



Community Governance Review (Parish Review)

Part One

Parishes of: Abbots Leigh, Backwell, Barrow Gurney, Brockley, Butcombe, Clapton-in-Gordano, Cleeve, Clevedon, Dundry, Easton-in-Gordano, Flax Bourton, Kenn, Kingston Seymour, Long Ashton, Nailsea, Portbury, Portishead & North Weston, Tickenham, Walton-in-Gordano, Weston-in-Gordano, Winford, Wraxall & Failand, Wrington and Yatton.

**Deadline for representations NOON on Wednesday 24th
September 2008 to:**

**Electoral Services (Review CGR),
Town Hall,
Weston-super-Mare,
Somerset,
BS23 1UJ**

**Submissions can also be made by using the consultation
section of our website at:**

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/parishconsultation2008

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Introduction

From February 2008, North Somerset Council has responsibility for undertaking Community Governance Reviews under the terms of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The purpose of a Community Governance Review is to provide a mechanism whereby the boundaries of areas served by Parish Councils and their related electoral arrangements (including provision of any parish council wards, and allocated numbers of parish councillors) can be amended where appropriate.

The Council's Planning & Regulatory Committee on 25th June 2008 gave approval for the Electoral Registration Officer to carry out a Community Governance Review of parish boundaries and electoral arrangements of the whole of North Somerset under the terms of the 2007 Act in two parts:

- (1) a review of parish boundaries and electoral arrangements within the Woodspring Parliamentary Constituency during 2008/09 (see list of parishes at Appendix A);
- (2) a review of parish boundaries and electoral arrangements within the Weston-super-Mare Parliamentary Constituency during 2009/10 (see list of parishes at Appendix C).

This document sets out the scope of Part One of the Review covering parish boundaries and related electoral arrangements within the Woodspring Parliamentary Constituency (with the addition of the parish of Butcombe). A separate document will be issued during mid- 2009 to give similar information relating to Part Two of the Review covering parishes within the Weston-super-Mare Constituency.

The law requires the Council to complete each Review within 12 months of commencement. Any changes arising from the Review will come in effect at the May 2011 full elections of parish councils (combined with the next scheduled elections to North Somerset Council). The timing of the two Parts of the review takes account of the forthcoming European Parliamentary election to be held in June 2009.

This Part of the Review may consider some parish related electoral matters advised to the Electoral Registration Officer prior to the introduction of the new legislation within the parishes of Portbury, Portishead & North Weston and Yatton (see Appendix B).

What is NOT being reviewed

The following are not covered by this Review:

- the boundaries of UK parliamentary constituencies,
- the boundaries and names of North Somerset Council wards.

Definition of terms

Within this document the following terms appear:

Parish Council - a local authority operating at civil parish level. For the purposes of the review this includes Town Councils.

Principal Council - a local authority operating at county, unitary or district level. For the purposes of this Review, North Somerset Council is the principal council.

Criteria and aim of the review

In conducting this Review, Section 93 of the 2007 Act requires North Somerset Council to seek 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**.

When considering this, North Somerset Council will take into account a number of influential factors, including:

- the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

The Government's vision of an integrated and cohesive community is based on three foundations:

- People from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities
- People knowing their rights and responsibilities
- People trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly

And three key ways of living together:

- A shared future vision and sense of belonging
- A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside recognition of the value of diversity
- Strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds

Issues to consider in a Community Governance Review

Parish Boundaries

It is desirable that parish boundaries are readily identifiable by permanent features e.g. coastlines, watercourses, major roads, or railway lines.

There is a need to consider “Coterminosity” in cases where existing parish council boundaries coincide with North Somerset Council ward boundaries. It is a legal requirement that the wards of North Somerset Council are comprised of whole parishes or whole parish wards. In many locations, a proposal to relocate a parish council boundary may require the creation of a separate parish council ward or, where appropriate a request to the Electoral Commission to review the coterminous North Somerset Council ward boundary.

The Commission will not normally look to move unitary council ward boundaries onto new parish ward boundaries. However, it will consider each proposal on its merits.

Potential growth

The Electoral Services office will obtain forecasts and take into consideration any planned development within the area of the Review during a period of five years from March 2009.

Council Size

Council size is the term used to describe the number of councillors to be elected to the whole parish council. The Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) specifies that each parish council must have at least five councillors; there is no maximum number. There are no rules relating to the allocation of those councillors between parish wards but each parish ward must have at least one parish councillor.

The council size range was set out in the “National Association of Local Councils” Circular 1126; the Circular suggested that the minimum number of councillors for any parish should be 7 and the maximum 25.

In considering the issue of council size each area should be considered on its own merits, having regard to its population, geography and the pattern of communities.

Parish warding

Parish warding is the division of a parish into wards for the purpose of electing councillors, including the number and boundaries of any wards, the number of councillors to be elected for any ward and the names of wards.

In considering whether or not a parish should be divided into wards, the legislation requires that consideration be given to whether:

- a) the number, or distribution of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
- b) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented.

There is a need to consider not only the size of the electorate in the area but also the distribution of communities within it.

When contemplating parish ward boundaries there is a need to ensure that consideration is given as to the desirability of fixing of boundaries which are, and will remain, easily identifiable, as well as taking into account any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

Names of parish wards

In considering the names of parish wards, thought should be given to existing local or historic places so that, where appropriate, these are reflected.

The number of councillors to be elected for parish wards

If it is proposed that a parish should be warded, consideration should be given to the levels of representation between each ward i.e. the number of councillors to be elected for each ward and the number of electors they represent.

It is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government, either for voters or councillors, to have significant differences in levels of representation between different parish wards.

Ordinary year of election

Ordinary parish elections are held once every four years with all councillors being elected at the same time. The standard parish electoral cycle is for elections in 2011 and every four years thereafter.

New or revised parish electoral arrangements come into force at ordinary parish elections, rather than at parish by-elections, so they usually have to wait until the next scheduled parish elections.

Parish names and alternative styles for parishes

Prior to the 2007 Act, a parish could be given the status of a town under the Local Government Act 1972. "Town" status continues to be available to a parish. In addition, the 2007 Act offers a further choice of alternative styles for a parish: **community**, **neighbourhood** and **village**. However, for as long as the parish has an alternative style, it will not also be able to have the status of a town and vice versa.

The 'name' of a parish refers to the geographical name of the area concerned, whereas its status or 'style' allows for that area to be known as a town, community, neighbourhood or village, rather than as a parish. The status or style of the parish will be reflected in the name of any council of the parish, the parish meeting, and the chairman or vice-chairman of the parish meeting or of any parish council. So, for example, the council of a parish which uses the style 'village' will be known as the 'village council' and its councillors as the 'village councillors', etc.

So far as existing parishes under review are concerned, the review must make recommendations as to whether the geographical name of the parish should be changed, but it may not make any recommendations for the parish about alternative style. It will be for the parish council or parish meeting to resolve whether the parish should have one of the alternative styles.

Recommendations and decisions on the outcome of Community Governance Reviews

In relation to a Community Governance Review, North Somerset Council must make recommendations as to:

- a) whether a new parish or any new parishes should be constituted;
- b) whether existing parishes should or should not be abolished or whether the area of existing parishes should be altered; or
- c) what the electoral arrangements for new or existing parishes, which are to have parish councils, should be.

It may also make recommendations concerning:

- a) the grouping or degrouping of parishes; or
- b) making related alterations to the boundaries its own electoral areas.

In deciding what recommendations to make the Council must have regard to the need to secure that community governance reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient.

In making its recommendations North Somerset Council will consider the information it has received in the form of expressions of local opinion on the matters considered by the review, representations made by local people and other interested persons, and also use its own knowledge of the local area.

The review process

The Council will publish a notice on Thursday 24th July 2008 announcing that a community governance review is taking place. This will commence a consultation period of two months, during which everyone is invited to submit proposals and comments for consideration by North Somerset Council prior to the making of the Draft Recommendations on future electoral arrangements for those parishes listed at Appendix A.

There is however no requirement to change any existing arrangements.

Representations are being invited from everyone including Parish Councils, Parish and District Councillors, MP's, MEP's, local political parties, and the public.

We would welcome proposals backed up by demonstrable evidence during this stage of the Review and will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our Draft Recommendations.

A form to assist in the submission of any comments or proposals is attached at the end of this document.

Please express your views by writing directly to:

**Electoral Services (Review CGR)
North Somerset Council
Town Hall
Weston-super-Mare
Somerset
BS23 1UJ**

to arrive by no later than NOON on Wednesday 24th September 2008.

Any submissions received after this date may not be taken into account.

Submissions can also be made by using the consultation section of our website:

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/parishconsultation2008

Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, the Council will make available for public inspection full copies of all representations it takes into account as part of this Review at the Electoral Services Office, North Somerset Council, Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset, BS23 1UJ.

In the light of representations received, the Electoral Registration Officer will prepare Draft Recommendations. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence regarding parish council boundaries and electoral arrangements whether or not they wish to propose any change to such arrangements. In this connection submissions advising that existing parish electoral arrangements are satisfactory and do not require any change may also be submitted along with relevant supporting evidence.

A report including proposed Draft Recommendations for any new or revised parish electoral arrangements will be submitted to the Council's Planning & Regulatory Committee at its meeting on 29th October 2008 for approval, prior to their publication and the commencement of a six week period for public consultation on those recommendations closing on NOON on Wednesday 24 December 2009.

Final Recommendations will be prepared by the Electoral Registration Officer taking account of the representations received on the Draft Recommendations, and will be submitted for approval to North Somerset Council at its meeting on Tuesday 24th February 2009.

Any changes resulting from this review will be fully implemented in time to operate at the next full Parish elections scheduled to be held on Thursday 5th May 2011.

Maps and More Information

Maps showing existing parish boundaries may be inspected at the Electoral Services Office at the address below.

A summary map of parish boundaries within the area of the Review can be inspected at the Public Libraries at:

Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead and Weston-super-Mare (Central)

Mapping of parish boundaries can also be accessed via the Internet at:

<http://gisweb.n-somerset.gov.uk/planaccess/redirect.htm>

More information can be obtained from the Electoral Services team who may be contacted at:

**Electoral Services (Review CGR)
North Somerset Council
Town Hall
Weston-super-Mare
Somerset
BS23 1UJ**

Telephone: 01934 634903

E-mail: electoral.services@n-somerset.gov.uk

Community Governance Review Timetable

Within the area of Woodspring Constituency 2008/09

Event	Timescale	Date
Commencement of Review		Thursday 24 th July 2008
Period of initial public consultation: submission of detailed proposals for consideration under the Review	2 months	By noon on Wednesday 24 th September 2008
Draft Recommendations submitted for approval by NSC's Planning & Regulatory Committee		Weds 29 th October 2008
Period of public consultation on NSC's Draft Recommendations	7 weeks	By noon on Wednesday 24 December 2008
Final Recommendations submitted for approval by North Somerset Council		Tuesday 24 th February 2009
Register of Electors amended to take account of any amendments arising from the Review	During canvass 2010	By 1 st December 2010
Any parish boundary amendments arising from the Review take effect		With effect from 1 st April 2011
Implementation of any necessary changes in electoral arrangements	At full Parish elections	Thursday 5 th May 2011

Appendix A

Community Governance Review - Part One (July 2008 to Feb 2009)

Parishes within the Woodspring* Parliamentary Constituency (current parish council size shown in brackets)

Abbots Leigh (5)	
Backwell (15)	
Barrow Gurney (7)	
Brockley (6)	
Butcombe (5)	
Clapton-in-Gordano (5)	
Cleeve (7)	
Clevedon (Town Council) (21)#	(seven parish wards)
Dundry (10)	
Easton-in-Gordano (15)#	(two parish wards)
Flax Bourton (7)	
Kenn (7)	
Kingston Seymour (7)	
Long Ashton (21)#	(two parish wards)
Nailsea (Town Council) (20)#	(five parish wards)
Portbury (7)	
Portishead & North Weston (Town Council) (18)#	(six parish wards)
Tickenham (11)	
Walton-in-Gordano (5)	
Weston-in-Gordano (7)	
Winford (12)#	(three parish wards)
Wraxall & Failand (11)	
Wroughton (16)#	(two parish wards)
Yatton (21)#	(four parish wards)

* Woodspring Parliamentary Constituency will be renamed North Somerset Parliamentary Constituency from the next Parliamentary General election and its boundary will be amended to include the parish of Butcombe. For this reason the parish of Butcombe is included in Part One of the Review.

Parish Warding

These parishes are currently “warded”. The list below gives details of existing parish wards together with the allocated number of parish councillors:

Clevedon : seven parish wards (each with 3 councillors)

Central
East
North
South
Walton
West
Yeo

Easton-in-Gordano : two parish wards

Pill (10)
St.George (5)

Long Ashton : two parish wards

Leigh Woods (2)
Long Ashton (19)

Nailsea : five parish wards (each with 4 councillors)

Golden Valley
Mizzymead
West End
Yeo
Youngwood

Portishead & North Weston : six parish wards (each with 3 councillors)

Central
Coast
East
Redcliffe Bay
South & North Weston
West

Winford : three parish wards

Felton (5)
Regil (2)
Winford (5)

Wrington : two parish wards

Northeast (4)
Southwest (12)

Yatton : four parish wards

Claverham (3)
Horsecastle (5)
North (7)
South (6)

Appendix B

Parish electoral issues notified to the Electoral Registration Officer prior to the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 coming into force:

- 1. Yatton Parish Council** - request submitted for a reduction in the number of parish councillors from 21 to 18;

- 2. Portishead & North Weston Town Council** - request submitted for a review of the boundary between the parish of Portishead & North Weston and the parish of Portbury, and of parish ward boundaries between Portishead East Ward and Central Ward. (Any proposed movement of these boundaries could have an impact on coterminous District Ward boundaries and require a subsequent Electoral Review to be performed by the Electoral Commission).

- 3. Portbury Parish Council** - request submitted for an increase in the number of parish councillors from 7 to 8;

Appendix C

The following parishes are within area of the Weston-super-Mare Parliamentary Constituency.

These parishes are NOT within the scope of the current part of the review

This area will be the subject of Part Two of the Community Governance Review scheduled to take place in the period July 2009 to February 2010 which will follow an identical process to that operating within Part One of the review.

Proposals in respect of the following parishes should NOT be submitted prior to July 2009.

**Banwell
Blagdon
Bleadon
Burrington
Churchill
Congresbury
Hutton
Kewstoke
Locking
Loxton
Puxton
St. Georges
Weston-super-Mare (Town Council)
Wick St. Lawrence
Winscombe & Sandford**

The Woodspring Parliamentary Constituency will become the North Somerset Parliamentary Constituency with effect from the next Parliamentary General election and its boundary will be amended to include the parish of Butcombe. For this reason the parish of Butcombe is included in Part One of the Review during 2008/09 (see Appendix A).

Community Governance Review

Form to assist in the Submission of any comments or proposals

Parishes of: Abbots Leigh, Backwell, Barrow Gurney, Brockley, Butcombe, Clapton-in-Gordano, Cleeve, Clevedon, Dundry, Easton-in-Gordano, Flax Bourton, Kenn, Kingston Seymour, Long Ashton, Nailsea, Portbury, Portishead & North Weston, Tickenham, Walton-in-Gordano, Weston-in-Gordano, Winford, Wraxall & Failand, Wrington and Yatton.

Please take a few minutes to give your views. We ask your name and address as 'must answer' questions. This is, by law, a public consultation so all response to this consultation will be publicly available - including respondent's name, address and contact details. You can see your and other people's responses in hard copy at the Electoral Services Office, Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1UJ or via the consultation section of our website at:

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/parishconsultation2008

1. What is your name? You must provide an answer to this question.

2. What is your address? You must provide an answer to this question.

3. Please give an email address or a daytime phone number we can contact

you on: this information is optional

4. Existing parish electoral arrangements are satisfactory and I do not propose any change

(Please add any comments in support of your view that existing parish electoral arrangements are satisfactory in no more than 2,000 words)

**5. What change(s) do you propose to:
Parish council boundaries* / parish warding arrangements* /
to levels of parish council membership*? (* Please delete as appropriate)**

Please say in no more than 2,000 words which Parish Council area(s) your proposal relates to, and provide your reasons and/or relevant supporting evidence. (Please continue on additional sheets of paper if necessary).

Many thanks for taking the time to give your views.

Please submit your responses to:

**Electoral Services (Review CGR)
North Somerset Council
Town Hall
Weston-super-Mare
Somerset
BS23 1UJ**

to arrive by no later than NOON on Wednesday 24th September 2008.