impact Assessment is set out in Appendix 5.

11.2 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 devolves the power to take decisions about matters such as the creation, changes, and abolishment of parishes to principal councils. The Council has a duty to keep under review the arrangements of its parishes. As set out in the Guidance on community governance reviews, it is considered good practice for a principal council to consider conducting a review every 10-15 years.

11.3 When carrying out a review, the Council must consult with those residing in the area, and other interested parties, on the most suitable ways of representing the people in the area identified in the review. As well as carrying out online consultation, hard copies will be made available in all local libraries to minimise the distance residents would have to travel.

11.4 To minimise the distances residents would have to travel to any consultation events held as part of the review, the locations will be chosen to ensure a good geographical spread across the Borough. When travelling to consultation events, where possible, Electoral Services staff will car share.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no implications for partners arising from this report.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The 2007 Act requires that local people are consulted during a CGR, that representations received in connection with the review are considered and that steps are taken to notify respondents of the outcomes of such reviews including any decisions. When undertaking the review, the Council must have regard to the need to ensure that community governance reflects the identities and interests of the community in the area under review and it is effective and convenient.

13.2 Following consultation, there may be representations from individuals or parish councils where the proposals are in conflict or contradictory. This may present a risk that a local amicable solution will not be possible, and the Council will have to decide.

- 13.3 Without effective consultation there is the risk that recommendations arising from the review would not reflect the identities and interests of local communities or effective and convenient community governance. That risk is sought to be mitigated by the proposed consultation on the draft recommendations.

14. Accountable Officers

Phillip Horsfield, Service Director of Legal, Election and Registration Services (Monitoring Officer)

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	22/09/2026
Executive Director of Corporate Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	16/09/2026
Service Director of Legal, Elections and Registration Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	21/09/2026

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