

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 17 OCTOBER 2018

REPORT BY HEAD OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND
MONITORING OFFICER

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BISHOP'S STORTFORD TOWN
COUNCIL – REPORT ON SECOND STAGE CONSULTATION AND FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: BISHOP'S STORTFORD ALL SAINTS, CENTRAL,
MEADS, SILVERLEYS AND SOUTH; MUCH
HADHAM

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To report the responses received during the second stage consultation period for the Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council; and to agree and give effect to the final recommendations of the Community Governance Review.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL: That:

(A)	The Council consider the responses received to the second stage consultation on the Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council as set out in section 5 of the report, together with the recommendations of the Executive in relation to the review at section 6 of the report;
(B)	The Council agree and give effect to the final recommendations of the Community Governance

Review as follows:-

- (1) That no new parishes be constituted in the area under review;**
- (2) That no change be made to the name of either Bishop's Stortford or Thorley Parish and that each of the parishes continue to have a council;**
- (3) That the areas of Bishop's Stortford and Thorley parishes be altered as follows:-**
 - a) That the part of St Michael's Mead that is currently in Thorley Parish (marked as Area A on the map at sheet number 2 of Essential Reference Paper B) be transferred to Bishop's Stortford Parish, with the parish boundary being amended to follow Moor Hall Lane from St James' Way to the existing boundary so that Southern Country Park and other undeveloped adjacent land will remain in Thorley Parish.**
 - b) That those properties in Rectory Close that are currently in Bishop's Stortford Parish (marked as Area B on the map at sheet number 2 of Essential Reference Paper B) be transferred to Thorley Parish.**
 - c) That the area of land occupied by numbers 6 to 9 Park View Cottages (marked as Area C on the map at sheet number 2 of Essential Reference Paper B) be transferred from Bishop's Stortford Parish to Thorley Parish.**
 - d) That no other changes be made at this time to the parish boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley parishes;**
- (4) That the Council keep under review any future**

development in Bishop's Stortford South or elsewhere with a view to considering whether this may in due course give rise to the need for a further community governance review of any part or parts of the District;

- (5) That in relation to the electoral arrangements for Bishop's Stortford Town Council:-
- a) The total number of councillors to be elected to the Town Council be reduced from 18 to 17;
 - b) That Bishop's Stortford continue to be divided into five wards for the purpose of electing councillors to the Town Council;
 - c) That no change be made to the name of any ward;
 - d) That the boundaries between the Town Council wards be altered as set out in the table at paragraph 7.24 of this report and illustrated at sheets 3 to 16 of the map at Essential Reference Paper B; and
 - e) That the number of councillors to be elected to represent each ward on the Town Council be as follows:-

All Saints Ward	3 councillors
Central Ward	4 councillors
Meads Ward	3 councillors
Silverleys Ward	3 councillors
South Ward	4 councillors

- (6) That in relation to the electoral arrangements for Thorley Parish Council:-
- a) The total number of councillors to be elected to the Parish Council be reduced from 7 to 6;
 - b) That Thorley Parish continue to be divided into two wards for the purpose of electing councillors to the Parish Council;

	<p>c) That no change be made to the name of any ward;</p> <p>d) That the boundary between the Parish Council Rural and Urban Wards continue to follow the boundary between the District Council wards of Bishop’s Stortford South and Much Hadham as illustrated at sheet 2 of the map at Essential Reference Paper B; and</p> <p>e) That the number of councillors to be elected to represent each ward on the Parish Council be as follows:-</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Rural Ward</td> <td>2 councillors</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Urban Ward</td> <td>4 councillors</td> </tr> </table> <p>(7) That the Local Government Boundary Commission for England be requested to make changes to the boundaries of the relevant District Council Wards and County Council Divisions as necessary to ensure coterminosity between those boundaries and the revised Parish and Parish Ward boundaries made in this Community Governance Review; and</p>	Rural Ward	2 councillors	Urban Ward	4 councillors
Rural Ward	2 councillors				
Urban Ward	4 councillors				
(C)	<p>The Council make the East Hertfordshire (Reorganisation of Community Governance) (Bishop’s Stortford and Thorley) Order 2018 as attached at Essential Reference Paper B.</p>				

1.0 Background – Community Governance Reviews

1.1 Chapter 3 of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (‘the 2007 Act’) empowers a principal authority such as East Herts Council to review and make changes to the governance arrangements for parishes and parish/town councils in its area.

- 1.2 The mechanism for making decisions on these matters is a Community Governance Review. This is a review of the whole or part of the district with a view to making recommendations on one or more of the following:
- Creating, merging or abolishing parishes;
 - Boundary alterations between existing parishes;
 - The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes;
 - The establishment of parish councils;
 - Electoral arrangements for parish councils (the year of election; number of councillors; warding), and/or
 - Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes.
- 1.3 A Community Governance Review may be triggered by a statutory petition or a formal 'application' in the terms of the 2007 Act, or the Council may decide to undertake a review at any time, e.g. in response to population changes or new housing development, as part of a periodic programme of reviews or in response to a request from a town/parish council or other person(s).
- 1.4 Section 93 (3) of the 2007 Act requires that in undertaking a review the Council must consult (i) the local government electors for the area under review; and (ii) any other person or body (including a local authority) which appears to the principal council to have an interest in the review. Section 93 (6) states that the Council must take into account any representations received in connection with the review; whilst Section 100 (4) provides that the Council must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).
- 1.5 A Community Governance Review begins when the Council publishes terms of reference for the review and ends when it

agrees the final recommendations (which must be within 12 months of the review starting) and adopts a Community Governance Reorganisation Order detailing any changes in accordance with those recommendations. Any revised electoral arrangements take effect at the next ordinary parish elections, which in East Herts are scheduled for May 2019.

Consequential recommendations to the LGBCE

- 1.6 Any changes to parish or parish/town ward boundaries as a result of this review will not automatically change the corresponding district ward or county division boundaries. In the event that such changes are made the Council may make recommendations to the LGBCE that the district ward and county division boundaries are realigned to follow the revised parish/parish ward boundaries. The LGBCE would require evidence that the Council has consulted on this as part of the review.

2.0 Issues for consideration and decision-making criteria for a Community Governance Review

- 2.1 Section 93 (4) of the 2007 Act requires a principal council to have regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review –
- (a) reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
 - (b) is effective and convenient.
- 2.2 Section 93 (5) provides that in deciding what recommendations to make, a principal council must take into account any other arrangements (apart from those relating to parishes and their institutions) –
- (a) that have already been made, or

(b) that could be made,

for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in respect of the area under review.

2.3 The guidance issued by the Secretary of State and the LGBCE states that when considering the above criteria, principal councils should 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.

2.4 The guidance further states that ‘the general rule should be that the parish is based on an area which reflects community identity and interest and which is of a size which is viable as an administrative unit of local government’. In relation to boundaries, the guidance states that these ‘should reflect the “no-man’s land” between communities represented by areas of low population or barriers such as rivers, roads or railways.’

Electoral arrangements

2.5 Once the Council has determined whether it will make any changes to parish boundaries, it must go on to consider if any changes are required to the electoral arrangements for the parish(es) affected. Electoral arrangements are defined in the 2007 Act as:-

- **Ordinary year of election** – the year in which ordinary elections of the parish/town councillors are to be held;
- **Council size** - the number of councillors to be elected to the parish/town council; and

- **Parish warding** - whether the parish should be, or should continue to be, divided into wards for the purpose of electing parish/town councillors, including the number and boundaries of any such wards, the number of councillors to be elected for any such ward and the name of any such ward.

Making recommendations

2.6 Sections 87 to 92 of the 2007 Act provide that at the end of a Community Governance Review the principal 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; and
- (c) What the electoral arrangements for new or existing parishes, which are to have parish councils, should be.

2.7 The principal council may also make recommendations about:

- (a) The grouping or de-grouping of parishes;
- (b) Adding parishes to an existing group of parishes; or
- (c) Making related alterations to the boundaries of a principal council's electoral area.

3.0 Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council, including the town boundary

3.1 The Council on 16 December 2015 agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council, including the town boundary. The review was agreed following a request from Bishop's Stortford Town Council, which identified two issues for consideration:

- (i) The parish boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley:- The Town Council identified development which crosses the parish boundary - for example at St Michael's Mead - and areas of future development to the south of the town either consented or envisaged in the district plan. Parts of the areas identified are currently in Thorley Parish but the Town Council considered the developments are, or will be, seen by residents as part of Bishop's Stortford and therefore suggested that its boundary with Thorley Parish be re-drawn to follow the existing district ward boundary, with all land north of St James' Way - including St Michael's Mead, the land south of Whittington Way and the Thorley Street and Pig Lane areas - being transferred from Thorley Parish Council to Bishop's Stortford Town Council.
- (ii) The ward boundaries within the town:- The Town Council also made a number of detailed proposals for changes to ward boundaries within the town to address perceived anomalies, such as roads or developments split between two or more wards. Eighteen separate minor changes to ward boundaries were proposed, affecting a total of approximately 450 properties currently housing about 850 electors.

3.2 A copy of the request from Bishop's Stortford Town Council is attached at **Essential Reference Paper C**.

Terms of reference

3.3 The review began on 13 February 2018 with the publication of terms of reference setting out the aims, process and timetable for the review and the matters to be considered. The terms of reference included a number of policies, consistent with the criteria at section 2 above, to guide the consideration of evidence and the formulation of recommendations during the

review. A copy of the terms of reference is attached at **Essential Reference Paper D**.

Initial consultation and draft recommendations

- 3.4 The initial public consultation period ran from 13 February to 6 April 2018, during which local electors and all interested parties were invited to make submissions on the Town Council's proposals and any other matters that they felt should be considered.
- 3.5 In relation to the package of proposed minor changes to ward boundaries within Bishop's Stortford Town Council, twelve consultation responses were received. Of these, one respondent opposed the changes and four stated 'no comment' or similar. The other seven respondents were broadly supportive of the changes.
- 3.6 In relation to the parish boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley, responses were received from nine local organisations and 125 individuals. A large majority of respondents did not support the Town Council's proposals. In addition, 394 individually signed pro-forma letters were received objecting to the proposed Thorley boundary change and a petition was received, signed by a total of 960 persons, calling for 'no change to the current boundary between Thorley village and Bishop's Stortford'. Although many responses cited reasons related to over-development, preservation of Green Belt or opposition to development on the Whittington Way site (which are matters for the planning process rather than a community governance review), others did reference matters specifically relevant to the criteria. Many were concerned that if the Town Council's proposal was agreed, Thorley Parish would no longer be viable as an administrative area. Although most responses were from people living outside the area affected, a large majority of responses from within that area were

opposed to the proposal, and of these, most were from the Thorley Street and Pig Lane areas or Rectory Close.

- 3.7 Council on 16 May 2018 discussed the Community Governance Review. In considering whether or not the proposals from the Town Council should be recommended either in full or in amended form, the Council took into account the responses received to the consultation, the LGBCE's guidance on community governance reviews, geographical data, electorate projections and the recommendations of the Executive which in turn were informed by the comments of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.8 Following consideration in turn of each element of the Town Council's proposal, the Council recommended that some but not all of the areas identified by the Town Council should be transferred to the Town Council's area, and proposed some other changes to governance arrangements. The Council's decisions formed the basis of the draft recommendations of the Community Governance Review, which were then subject to a further round of public consultation, as follows:-

Minor ward boundary changes within Bishop's Stortford

- a) The Council recommended that the detailed ward boundary changes within the existing area of Bishop's Stortford Town Council, as proposed by the Town Council, be agreed.

The boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley

- b) **St Michael's Mead** – The Council recommended that the whole of St Michael's Mead should be incorporated within the area of Bishop's Stortford Town Council.
- c) **Land south of Whittington Way** – The Council recommended that the site of proposed development south

of Whittington Way should be incorporated within the area of Bishop's Stortford Town Council.

- d) **Thorley Street, Pig Lane and Twyford Bury Lane areas** – The Council recommended that the Thorley Street, Pig Lane and Twyford Bury Lane areas should remain part of Thorley Parish.
- e) **Rectory Close** – The Council recommended that all properties in Rectory Close should be incorporated into Thorley Parish.
- f) **Park View Cottages** – The Council recommended that the area occupied by numbers 6 to 9 Park View Cottages should be incorporated into Thorley Parish.
- g) **Thorley Parish Council electoral arrangements** – The Council recommended that Thorley Parish on its revised boundaries should no longer be divided into wards; and that the new Thorley Parish Council should comprise of five parish councillors rather than the current seven.
- h) **District Council ward boundaries** – In order to maintain coterminosity the Council recommended that the LGBC be asked to change the relevant district ward and county division boundaries to align them with the revised parish boundaries.

4.0 Second stage consultation

- 4.1 The Council's draft recommendations were published for a further round of public consultation from 31 May 2018 until 10 August 2018 (extended during the process from the original deadline of 27 July 2018).

4.2 As for the first round of public consultation, a range of methods and channels were used to publicise the draft recommendations and invite electors and others to respond including:

- Notification to the relevant parish/town councils and to the County Council
- Notification to elected representatives for the areas under review and local political parties
- Letters/e-mails to community groups and business organisations based in the areas under review
- Consultation leaflets distributed via the Council offices at Wallfields and Charringtons, Bishop's Stortford Library, community centres/halls and other local venues
- Consultation leaflets also delivered to all properties directly affected by the draft recommendations
- A dedicated page for the review on the 'consultations' section of the EHDC website consultation with an online form for responses and periodic links from the home page
- Press releases, social media and 'network' posts.

4.3 Responses were accepted by post, e-mail or via the online form or a hard copy version of the form distributed at the St Barnabas Centre public meeting (see below) and with subsequent consultation leaflets.

4.4 During the consultation period and as part of their responses to the consultation, two organisations submitted further proposals which were then added into the consultation and responses invited on the further proposals as follows:-

- Bishops Stortford Town Council proposed that the number of town councillors be reduced from 18 to 17 in order to improve electoral equality in the medium term, to be achieved by reducing the number of town councillors elected to represent All Saints Ward from four to three.

- Thorley Parish Council suggested three alternative options for changes to the parish boundary between Thorley and Bishop's Stortford as follows:-
 - Option one – Under this option Thorley Parish would retain all of its existing area and would also incorporate a strip of land north of the current boundary with Bishop's Stortford and south of Thorley Lane/Obrey Way/Whittington Way, from Moor Hall Lane in the west to London Road in the east.
 - Option two – Under this option Thorley Parish would retain all of its existing area and would also incorporate a strip of land, longer than that in Option 1, north of the current boundary with Bishop's Stortford and south of Great Hadham Road, Thorley Lane West, Mercers Avenue, Milliners Way, Thorley Lane, Obrey Way and Whittington Way.
 - Option three – Under this option Thorley Parish would incorporate a strip of land north of the current boundary with Bishop's Stortford as in Option 1. In addition the section of St Michael's Mead that is currently in Thorley (but not Southern Country Park) would transfer to Bishop's Stortford.

4.5 Maps provided by the Parish Council illustrating the three options above are set out in **Essential Reference Paper E** attached.

4.6 As well as amending the online consultation to seek views on the above three options, an addendum consultation form was distributed in hard copy on this matter.

4.7 During the consultation period, members of the Old Thorley and Twyford Residents' Association promoted an e-petition on the Council's website calling for a public meeting to discuss the draft recommendations. The Council arranged a public meeting as part of the consultation process – this took place at the St Barnabas Centre in Thorley on 18 July 2018 and the notes of the meeting are included as a background paper to this report.

5.0 Responses to the second stage consultation

5.1 In total 483 responses were received to the second stage consultation as follows:-

- 7 organisations: - Bishop's Stortford Town Council
 - Thorley Parish Council
 - Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation
 - Old Thorley and Twyford Residents' Association
 - Parsonage Residents' Association
 - Friends of Southern Country Park
 - Hertfordshire County Council on behalf of two county councillors
- 136 individual direct responses, mostly from residents of Thorley or Bishop's Stortford South ward.
- 340 'Petition Forms' signed by individual residents and collected by Thorley Parish Council. The 'Petition Forms' set out four elements of the Council's draft recommendations together with associated questions and asked the signatories to agree or disagree with each proposition. The majority of the forms were signed by residents of Thorley or Bishop's Stortford South Ward with a small number from elsewhere in Bishop's Stortford

or further afield. It is possible that some signatories also submitted individual responses included above.

5.2 Below is a brief summary of the points made in their responses by each of the organisations listed above. The direct responses received from both individuals and organisations are included in full in the schedule prepared for the meeting of the Executive on 11 September 2018 and available as a background paper to this report:-

- **Bishop's Stortford Town Council** – Supports EHDC's draft recommendations (but makes no comment on the proposed arrangements for Thorley Parish Council). Requests a reduction in the number of Town Councillors from 18 to 17. Does not support any of the alternative options proposed by Thorley Parish Council.
- **Thorley Parish Council** – Does not support EHDC's recommendations in respect of St Michael's Mead or the land south of Whittington Way. Proposes three alternative options for changes to the parish boundary. Welcomes EHDC's recommendations in respect of Thorley Street/Pig Lane, Rectory Close and Park View Cottages.
- **Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation** – Challenges the assertion that there will be significant development on the Thorley part of the Bishop's Stortford South site by 2023 and concludes that there is currently no case for changing the boundaries between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley; and that the appropriate time to consider this issue, if necessary, should be after 2022.
- **Old Thorley and Twyford Residents' Association** – Opposes the recommendations regarding land south of Whittington Way. Supports the other EHDC recommendations except the reduction in number of

Thorley Parish Councillors. Have proposed a further alternative option for a revised parish boundary that is a variation of Thorley Parish Council's Option 3 and would restore Thorley to pre-1990's status as an unwarded parish.

- **Parsonage Residents' Association** – Opposes the ward boundary changes, stating that 'ward boundaries should remain the same or be kept to local main roads'. Challenges the assertion that the status of Thorley Village as a Group 3 village within the emerging District Plan will not be affected by the proposed parish boundary change.
- **Friends of Southern Country Park** – Support Option 3 as proposed by Thorley Parish Council.
- **Hertfordshire County Council** canvassed its councillors and forwarded responses from County Councillors Colin Woodward and John Wyllie, both of whom support the EHDC/Town Council proposals and oppose the Thorley Parish Council alternative options.

5.3 An analysis of the individual responses received in respect of each element of the Council's draft recommendations is set out below:-

(a) **Minor ward boundary changes within the Bishop's Stortford Town Council area**

There were 14 responses in favour of the proposed package of minor ward boundary changes within the existing Bishop's Stortford Town Council area, 22 against and 15 respondents stated 'don't know'.

Text in the 'comments' box suggests that some of those who opposed the changes were focussed on the Thorley boundary issue and either did not realise that this

question concerned the minor changes elsewhere in Bishop's Stortford or were voting 'against' in order to reinforce a general 'no change' message.

(b) Reduction in the number of Bishop's Stortford Town Councillors from 18 to 17

Only two respondents expressed a view on this proposal – one in favour and one 'don't know'.

(c) St Michael's Mead

There were 32 responses in favour of the proposal to transfer all of St Michael's Mead into Bishop's Stortford and 57 against. 7 respondents stated 'don't know' and one 'possible'.

Some respondents in favour of the change referred to St Michael's Mead as an urban extension of Bishop's Stortford and stated that many of its residents already thought of themselves as living in Bishop's Stortford or that they were not involved in large numbers in Thorley village life.

Some respondents did not object to the transfer of St Michael's Mead but felt that this should not include Southern Country Park which had no residents and which should remain in Thorley.

Some respondents opposed to the change agreed that it made sense for St Michael's Mead to be entirely within one parish but felt that this should be Thorley rather than Bishop's Stortford. Points raised included the fact that vehicular access to St Michael's Mead is from Thorley. Other respondents stated that they were happy with the

status quo and that no compelling case had been made for the change or advantage demonstrated for residents.

Of the 'Petition Forms' submitted by Thorley Parish Council, 64 responses were in favour of the proposal to transfer all of St Michael's Mead into Bishop's Stortford and 247 were against. There were 29 blank or 'don't know'/'n/a' responses.

(d) Land south of Whittington Way

There were 12 responses in favour of the proposal to transfer the whole of the land allocated for housing development south of Whittington Way into Bishop's Stortford and 90 against. 2 respondents stated 'don't know'.

Of the 'Petition Forms' submitted by Thorley Parish Council, 15 responses were in favour of the proposal to transfer the land south of Whittington Way into Bishop's Stortford and 305 were against. 20 responses were blank.

In relation to the comments and supporting reasons submitted by respondents, those in favour of the change made points including:-

- The District Plan envisages relatively high density housing on the site which will be more urban in nature than the rest of Thorley parish.
- Future residents of the site are likely to feel part of Bishop's Stortford and the Town Council would be better placed to represent them.
- The residents would use services provided by the Town Council and should therefore contribute to the cost of those services via the precept.

- Bishop's Stortford Town Council stated that the change could help to safeguard the future viability of Thorley Parish by retaining its predominantly rural character.

Respondents who opposed the change raised a range of points. As in the first stage of consultation, there were a number of comments about planning issues or overdevelopment. However, a number of arguments relevant to the review were advanced including:-

- The land is not 'no-man's land' but is an integral part of Thorley, linking the upper and lower parts of the village.
- The review is premature as the proposed development has not yet received planning permission. It is therefore impossible to be certain (a) that it will go ahead or (b) what the character of any development will be.
- Even if planning permission is granted, the phasing of the development is not yet known with certainty. Recent information suggests that only 200 houses might be developed on the site by 2022 and that these would be predominantly or even exclusively on the section of the site that is already within Bishop's Stortford (immediately south of Whittington Way).
- Insufficient evidence has been provided to support the conjecture that future residents of the site will see themselves as part of the Bishop's Stortford community, rather than that of Thorley. They may wish to be part of a rural parish. The housing will be marketed as a village development.
- Many other residents of the wider area use the facilities in Bishop's Stortford town centre despite not being part of Bishop's Stortford Town Council.
- The majority of the site is in Thorley. There is no reason why any new development should not be

included within Thorley. This may enhance the viability of the parish.

- There is no need to rush the review or speculate. Decisions should be made if and when the site has been developed, taking into account the actual views of future residents.

(e) Thorley Street, Pig Lane, Twyford Bury Lane

There were 87 responses in favour of the proposal that Thorley Street and the areas around Pig Lane and Twyford Bury Lane should remain in Thorley Parish and 6 against. 4 respondents stated 'don't know' and 1 'no comment'.

Of the 'Petition Forms' submitted by Thorley Parish Council, 300 responses were in favour of the proposal, 18 were against and 22 responses were blank.

(f) Rectory Close

There were 67 responses in favour of the proposal that all of Rectory Close should be within Thorley and 20 against. 9 respondents stated 'don't know' and 1 'no comment'.

Of the 'Petition Forms' submitted by Thorley Parish Council, 280 responses were in favour of the proposal, 24 were against and there were 36 blank or 'don't know' responses.

(g) Park View Cottages

There were 63 responses in favour of the proposal that numbers 6-9 Park View Cottages should be transferred to Thorley Parish and 19 against. 14 respondents stated 'don't know' and 1 'no comment'.

(h) Thorley Parish Council electoral arrangements

There were 13 responses in favour of the proposal that Thorley Parish Council on its new boundaries should be unwarded and composed of five councillors rather than seven as at present and 61 against. 19 respondents stated 'don't know' and 1 'no comment'.

A number of respondents agreed with the move to an unwarded parish council but not the reduction in the number of parish councillors.

(i) Consequential changes to District ward/County division boundaries

There were 27 responses in favour of the proposal that the LG BCE be asked to bring the District and County division boundaries into line with any revised parish ward boundaries and 46 against. 24 respondents stated 'don't know'.

Text in the 'comments' box suggests that some of those who opposed this proposal did so because they are opposed to the proposed parish boundary changes rather than the principal of coterminous boundaries.

(j) Thorley Parish Council's alternative options

As stated above, the scope of the consultation was extended to facilitate responses on to the three alternative options for changes to the parish boundary suggested by Thorley Parish Council. Responses were received as follows:-

- **Option 1** (Thorley Parish to retain existing area and to take on a strip of Bishop's Stortford up to Whittington Way):
 - 24 responses in favour, 15 against.
- **Option 2** (Thorley Parish to retain existing area and to take on a longer strip of Bishop's Stortford including more of St Michael's Mead):
 - 29 responses in favour, 13 against.
- **Option 3** (Thorley Parish to take on a strip of Bishop's Stortford up to Whittington Way but all of St Michael's Mead (but not Southern County Park) to move to Bishop's Stortford):
 - 11 responses in favour, 25 against, 3 'don't know'.

(k) General/other issues

In addition to the above site-specific points, a number of general issues were raised in the comments submitted by respondents. These included criticism of the adequacy of the consultation; assertions that the status quo is working well, that the review is premature and that no benefits from the proposed changes had been demonstrated for residents; and a perception that the boundary issues which the current review was seeking to address had themselves been caused by a previous flawed boundary review.

6.0 Recommendations of the Executive

- 6.1 The Executive on 11 September 2018 considered the responses to the second stage consultation and made recommendations to the Council for its consideration when discussing the final outcome of the review.

- 6.2 The Executive noted the responses as detailed in the report submitted. The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services commented on the consultation responses and suggested that amended proposals be forwarded to Council for consideration. In particular, he referred to the land south of Whittington Way and the uncertainties and timescales in respect of the proposed development. He suggested that in view of these, no change to the boundary be made at this stage, but that the situation be kept under review when residents in the area could be consulted.
- 6.3 In respect of the proposals on St. Michaels's Mead, the Executive Member proposed that the new boundary in the draft recommendations be agreed, except that the unoccupied land adjacent, including Southern Country Park, be left in Thorley.
- 6.4 Finally, in respect of the Thorley Parish Council electoral arrangements, given the more limited change to the boundary now proposed, the Executive Member suggested that the change to an unwarded parish was now unnecessary.
- 6.5 The Executive Member for Economic Development reiterated his previously expressed view that the land south of Whittington Way should be transferred from Thorley to Bishop's Stortford and did not support the Executive Member for Finance and Support Services' proposal on this.
- 6.6 Councillor G Williamson moved, and Councillor S Rutland-Barsby seconded, a motion that the recommendations now detailed be supported. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED and the Executive made the following recommendations to the Council:-

That (A) the responses received to the second stage consultation on the Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council, as set out in the report submitted, be noted;

(B) the draft recommendations for the Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council be confirmed, subject to the following amendments:

- (i) the land south of Whittington Way earmarked in the District Plan should not be transferred to Bishop's Stortford at this stage and that no change be made to that section of the parish boundary in connection with this review;
 - (ii) all of St Michael's Mead be included in Bishop's Stortford as proposed but that the parish boundary should follow Moor Hall Lane from St James' Way to the existing boundary so that Southern Country Park and other undeveloped adjacent land will remain in Thorley Parish;
 - (iii) the size of Bishop's Stortford Town Council be reduced from 18 to 17 town councillors as proposed by the Town Council, to be achieved by reducing the number of town councillors to be elected to represent All Saints Ward from 4 to 3;
 - (iv) Thorley Parish Council on its new boundaries continue to be divided into Urban and Rural wards and that the new parish council comprise of six councillors across the two wards; and
- (C) the Council keep under review any future development in Bishop's Stortford South or elsewhere with a view to considering whether this may in due course give rise to

the need for a further community governance review of any part or parts of the District.

7.0 Considerations and final recommendations

7.1 The following paragraphs consider in turn the matters on which the Council must or may make recommendations as set out in section 2 of the report. In each case the criteria set out in the 2007 Act and the statutory guidance, together with the policies set out in the terms of reference for the review, are applied in the context of the evidence submitted, the responses to the consultation and the recommendations of the Executive; and the final recommendations of the Community Governance Review are proposed.

Whether a new parish or any new parishes should be constituted

7.2 Section 87 of the 2007 Act requires that a principal council undertaking a Community Governance Review must make recommendations on whether a new parish or any new parishes should be constituted. In relation to Bishop's Stortford and Thorley, the entire area under review is already parished.

Recommendation 1 – That no new parishes be constituted in the area under review
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Whether existing parishes should or should not be abolished or whether the area of existing parishes should be altered

7.3 Section 88 of the 2007 Act requires that a Community Governance Review must make one of the following recommendations in relation to each of the existing parishes under review:

- (a) That the parish should not be abolished and that its area should not be altered;
- (b) That the area of the parish should be altered; or
- (c) That the parish should be abolished.

7.4 No substantive evidence has been submitted to support any proposition that either of the parishes under review should be abolished and the statutory guidance states that 'the Government expects to see a trend in the creation, rather than the abolition, of parishes' and that 'the abolition of parishes should not be undertaken unless clearly justified'.

7.5 The review must also make recommendations as to whether or not the name of the parish should be changed; and if (as is the case for both Bishop's Stortford and Thorley) the parish has a council, recommendations as to whether or not the parish should continue to have a council.

7.6 No evidence has been submitted to the review regarding any proposed change of name for either parish, nor to support any proposition that either Bishop's Stortford or Thorley parish should not continue to have a council.

7.7 Regarding the potential alteration of the parish areas, the draft recommendations included a number of proposals which are addressed in turn below.

a) **Land south of Whittington Way** – The land south of Whittington Way is allocated for housing in the emerging District Plan and electorate forecasts suggested that by February 2023 there would be approximately 500 electors living on this site. The current parish boundary runs through the site and therefore, when it is developed, the boundary will no longer meet the guidance. In reaching its draft recommendations, the Council had taken into consideration

that any development on the site is likely to be in the character of an urban extension and felt that its future occupants were likely to identify with the town of Bishop's Stortford.

As stated in section 5 above, a large majority of respondents in the second stage consultation was against the proposal to transfer the land south of Whittington Way into Bishop's Stortford.

Further, as set out above, the Executive on 11 September 2018 noted the uncertainties around the timescale of any development and recommended that no change be made to that section of the parish boundary at this stage. Full planning permission has yet to be granted and no development has so far taken place. The most recent masterplan states that subject to approval, building will take place from 2021/22 and will start on the part of the site that is within Bishop's Stortford. Only a relatively small number of properties are likely to be occupied in the Thorley part of the site by 2023.

It is proposed therefore that there is no immediate compelling reason to change the parish boundary on the Whittington Way site. Community governance is a living thing and a review may be undertaken at any time. The Council may wish to keep the situation under review and, if and when future development does take place, consider whether there is a need for a further review which would consider the matter on its merits at that time in consultation with local electors and others.

- b) **St Michael's Mead** – A majority of respondents were also against the proposal for all of St Michael's Mead to be included in Bishop's Stortford, although more respondents were prepared to countenance this change than the

Whittington Way site. The considerations in respect of the two areas are very different. St Michael's Mead is an established residential area that has extended across the existing parish boundary which as a result no longer meets the guidance for such boundaries. The large majority of the development is within Bishop's Stortford and the character of the building is that of an urban extension to the town with which it forms a continuous built up area. The Executive on 11 September 2018 therefore recommended that the whole of St Michael's Mead should be incorporated within the area of Bishop's Stortford Town Council.

However the Executive also noted that the draft recommendations included in the proposed transfer unoccupied land adjacent to St Michael's Mead, including Southern County Park. The Executive agreed with the view of some consultees that this was unnecessary and recommended that only the developed area of housing be transferred.

- c) **Thorley Street, Pig Lane and Twyford Bury Lane areas** – In formulating its draft recommendations, the Council on 16 May 2018 did not consider that Bishop's Stortford Town Council had provided any compelling evidence that Thorley Street and the areas east of London Road and the railway, including Pig Lane and Twyford Bury Lane, should be transferred to Bishop's Stortford. It felt that these areas had much in common with the remainder of Thorley Parish and noted that a majority of the responses from Thorley residents opposing the Town Council's proposal had come from these areas.

In addition, the Council noted that the original proposal from the Town Council would have left Thorley Parish with only 47 current electors, which would jeopardise the viability of the parish. The Council recommended that the Thorley Street,

Pig Lane and Twyford Bury Lane areas should remain part of Thorley Parish. This, together with the proposed changes at Rectory Close and Park View Cottages (see below) would bring the electorate of the revised parish area to approximately 240 and the Council believed that the areas included in the revised boundary of the parish would share the common traditions, sense of place and identity that many respondents to the initial consultation had referred to.

As set out in section 5 above, the Council's draft recommendation in respect of this area was welcomed by respondents to the second stage consultation and the Executive on 11 September 2018 recommended that it should be confirmed.

- d) **Rectory Close** – This road is currently split between the two parishes as the current boundary runs between numbers 4 and 5. The Council recommended that this anomaly should be corrected and that all properties in Rectory Close should be incorporated into Thorley Parish.
- e) **Park View Cottages** – Numbers 6 to 9 Park View Cottages are situated east of London Road and south of the junction with Whittington Way but are currently within Bishop's Stortford Town Council's area. The Council recommended that the area in which these properties are situated should be incorporated into Thorley Parish.

In relation to both (d) and (e) above, the Council's draft recommendations were welcomed by respondents to the second stage consultation and the Executive recommended that they should be confirmed.

- 7.8 The recommendations below build on the above findings and give effect to the criteria and policies in the terms of reference for the review in relation to community identities and interests,

effective and convenient local government and the size, population and boundaries of the respective parishes.

- 7.9 In relation to community cohesion, this is related to community identities and interests and no evidence has been submitted to suggest that any of the recommendations will damage community cohesion.
- 7.10 As stated above, the 2007 Act requires a principal council in undertaking a Community Governance Review to give consideration to other (non-parish) forms of community governance that have been made, or could be made, for the purpose of community representation or engagement in the area under review. The guidance states that these should be considered as alternatives to, or stages towards, the establishment of parish councils. However, the guidance also states that 'what sets parish councils apart from other kinds of governance is the fact they are a democratically elected tier of local government, independent of other council tiers and budgets, and possess specific powers' and that 'their directly elected parish councillors represent local communities in a way that other bodies, however worthy, cannot since such organisations do not have representatives directly elected to those bodies'. No evidence has been submitted to the review that the town or parish councils under review should be replaced by any other arrangements.

Recommendation 2 - That no change be made to the name of either Bishop's Stortford or Thorley Parish and that each of the parishes continue to have a council.

Recommendation 3 - That the areas of Bishop's Stortford and Thorley parishes be altered as follows:-

- (a) That the part of St Michael's Mead that is currently in Thorley Parish (marked as Area A on the map at sheet**

number 2 of Essential Reference Paper B) be transferred to Bishop's Stortford Parish, with the parish boundary being amended to follow Moor Hall Lane from St James' Way to the existing boundary so that Southern Country Park and other undeveloped adjacent land will remain in Thorley Parish.

- (b) That those properties in Rectory Close that are currently in Bishop's Stortford Parish (marked as Area B on the map at sheet number 2 of Essential Reference Paper B) be transferred to Thorley Parish.**
- (c) That the area of land occupied by numbers 6 to 9 Park View Cottages (marked as Area C on the map at sheet number 2 of Essential Reference Paper B) be transferred from Bishop's Stortford Parish to Thorley Parish.**
- (d) That no other changes be made at this time to the parish boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley parishes.**

Recommendation 4 - That the Council keep under review any future development in Bishop's Stortford South or elsewhere with a view to considering whether this may in due course give rise to the need for a further community governance review of any part or parts of the District.

What the electoral arrangements for new or existing parishes, which are to have parish councils, should be.

Council size

- 7.11 The Local Government Act 1972, as amended, specifies that each parish council must have at least five councillors. There is no maximum number, no requirement in legislation that the number of councillors should be proportional to electorate size

and no legislative guidance on the ideal number of parish councillors.

- 7.12 The LGBCE's guidance is that "each area should be considered on its own merits, having regard to its population, geography and the pattern of communities. Nevertheless, having regard to the current powers of parish councils, [the principal council] should consider the broad pattern of existing council sizes. This pattern appears to have stood the test of time and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to have provided for effective and convenient local government. Principal councils should also bear in mind that the conduct of parish council business does not usually require a large body of councillors. [...]"
- 7.13 The statutory guidance goes on to state: "In addition, historically many parish councils, particularly smaller ones, have found difficulty in attracting sufficient candidates to stand for election. This has led to uncontested elections and/or a need to co-opt members in order to fill vacancies. However, a parish council's budget and planned or actual level of service provision may also be important factors in reaching conclusions on council size."
- 7.14 Although there is no statutory guidance on the number of parish councillors to be allocated, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has published recommendations on the matter. NALC Circular 1126 (1988) recommends that a council of no more than the legal minimum of five members is inconveniently small and that the practical minimum should be seven, to apply to any parish council with up to 900 electors. Further recommendations were made for parishes with larger electorates, up to a maximum of 25 councillors where the electorate exceeds 23,000.

7.15 The Aston Business School also published research in 1992 which showed actual levels of representation at that time as follows:-

Electors	Councillors		Electors	Councillors
Up to 500	5-8		10,001 – 20,000	13-27
501 – 2,500	6-12		Over 20,000	13-31
2,501 – 10,000	9-16			

Bishop’s Stortford Town Council

7.16 Bishop’s Stortford Town Council itself proposed that the size of the Town Council should be reduced from 18 to 17 members. No adverse responses to this proposal were received during the second stage consultation, the proposal has the potential to improve electoral equality and the Executive on 11 September 2018 recommended that it should go ahead.

Thorley Parish Council

7.17 The proposed changes to the boundary of Thorley Parish would give rise to a reduction in the electorate of the parish from 513 at the start of the review to just over 240. The Council’s draft recommendation that Thorley Parish on its revised boundaries should no longer be divided into wards and that the Parish Council should comprise of five parish councillors was not supported by a majority of consultation respondents.

7.18 In view of the above and of the Executive’s revised proposals in relation to the boundary changes and the retention of warding in the parish (see below), the Executive on 11 September 2018 considered that it may be advantageous for the council to have more than the legal minimum number of members and proposed that the new number should be six councillors across the two wards.

Parish warding

- 7.19 The Council is required to consider whether a parish should be, or should continue to be, divided into wards for the purposes of elections to the parish/town council and the number and boundaries of parish wards, taking account of population distribution and community identity and interests in the area.
- 7.20 Regarding whether a parish should be divided into wards, the 2007 Act requires the Council to consider:
- a) Whether the number, or distribution of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
 - b) Whether it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented.
- 7.21 If a principal council decides that a parish should (continue to be) divided into wards, it must have regard to certain factors when considering (a) the size and boundaries of the wards; and (b) the number of councillors to be elected for each ward. Those factors are:-
- (a) The number of local government electors for the parish;
 - (b) Any change in the number, or distribution, of the local government electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts;
 - (c) The desirability of fixing boundaries which are, and will remain, easily identifiable; and
 - (d) Any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

Bishop's Stortford Town Council

7.22 Bishop's Stortford Town Council is currently divided into five wards for the purpose of electing town councillors and no evidence has been submitted that this should not continue to be the case, nor that there should be any change to the names of the wards.

7.23 In relation to the boundaries of those wards, the Town Council proposed 18 separate, relatively minor, changes to ward boundaries within its area. It is suggested that these are sensible proposals that will address anomalies that have arisen in the main due to infill development over the existing boundaries and that they have the potential to provide practical and convenient arrangements for electors and to slightly improve electoral equality between the wards. No significant adverse responses to these proposals were received during either stage of consultation and the Executive on 11 September 2018 recommended that they should go ahead.

7.24 The proposed changes to ward boundaries are illustrated at sheets 3 to 16 of the map at **Essential Reference Paper B** and are summarised in the table below. They represent changes to roads which currently have residents in more than one ward and where it is proposed either that the boundaries be re-drawn so that all properties are in the ward which currently has the largest number of electors, or so that the road(s) are in the ward from which access is gained or for some other reason to improve convenience to electors:-

Street/Road	Change proposed	Area marked no.	Map sheet no.
Collins Cross	Properties currently in All Saints Ward to transfer to Meads Ward	Area marked 1	Map sheet 3
High Street	Property currently in Meads Ward to transfer to Central Ward	Areas marked 2	Map sheet 4

Parsonage Lane	Properties currently in Meads Ward to transfer to All Saints Ward	Area marked 3	Map sheet 5
Wentworth Drive	Properties currently in Central Ward to transfer to Silverleys Ward	Area marked 4	Map sheet 6
Westfield Road	Properties currently in Silverleys Ward to transfer to Meads Ward	Area marked 5	Map sheet 7
Dane O'coys Road and Whitehall Road	Properties currently in Meads Ward to transfer to Silverleys Ward	Area marked 6	Map sheet 8
Great Hadham Road (Honeysuckle House)	Property currently in South Ward to transfer to Silverleys Ward	Area marked 7	Map sheet 9
Lea Grove	Properties currently in Meads Ward to transfer to All Saints Ward	Area marked 8	Map sheet 3
South Street	Properties currently in Meads Ward to transfer to Central Ward	Area marked 9	Map sheet 10
Potter Street	Property currently in Central Ward to transfer to Meads Ward	Area marked 10	Map sheet 10
Bells Hill, Regency Close and Windhill	Properties currently in Meads Ward to transfer to Silverleys Ward	Area marked 11	Map sheet 11
Hallingbury Road (Styleman's Farm)	Properties currently in South Ward to transfer to All Saints Ward	Area marked 12	Map sheet 12
South Road and Mulberry Court	Properties currently in South Ward to transfer to Central Ward	Area marked 13	Map sheet 13
The Thatchers, Stockmen Field, Drovers Way, Wainwright Street, Brewers Close, Thresher Close, The Carpenters, Tailors	Properties currently in Central Ward to transfer to South Ward	Area marked 14	Map sheet 14
Tanners Wharf (a)	Properties currently in All Saints Ward to transfer to Central Ward	Area marked 15a	Map sheet 15
Tanners Wharf (b)	Properties currently in South Ward to transfer to Central Ward	Area marked 15b	Map sheet 15

Priory Court	Properties currently in Silverleys Ward to transfer to Central Ward	Area marked 16	Map sheet 11
Thorley Hill	Two properties currently in Central Ward to transfer to South Ward	Area marked 17	Map sheet 16

Thorley Parish Council

- 7.25 Thorley Parish is currently divided into two wards for the purpose of electing parish councillors. The Council's draft recommendation that Thorley Parish on its revised boundaries should be unwarded was not supported by a majority of consultation respondents.
- 7.26 In view of the more limited change that is now being proposed to the parish boundary, it is appropriate to revisit the warding issue. In this regard, the statutory guidance states that a principal council should be mindful of the provisions of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 in relation to reviews of district and county council electoral arrangements. These provide that when the LGBCE is making changes to principal council electoral arrangements, no unwarded parish should be divided by a district ward or county division boundary, and that no parish ward should be split by such a boundary. While these provisions do not apply to reviews of parish electoral arrangements, the LGBCE believes that, in the interests of effective and convenient local government, they are relevant considerations for principal councils to take into account when undertaking community governance reviews.
- 7.27 The Executive on 11 September 2018 therefore recommended that Thorley Parish Council on its new boundaries should continue to be divided into Urban and Rural Wards. It is suggested that the boundary between the two wards should continue to coincide with the boundary between the district

council wards of Bishop's Stortford South and Much Hadham as shown on sheet 2 of the map at **Essential Reference Paper B**.

The number of councillors to be elected for each ward

- 7.28 As stated above, when recommending the number of councillors to be elected for each parish ward, the Council must take into account 'the number of local government electors for the parish and any change in the number, or distribution, of the local government electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts'.
- 7.29 There is no requirement in legislation that each parish/town councillor should represent, as nearly as may be, the same number of electors. However, the statutory guidance states that 'the LG BCE believes 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'.
- 7.30 For the purposes of the Community Governance Review, East Herts District Council has therefore calculated current and estimated forecast electorates and elector-to-councillor ratios for the areas under review, based on (i) no change and (ii) the changes now recommended in this report (forecasts updated September 2018).
- 7.31 Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the figures below are as accurate as possible, it will be noted that any forecast electorate figure can only be an estimate based on the best information available. In particular, planned or consented development may not take place as scheduled, or at all. A technical note on the methodology employed in calculating the electorate forecasts is available on request.

Table A – Current and forecast electorate figures/ratios with no change to boundaries or numbers of councillors.

Bishop’s Stortford Town Council

Ward	No. of Cllrs	Electorate (Feb 2018)	Ratio (Electors/ Councillor) Feb 2018	Forecast electorate Feb 2023	Forecast ratio Feb 2023	Variance from town average
All Saints	4	6,175	1,544	6,257	1,564	-14.91%
Central	4	7,481	1,870	8,508	2,127	+15.72%
Meads	3	4,715	1,572	6,125	2,042	+11.10%
Silverleys	3	4,196	1,399	5,642	1,881	+2.29%
South	4	6,212	1,553	6,555	1,639	-10.82%
Total	18	28,779	1,599	33,087	1,838	

Thorley Parish Council

Ward	No. of Cllrs	Electorate (Feb 2018)	Ratio (Electors/ Councillor) Feb 2018	Forecast electorate Feb 2023	Forecast ratio Feb 2018	Variance from parish average
Rural	3	47	16	50	17	-85.09%
Urban	4	466	116	748	187	+64.04%
Total	7	513	73	798	114	

Table B – Current and forecast electorate figures/ratios taking into account changes now recommended.

Bishop’s Stortford Town Council

Ward	No. of Cllrs	Electorate (Feb 2018)	Ratio (Electors/ Councillor) Feb 2018	Forecast electorate Feb 2023	Forecast ratio Feb 2023	Variance from town average
All Saints	3	6,071	2,024	6,153	2,051	+4.48%
Central	4	7,250	1,812	8,276	2,069	+5.40%
Meads	3	4,634	1,545	6,044	2,015	+2.65%
Silverleys	3	4,275	1,425	5,721	1,907	-2.85%
South	4	6,818	1,704	7,180	1,795	-8.56%
Total	17	29,048	1,709	33,374	1,963	

Thorley Parish Council

Ward	No. of Cllrs	Electorate (Feb 2018)	Ratio (Electors/ Councillor) Feb 2018	Forecast electorate Feb 2023	Forecast ratio Feb 2018	Variance from parish average
Rural	2	47	23	50	25	-70.59%
Urban	4	197	49	461	115	+35.29%
Total	6	244	41	511	85	

7.31 It can be seen that in the case of both Bishop’s Stortford Town Council and Thorley Parish Council, the proposed changes to council size and ward boundaries are forecast to improve electoral equality between the wards over the five year period compared to the ‘no change’ position (i.e. the variances between the electors-to-councillor ratio for each ward and that for the council as a whole are forecast to be lower).

Recommendation 5 – That in relation to the electoral arrangements for Bishop’s Stortford Town Council:-

- (a) The total number of councillors to be elected to the Town Council be reduced from 18 to 17;**
- (b) That Bishop’s Stortford continue to be divided into five wards for the purpose of electing councillors to the Town Council;**
- (c) That no change be made to the name of any ward;**
- (d) That the boundaries between the Town Council wards be altered as set out in the table at paragraph 7.24 of this report and illustrated at sheets 3 to 16 of the map at Essential Reference Paper B; and**
- (e) That the number of councillors to be elected to represent each ward on the Town Council be as follows:-**

All Saints Ward	3 councillors
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Central Ward	4 councillors
Meads Ward	3 councillors
Silverleys Ward	3 councillors
South Ward	4 councillors
<p>Recommendation 6 – That in relation to the electoral arrangements for Thorley Parish Council:-</p> <p>(a) The total number of councillors to be elected to the Parish Council be reduced from 7 to 6;</p> <p>(b) That Thorley Parish continue to be divided into two wards for the purpose of electing councillors to the Parish Council;</p> <p>(c) That no change be made to the name of any ward;</p> <p>(d) That the boundary between the Parish Council Rural and Urban Wards continue to follow the boundary between the District Council wards of Bishop’s Stortford South and Much Hadham as illustrated at sheet 2 of the map at Essential Reference Paper B; and</p> <p>(e) That the number of councillors to be elected to represent each ward on the Parish Council be as follows:-</p>	
Rural Ward	2 councillors
Urban Ward	4 councillors

Making related alterations to the boundaries of a principal council’s electoral area.

7.32 Any changes to parish boundaries made as part of this Community Governance Review will not automatically change the equivalent boundaries for District or County Council elections. The Council in May 2018 recommended that the LGBCE should be asked to change the relevant District Ward

and County Division boundaries to align them with any revised parish boundaries following the review.

7.33 This proposal was consulted on as part of the review. A majority of respondents to the second stage consultation did not agree with the proposal although text in the 'comments' box suggested that some of those who opposed it did so because they were opposed to the proposed parish boundary changes rather than to the principal of coterminous boundaries.

7.34 In the interests of clarity and elector convenience, the Executive on 11 September 2018 proposed that the draft recommendation to the LGBCE should be confirmed.

Recommendation 7 – That the Local Government Boundary Commission for England be requested to make changes to the boundaries of the relevant District Council Wards and County Council Divisions as necessary to ensure coterminosity between those boundaries and the revised Parish and Parish Ward boundaries made in this Community Governance Review.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 The second stage consultation period for the Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council closed on Friday 10 August 2018. This report sets out the issues for consideration in the review; the results of that consultation; and the proposed final recommendations of the review. The Council is invited to agree and give effect to the final recommendations of the Community Governance Review and to make the Reorganisation of Community Governance Order at **Essential Reference Paper B**, in order to allow for the implementation of the agreed changes in the revised register of

electors on 1 December 2018 and in the council tax base data ahead of the new financial year.

9.0 Implications/Consultations

9.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found in **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

- (i) Notes of the public consultation meeting held on 18 July 2018 at the St Barnabas Centre, Thorley.
- (ii) Full schedule of responses received to the second stage consultation on the Community Governance Review

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?lId=23234&J=1>

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