

Community Governance Review -Numbers of Parish Councillors Terms of Reference

Introduction

Following receipt of requests from the respective parish councils, Somerset Council has resolved to undertake a Community Governance Review to amend the number of parish councillors in four parishes. In undertaking the review, the Council will be guided by Part 4, Chapter 3, of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, and the Local Government (Parish and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008.

What is a Community Governance Review?

A Community Governance Review (“CGR”) provides an opportunity to put in place strong, clearly defined boundaries, which reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government. It can take place for the whole or part of the Somerset Council area and can consider the following:

- creating, merging, altering or abolishing Parishes;
- the naming of Parishes and the style of new Parishes;
- the electoral arrangements for Parishes including:
 - the ordinary year of election;
 - the number of Councillors to be elected; and
 - the warding (if any) of the Parish
- grouping Parishes under a common Parish Council or de-grouping Parishes

The Council is required to ensure that community governance within the area under review will be:

- reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- is effective and convenient in doing so, the review will take into account:
 - the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
 - the size, population and boundaries of a local community or Parish.

Why undertake a Community Governance Review?

The Council has received requests from the following parishes to amend the number of parish councillors to improve the governance of each of the parish councils.

The proposals are:

Parish Council	Electorate	No. of councillors	No. requested
Ashwick	1084	11	9
Chapel Allerton	329	5	7
Martock	3926	15	12
West Monkton	4539	9	13

Who will undertake the Review?

As the relevant Principal Authority, Somerset Council will oversee the Review and approve the final recommendations. The matter will be considered by the Council's Constitution and Governance Committee which will refer the matter to the full Council for determination.

In the first instance the Council is inviting comments on the proposal as to whether or not there is support for the proposals.

Draft Review Timetable

Event	Date
Council approve Terms of Reference and Timetable	February 2026
Consultation with relevant stakeholders	March/April 2026
Recommendations considered by Constitution and Governance Committee	June 2026
Consultations on draft recommendations	July/August 2026
Final recommendations considered by Committee	September 2026
Order prepared to include implementation date by	1 December 2026
Implementation	1 April 2027

Consultees will include: The relevant Members for the relevant Divisions of Somerset Council, the Parish Councils concerned.