

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive	Council	16 July 2013

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BUCKSHAW

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update Members on the status of the Community Governance Review of Buckshaw following the publication of the Terms of Reference for the Review published in February 2011 and to determine a way forward.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That the Community Governance Review be discontinued and the Council makes a decision to make no recommendations to change the current parishing or boundary arrangements.
3. The consultees from the first stage of the review, be advised of the Council's position.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	/	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	/

BACKGROUND

5. In 2010 the Council received a request from a member of the public for the creation of a Parish Council for the Buckshaw area. There had previously been a number of similar informal requests and a meeting of the Council on 2 November 2010 agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review for the Buckshaw area of Chorley into whether the current parishing arrangements best served the local community and whether there should be a new parish council created for the Buckshaw area.
6. Members will be aware that Buckshaw Village lies partly within Chorley's Borough Boundary and partly within the South Ribble Borough Council area. The area of Buckshaw that lies within Chorley, is currently served by either Euxton Parish Council or Whittle le Woods Parish Council. The Community Governance Review was being conducted under the provisions of the Local Government and Public Health Act 2007 and the terms of reference document published in February 2011 set out in detail how the review would be conducted under the following headings:

- Consultation
- Electorate and demographics
- The present structure of parishes and their electoral arrangements in the review area
- Information about Euxton and Whittle le Woods Parish Councils
- Information about the creation of parish councils
- Review processes
- Detailed appendices containing maps; consultees; electorate information.

7. The review sought to look at all options for future parishing arrangements but specifically included the following:
- a. Creating a new parish for Buckshaw made up of parts of the current Euxton and Whittle le Woods Parish Councils;
 - b. No change at all to current arrangements;
 - c. Unparishing of some or all of the area under consideration;
 - d. Unparishing of some or all of the area under consideration, with a recommendation to reconsider the position if district boundaries are reviewed by the Boundary Commission for England which put all of Buckshaw Village under one District Council; and
 - e. Any other arrangements which come out of the consultation process for the review and receive significant support.

CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

8. The terms of reference, once published, were subject to a 3 month period of consultation. The outcome of this preliminary round of consultation suggested mixed views on whether or not there should be a Parish Council for Buckshaw but overriding support for any decision to be postponed until the local authority boundary is reviewed to put all of Buckshaw under one principal Council area.
9. In April 2011 the Council received correspondence from the Boundary Commission which indicated that there was the possibility of a Principal Area Boundary Review regarding the Buckshaw Village development. On the basis of the potential for a boundary review, along with the outcome of the preliminary consultation on the community governance review, the Community Governance Review Committee meeting in June 2011 decided to put the review on hold to allow the Council time to consider its position and to allow discussions to take place with the Boundary Commission and South Ribble Council. The position was confirmed at Council in July 2011 as follows:
- a. *That the Council agrees in principle that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England should be formally requested to conduct a principal area boundary review of the boundary between Chorley and South Ribble Councils with a view to Buckshaw Village residents being located under one local authority area.*
 - b. *In order to achieve this, the Council will work jointly with South Ribble Council to devise and make recommendations to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.*
 - c. *That it be noted that the Community Governance Review Committee has paused its Community Governance Review into whether or not to create a Parish Council for Buckshaw.*

BOUNDARY COMMISSION AND SOUTH RIBBLE DISCUSSIONS

10. A meeting was held with the Boundary Commission and South Ribble representatives in July 2011 where the position given by the Boundary Commission was that they would only consider a boundary change, where both Councils were agreed on a new boundary.

Subsequent discussions with South Ribble Council established that whilst both Councils saw the obvious benefits in the Buckshaw development being under one local authority, the impact of the loss of Buckshaw properties and businesses to either Council would have significant financial implications and therefore in the current climate, is not an approach either would wish to pursue.

With this position, the only other option which could be acceptable to both Councils (and therefore likely to be adopted by the Boundary Commission) would be to agree minor changes – ie to ensure the boundary goes around properties/streets rather than through them. However these changes would be minor, and would not provide the outcome which residents wished to see - Buckshaw would still be across two local authority areas, rendering the boundary review of minimal value.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ON BUCKSHAW

11. There is the additional complication that Buckshaw is still some way off completion with the Group 1 site still to be developed. Any new boundary which resolves current anomalies in streets/through houses will not prevent similar issues when the Group 1 site is fully developed. Any long term solution needs to take this potential growth into consideration – both in terms of electoral issues – parish and ward boundaries; service provision to residents; and the financial impact for both local authorities.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OPTIONS

12. In the circumstances there would seem to be little benefit to the continuation of the Community Governance Review at the current time. The continuation of the review is not likely to have any meaningful outcome in the near future. The suggestion is therefore that approval be given to ending this review, with a promise to reconsider the issues in 5 years time and that consultees from the first round of consultation should be advised of the Council's position.
13. Members views are requested.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

14. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	✓	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

15. Arising from the recommendations from this report there are no financial implications arising from this report.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

16. Whilst it would normally be the case that a Community Governance Review should be pursued to its conclusion following the statutory process, this departure, the discontinuance of the Review is reasonable. It is clear that this issue cannot be resolved at this time given the unknown factors surrounding the Group 1 Development. Further, the Boundary Commission are unable to take a decision making role on the line of the principal boundary which would leave the current difficulties of communities being split by parish and district boundary continuing.

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Terms of Reference of the Community Governance Committee	Feb 2011	***	

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Carol Russell	5196	2 July 2013	***