

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Council

28 July 2016

Subject: **Funtley Community Governance Review**

Report of: **Head of Democratic Services**

SUMMARY

On 30 July 2015 Fareham Borough Council agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review in response to a petition signed by residents of Funtley, which requested that a specific area be designated as a parished area and that a Parish Council be established.

The terms of reference for the Review were published on the 3 August 2015 along with a timetable setting out key dates. These key dates included the first phase consultation which ran from 21 September 2015 to 14 December 2015 and a Community Action Team meeting held in Funtley on 24 November 2015. Analysis of the initial consultation period was published along with draft recommendations for further comments to be considered before a final decision being made in respect of the creation of a Parish Council. The second phase consultation was extended at the request of Funtley Village Society, running between 23 May and 20 June 2016.

This report considers the responses to the first and second stages of public consultation carried out as part of the review, having regard to the law and the guidance on Community Governance Reviews, as outlined in the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (as amended) issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council:

- (a) notes the results of the consultations and considers the representations received;
- (b) considers the contents of this report and resolves to approve one of the following options:
 - i. make no change to the existing governance arrangements;
 - ii. establish a parish and form a Parish Council; or
 - iii. establish a parish and form a Parish Meeting.

Introduction and background

1. At its meeting on 30 July 2015, Council agreed both the terms of reference and a timetable for a Community Governance Review for Funtley, following the receipt of a valid Petition.
2. The first stage of the review involved consultation. It was designed to allow the Council to understand the views of residents, businesses and others who may be affected regarding the potential formation of a Parish Council and was neither a vote nor a referendum. Local government electors within the area identified in the petition were invited to take part. Appendix A shows the original petition leaflet which included a proposed boundary for Funtley Parish Council.

In response to the petition, a consultation questionnaire was designed to capture the following:

- The current community governance arrangements for the area;
 - Whether a Parish Council should be created;
 - The benefits and disadvantages the creation of a Parish Council would bring to the community; and
 - Any other comments or alternative options respondents wish the Council to consider.
3. A copy of the questionnaire is attached at Appendix B to this report for Members' information.
 4. Questionnaires were personally addressed to each elector in the area defined by the petition and delivered to each of the registered electors, businesses and community organisations. This amounted to 565 questionnaires being distributed.
 5. An option was also available for residents to complete the questionnaire online via the council's website.
 6. In addition, a Community Action Team public meeting was held at Funtley Social Club on 24 November 2015 at which the Executive Leader gave a presentation to the 20 residents present and answered questions. A copy of the minutes from the meeting is attached at Appendix C to this report and these minutes were circulated to 292 properties in Funtley following the meeting.
 7. The deadline for receipt of all completed questionnaires was 14 December 2015.
 8. The Council's preferred option, following the first consultation, was for arrangements to stay the same. This formed the basis of the second phase consultation which commenced on 23 May, with an original close date of the 6 June 2016. At the request of the Funtley Village Society, this phase was extended by two weeks until the 20 June 2016.
 9. In the course of considering the views of respondents and formulating recommendations for the future governance arrangements of the area, the

Council should be aware of the duties with regard to the Council and the review under sections 93 and 100 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Criteria for undertaking a Community Governance Review

10. Under section 93 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (“the 2007 Act”), the Council must comply with various duties when undertaking a community governance review, as set out below:
 - a. When reviewing community governance arrangements principal councils may wish to take into account a number of factors to help inform their judgement against the statutory criteria which includes the impact on community cohesion of community governance arrangements;
 - i. Arrangements should reflect, and be sufficiently representative of, people living across a whole community and not just a discrete cross section or small part of it;
 - ii. It will be difficult to think of a situation in which a principal council could make a decision to create a parish and a Parish Council which reflects community identities and interests in the area and, at the same time, threatens community cohesion; and
 - iii. Principal councils should be able to decline to set up such community governance arrangements where they judge that, to do so, would not be in the interests of either the local community or surrounding communities and where the effect would be likely to damage community cohesion.
 - b. Principal councils must have regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review reflects the identity and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient.
 - c. Size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish should be considered.
 - d. The Council must take into account any other arrangements, apart from those relating to parishes and their institutions, that have already been made, or that could be made for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in respect of the area under review.
 - e. The Council must take into account any representations received in connection with the review.
11. Under Section 100 of the 2007 Act, the Council must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The guidance refers to a desire to help people create cohesive and economically vibrant local communities and states that an

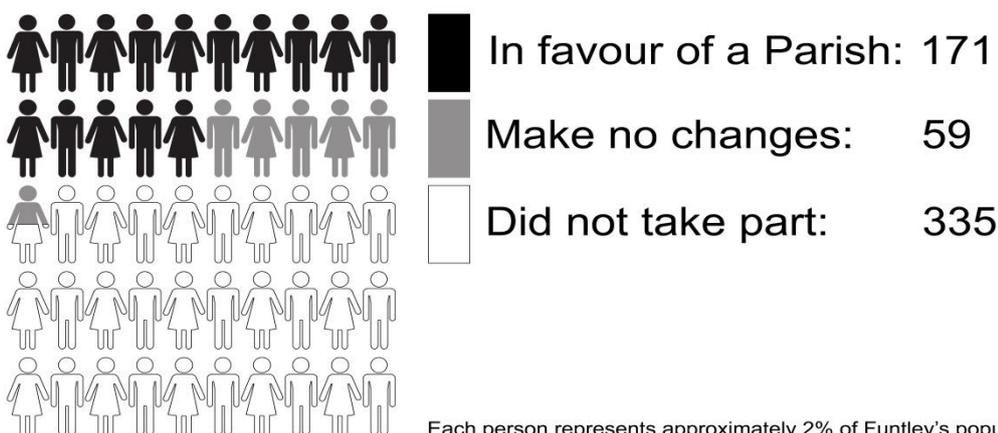
important aspect of this is allowing local people a say in the way their neighbourhoods are managed.

12. The guidance does stress that Parish Councils are an established and valued form of neighbourhood democracy and management in rural areas that increasingly have a role to play in urban areas and generally have an important role to play in the development of their communities. The need for community cohesion is also stressed along with the government's aim for communities to be fulfilling their own potential and overcoming their own difficulties. The value which is placed on these councils is also highlighted in the fact that the guidance states that the government expects to see the creation of parishes where clear and sustained local support is shown.
13. The guidance also states that the Council must have regard to the need to secure community governance within the area under review reflects the identities of the community in the area and is effective and convenient.
14. Guidance was published in updated form by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in 2010. Aimed largely at principal authorities, it offers advice about undertaking a review and implementing its recommendations.
15. Section 94 of the 2007 Act places principal councils who resolve to create a parish under a duty to recommend that a parish should have a council in parishes that have 1,000 electors or more. In parishes with 151-999 electors, as applies to the Funtley area which had 565 local government electors at the time the petition was submitted, the principal Council may recommend the creation of either a Parish Council or a parish meeting.

Analysis of responses to consultations

16. Of the 565 questionnaires delivered to registered electors as part of the first phase consultation, 230 responses were received which equates to a 41% return. The following diagram illustrates the proportion of residents who responded to the consultation and if they were in favour of a Parish Council. It also shows the 59% of residents who did not express an opinion:

Resident involvement in phase one consultation



17. Of the total responses, 74.5% were in favour of forming a Parish Council. This equates to 30% of the population of Funtley as a whole.
18. Comments were encouraged as part of the response to enable the Council to have a greater understanding of the views of residents both in relation to the perceived benefits and disadvantages of any proposal to change.
19. Of those expressing their support, 67% either did not comment, or gave no specific examples of how a Parish Council would achieve this, or what issues respondents would like more influence over.
20. The remaining comments focussed on the following themes:
 - Planning
 - Infrastructure
 - Facilities/Leisure
 - Community Cohesion
21. Comments from the respondents who did not want to make any changes to the current arrangements tended to focus on:
 - Concerns over having to pay a precept
 - Potential costs of the Parish Council
 - Questioning the difference it would make to the local community
 - The extra bureaucracy it could create
22. The response rate for the second phase consultation was low at 7.4%. Of those that responded 61% (32 responders) said they were against the Council's preferred option to make no changes to the current arrangements. This is equal to 5.6% of the population of Funtley expressing their dissatisfaction with the Council's recommendation to make no changes to the current arrangements. The majority of the supporting comments focused on the conclusions the Council had drawn from the results of the first consultation and how these were presented.
23. In total, 39% (20 responders) said that they supported the Council's preferred option to keep things as they are. The comments they made in support of this covered similar themes to those that emerged in the first phase consultation. All of the comments from both consultations can be found in Appendix D.

Considerations for the Council if minded to recommend the creation of a Parish Council, including the role of a Parish Council

The Role of a Parish Council

24. Elected democratically by local electors within the boundaries set, Parish Councils, which can vary in size, are the most local tier of Government in England. They have two main roles: community representation and local

administration and they play an important part in the development of local communities.

25. A chairman is elected annually and parish meetings held which are open to all local residents. Accounts should be maintained and formal records of meetings and associated documentation.
26. Parish Councils raise funds by way of a precept and they may raise funds from other sources, including accepting gifts or via grant-making bodies or Government initiatives.
27. Parish Councils have the power to obtain and supply land for allotments if local demand cannot be met.
28. A Parish Council with income and expenditure under £25,000 is subject to the requirements of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.
29. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) represents the interests of 9,000 local councils across the country and works to provide information and to support to the work of Parish Councils. The booklet "All About Local Councils" produced by NALC is included at Appendix H and includes case studies showing the positive work achieved by Parish Councils to enrich the well-being of local communities.
30. Co-opted Members are appointed to Parish Councils in instances where there is a shortage of candidates at election time.

Size of a Parish Council

31. In terms of numbers of Councillors on a Parish Council, section 16(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 establishes five councillors as the legal minimum size of a Parish Council but it does not make any link between the number of electors and the size of the council. In practice, there is a wide variation of council size between Parish Councils. Research has found that the typical Parish Council representing between 501 and 2500 electors had 6 to 12 councillors and this increased in line with the population. The size of the Funtley electorate would indicate a number towards the lower end of the scale would be appropriate.
32. Parish Councils can vary widely both in terms of the populations they represent and the functions they perform. Some have a limited, local role whilst others are more active, carrying out activities similar to that of a smaller borough council. The output of work is largely dependent on available budgets from the amount of precept charged alongside external funding streams.

Financial implications for local residents

33. In order to fund their activities, Parish Councillors can instruct the billing authority (Fareham Borough Council) to collect extra money on their behalf that is added to the council tax bill. This is known as a "local precept" and is paid by all households within the designated area, irrespective of whether they were in favour of the creation of the council or not. To give an example, Funtley Village

Society has proposed a precept of 77p a week (£40.04 per year) for a Band D property; this is in addition to the council tax paid by other residents in the Borough and a 28.5% increase on Fareham's part of the bill (this does not include the Hampshire County Council, Police & Crime Commissioner or Hampshire Fire & Rescue element to the bill). This precept is charged even if the services provided are the same as currently delivered.

34. It should be noted that whilst a newly formed Parish Council is able to set and charge a precept, it does not mean that residents' Council Tax bills which are paid to Fareham Borough Council would be reduced. Every council tax payer will be required to pay the precept alongside their Council Tax to Fareham Borough Council, regardless of the services provided. The only exceptions would be those who are exempt, for example, in receipt of housing benefit or single people would continue to receive a 25% reduction in their payment.
35. One of the suggestions from the Funtley Village Society is that a Parish Council may be able to replace and update the children's play area. The Leisure Services team estimate this would be a one off cost of approximately £70,000 with on-going maintenance costs of £1,640 per year. Taking into account the number of properties in the designated area, the proposed precept would collect £12,832.82 a year for the Parish Council. Therefore in order for a Parish Council to undertake a project of this nature, they may also need to rely on external funding sources to supplement the capital budget for the works. All grant applications are subject to a successful bidding process.
36. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure. Amendments made to The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2013) now allow the levy to be used to fund a very broad range of facilities such as play areas, parks and green spaces, cultural and sporting facilities, academies, free schools, police stations and other community safety facilities.
37. Section 59A of the regulations states that 15% of CIL payments received by the charging authority are passed directly to Parish Councils (where a neighbourhood plan does not exist). This is applicable only where developments are taking place wholly within the parish area. Adjacent or neighbouring sites will not automatically generate a CIL receipt for the parish (as those developments are outside of the proposed parish area).
38. If a Parish Council forms a Neighbourhood Plan, having gone through the due process and the Planning Authority having subsequently approved the Neighbourhood Plan, then CIL contributions for developments taking place wholly within the parish area would rise to 25%. This does not apply to developments taking place outside the parish boundary, the contributions for which can be used for Borough wide infrastructure.
39. Once established, a Parish Council can also apply for funding, by way of grants, and it can seek to borrow. Whilst Council Tax increases are currently capped by the Government, there are no such restrictions on Parish Council precepts which can be raised or lowered by a simple majority vote of the Parish Council, following consultation.

40. In addition to using precept funding for local improvements, monies collected from the precept are often used to fund a Parish Clerk. The Clerk to the Council is the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions, and in particular to serve or issue all the notifications required by law. The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Authority are carried out. The Clerk is expected to advise the Council on, and assist in the formation of, overall policies to be followed in respect of the Authority's activities and in particular to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement constructively all decisions. The person appointed is accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources and will report to them as and when required. The Clerk can also be the Responsible Financial Officer and responsible for all financial records of the Council and the careful administration of its finances.
41. The salary for an employed part-time Parish Clerk would need to be funded from the precept. Pay Scales for Parish Clerks, agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government (NJC) and the National Association for Local Councils (NALC) are published by the Society of Local Council Clerks and indicate that for part-time clerks the pay ranges from £8.61 to £12.32 per hour. A current advert¹ for a Clerk to Cameley Parish Council (including the Responsible Finance Officer role) is being advertised at between £10.30 - £12.04 per hour, dependent on experience and qualifications. This post is for 7 hours per week.
42. The population of Cameley, Somerset is approximate 1,292. It is difficult to gauge how the level of population, and therefore work generated within a parish is a factor in how many hours would be the ideal for a Parish Clerk. Another current advert² for a parish with a population of 6,000 is asking for 20 hours per week at pro rata of £25,694 for a deputy town clerk. When considering the responsibilities of the Parish Clerk and how many hours are appropriate, consideration could be given to enlisting guidance from the Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) who may be able to draw on experiences of similar sized Parish Councils.
43. Should Funtley require administration from a Parish Clerk of 5 hours per week, paid at the lowest spinal column point (£8.613 per hour), this basic salary would equate to £2,239.38 per annum.
44. All salary levels are subject to the National Terms & Conditions of Employment for Local Authority Employees. If the Parish Clerk role is undertaken on a voluntary working basis with no remuneration then the National Terms & Conditions would not apply.
45. Appendix E provides some examples of Parish Council precepts within Hampshire and Appendix F shows the year on year rise in precept of Whiteley Town Council to give a broad comparator from the local economic area.

¹ <http://www.slcc.co.uk/job-details/clerk-to-cameley-parish-council-and-responsible-finance-officer/763/>

² <http://www.nailsworthtowncouncil.gov.uk/>

Identities and Interests of the community

46. A detailed consultation response was submitted by Funtley Village Society following the publication of the Council's preferred option at the close of the first consultation exercise. The letter covered many community themed issues which are addressed throughout the following sections of this report. As the original petitioner, the FVS submission is included in full at Appendix D2.
47. Some of the themes, aside from the financial implications, that have emerged from analysis of all consultation responses indicate areas of interest to residents that they believe the creation of a parish would address include:

Local Community Issues

48. Many comments focussed on local community issues and how a Parish Council could resolve these. Key themes included being able to comment on planning applications, expedite solutions in respect of traffic and parking and litter and having access to funds.
49. In respect of planning applications, a Parish Council must, as a statutory consultee, be asked for comments on planning applications in their parish but are unable to determine the outcome as this is the function of the Planning Authority. The Funtley Village Society is already afforded the same status. Anyone living or working within the Borough is able to make Deputations, either supporting or opposing planning applications, to the Planning Committee.
50. Comments were received in respect of traffic calming measures, parking and speeding that suggested a Parish Council would have more powers. As responsibility for these areas sits with Hampshire County Council, it would be they who would take a decision as to whether or not they are prepared to delegate authority to a Parish Council in respect of implementing traffic calming measures and improving street lighting. Consent of a Parish Council is required for some highway matters and verge maintenance. Temporary speed limit reminder signs have been placed in the village previously by Fareham Borough Council in response to concerns raised by local residents. Another option available could be for residents of Funtley to explore the benefits of joining the Hampshire Constabulary Community Speedwatch initiative, which may have been previously considered. Funds raised by the Parish Council could be used towards improvements to street lighting which would avoid the need to be solely reliant on Hampshire County Council.
51. Issues of littering can currently be raised by residents directly to Fareham Borough Council Officers or via their Ward Councillors. Funds could be used by a Parish Council to make provisions for more litter bins and to support any anti-litter campaigns.
52. Collectively, Funtley Village Society is already able to address issues which affect the local community and residents and to request the Council address these. Similar to planning applications, a deputation scheme exists within Fareham Borough Council which enables people who live or work in the Borough to make deputations at Committee, Executive and Council meetings.

53. Funding available to a Parish Council would be gained via a precept, applications made to the principal council and other funding that is available to community groups. Funtley Village Society is already able to access funding streams available from a number of sources although consideration should be given to whether other sources of Grants are available to Parish Councils that wouldn't be available to the Funtley Village Society or any other Residents' Association/Community Group that could be used to enrich life in the village and the facilities available to residents. Any monies raised through a precept could also be used for events that bring the community together, such as a village fete.

Community Cohesion

54. When considering community cohesion in the responses of the first and second consultations, several similar comments were received that gave both positive indicators towards strengthening community cohesion, as well as indicators of threat to community cohesion if a Parish Council were created.

Could strengthen community cohesion	Could threaten community cohesion
"Local people want a vibrant village community and this could kick start it"	"Funtley Village Society (FVS) is made up of newcomers to the village and the residents who have lived here all their lives have never been included in this select group/they have not been asked to represent the residents of the village"
"Will bring decision making closer to communities"	(precept would rise) and cause embitterment within the community"
"Enhance the local community spirit"	"Would introduce unnecessary bureaucracy"
"To have more say in what happens to the village"	"Cannot afford the extra payments"

55. As well as considering the benefits of creating a Parish Council, the principal council must also consider if creating such a Parish Council would threaten community cohesion. Considerations should also be given to the guidance which states the creation of parishes is expected where "clear and sustained local support is shown". This is especially pertinent when considering the relatively low rates of the population of Funtley as a whole, expressing their support for a parish during the consultations; 30% during the first phase and 5.6% in the second phase. However, it must be noted that the Community Governance Review is neither a formal referendum nor a vote on the issue.

56. It is clear that there is enthusiasm from some respondents to bring the community closer together and retain the village feel. Other comments indicate that the existing society arrangement is self-appointed and perhaps considered a select group by elements of the Funtley community.

Size, population and boundaries

57. The general rule should be that a 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. Most parishes are below 12,000 in population but a Parish Council should be in a position to provide some basic services and it is not practical or desirable to set a rigid limit for the size of a parish.
58. As far as boundaries between parishes are concerned, these should reflect the “no-man’s land” between communities represented by areas of low population or barriers such as rivers, roads or railways. These need to be easily identifiable and a single community would be unlikely to straddle a river (with no crossing points) or a divide from a motorway (unless connected at each end by walkways).
59. In many cases a boundary change between existing parishes, or parishes or unparished areas, rather than the creation of an entirely new parish, will be sufficient to ensure that parish arrangements reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government. For example, over time, communities may expand with new housing developments. This can often lead to existing parish boundaries becoming anomalous as new houses are built across them resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours. District Councils should seek to address parish boundary issues at regular intervals.
60. When submitting the Petition to the Council, a map was attached which outlined the suggested area for a parish. To avoid divisions within a community, as indicated in paragraph 38 above, a revised proposed map was produced by Fareham Borough Council which did not include geographic divides to the community. This is shown at Appendix G.
61. The development of a revised Core Strategy and Local Plan Framework is likely to result in the need to review how Fareham Borough Council works with its diverse communities both in the emerging Solent Combined Authority context as well as recognising the need to establish clear identities of a number of its wards and village conurbations and how they link with each other to build strong and prosperous communities.

Other options for community representation or community engagement

62. In conducting a community governance review we have considered, as recommended in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, other arrangements that could be made for the purposes of community representation or community engagement. Opportunities exist for the creation of community governance by way of area committees; neighbourhood management; community forums/associations and resident’s and tenant’s associations. Some of these are part of the structure of a principal council and others by any group in the same area.

63. Fareham Borough Council is committed to involving our residents and communities in the local issues that affect or interest them. Effective engagement and consultation is also critical to ensuring that the services we provide meet the needs of our residents.
64. The Council utilises a range of methods and tools for engaging and consulting. The approaches used depend upon the needs of the different groups that want to get involved and the issues that are being considered. However, the Council's engagement and consultation will always recognise local neighbourhoods, engage with established local groups and support community cohesion.
65. Residents of Funtley have established the Funtley Village Society, although the number of members or details of its constitution are unknown, it states five primary objectives on the website:
1. To help sustain a corporate interest in the village as a community;
 2. To foster those features of village life which the majority of the villagers consider to be of benefit to them and the neighbourhood;
 3. To resist those changes that the majority of villagers consider to be detrimental to them and their neighbourhood;
 4. To represent the views of the villagers to local authorities and other outside bodies; and
 5. To provide a means of communication to the village for local authorities and other outside bodies.
66. Some of the comments received during the consultations included a concern that the creation of a Parish Council will introduce a layer of bureaucracy. The Funtley Village Society maintains it will still exist if a Parish Council is created and will work in conjunction with a Parish Council on issues affecting the local community.
67. A general view of those in favour of creating a Parish Council is it would have more powers. Under the current arrangements, local issues can be raised with Fareham Borough Council by residents. Consideration could be given to The Funtley Village Society, which already displays the enthusiasm to build a local identity, to develop in structure, engage more with residents and canvas their concerns, taking these forward collectively to Ward Councillors, Hampshire County Council and Fareham Borough Council. This would also help to build on community cohesion.
68. The only power that is available only to Parish Councils and not to other tiers of government is the power to obtain and supply land for allotments if local demand cannot be met.
69. Further comments from the consultation on the benefits of establishing a Parish Council are included below:

Consultation Comments	Response
<p>“Being able to comment on planning Applications”</p>	<p>A Parish Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications. Residents of Funtley are able to comment on planning applications now by way of written comments and by making Deputations to the Planning Committee</p>
<p>“Give...opportunity to address issues in the village which I feel the borough council ignores/more say over our village”</p>	<p>The Council’s Community Engagement Strategy includes a strong commitment to engaging with local communities with the popular and well-attended CAT meetings (Community Action Team) providing opportunities to take part in question and answer sessions with ward Councillors.</p>
<p>“To speak on behalf of the residents regarding the council”</p>	<p>Issues which exist currently can be raised to Fareham Borough Council via Ward Councillors or to officers at the Council directly. Both a Petition and a Deputation scheme is in operation which allows members of the public to support or oppose matters being considered at all Council and Committee meetings.</p>
<p>“Help stop dog walkers not picking up their dog poo”</p>	<p>There are three Acts of legislation which underpin littering and dog fouling enforcement. These also enable local authorities or the Courts to issue Fixed Penalty Notices or fines. Fareham Borough Council has an enforcement team who issues fines of £100 to those who do not pick up dog waste. Dog fouling can be reported to the Council and following a public consultation across the Borough in March 2016, free dog waste bags are available to collect from the Council. These are limited in number although the campaign will continue to run with posters and on refuse lorries.</p>
<p>“Hope it would achieve a lower road speed limit through the village”</p>	<p>A Parish Council would not have the powers to impose speed limits through the village. As is the case now, concerns would need to be raised to Hampshire County Council and Fareham Borough Council. Traffic reminder signs have</p>

been used in Funtley in recent months following concerns raised by Hampshire County Council and local residents.
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70. A residents' association can be an effective body which represents the residents in the same way as a Parish Council and consideration could be given to alternative types of viable community representation. The aims of Funtley Village Society appear to be similar to that of the role of a Parish Council and the continuation of this Society could be a suitable alternative to consider without the need for payment of a local precept.
71. Another alternative for the Council to consider is the formation of a parish meeting rather than a Parish Council. A parish meeting is sometimes more applicable for small communities as they must meet twice a year, elect a Chairman and Trustees but cannot charge a precept. A principal Council may recommend the creation of a parish meeting in parishes with between 151 and 999 electors. Parish meetings consist of the local government electors for the parish and their purpose is to discuss parish affairs and exercise any statutory functions conferred on them. Parish meetings have a number of functions, powers and rights of notification or consultation conferred directly by statute. In areas where there is no Parish Council these include; the administration of allotments, provision and maintenance of a bus shelter, be an interested party in an application for a licensed premises or rights of way.
72. If the parish has no Parish Council, the Chairman of the parish meeting and the proper officer of the district council are the body corporate of the parish meeting and are known as "the Parish trustees".
73. There are 21 parish meetings currently operating throughout Hampshire and a sample list of these is included for information in the table below:

Parish Meeting	Population Size
Bradley	204
Exton	203
Farleigh Wallop	196
Litchfield and Woodcott	142
Popham	466
Stratfield Turgis	232
Tunworth	224
Weston Corbett & Weston Patrick	448
Winslade	224

74. A parish meeting may precept the district council for the funds necessary to cover its expenses. The accounts of a parish meeting are subject to audit in the same way as those of Parish Councils and pay non-refundable VAT on purchases.

Conclusions

75. In order to recommend the creation of a Parish Council for Funtley, the Council should be satisfied that such a body would reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area, would be effective and convenient and give better local service delivery.
76. It is clear that the work of Parish Councils can provide an important link for local communities and play a vital part in representing the interests of local people and improving the quality of life and the local environment.
77. From the issues set out within the petition and the comments referred to in this report and the appendices, Members may wish to consider the options set out in the previous section as well as the request for a Parish Council as they may be more effective in terms of community representation or community engagement. The petition which started the review was not specific in its aims other than the request to be “an independent Parish Council for Funtley Village which will work closely with its residents and Fareham Borough Council”.
78. The Government has emphasised that recommendations made in Community Governance Reviews ought to bring about improved community engagement, more cohesive communities, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.
79. It is clear from the majority of responses received that there is a strong community spirit in Funtley. By participating in the consultations residents have shown that many want a greater say in local matters, particularly related to planning issues and applications, leisure and recreation facilities, and infrastructure such as traffic calming measures and street lighting.
80. Funtley Village Society is already treated in the same way as a Parish Council for planning issues, albeit not as a statutory consultee. The Society also has the ability to apply for community funding and many other funding streams. The play area had a mini makeover in 2015 and is scheduled for a complete refurbishment in the 2017/18 programme and Funtley residents will have the opportunity to request equipment or other features when this is consulted on later in the year.
81. In terms of infrastructure, Fareham Borough Council is able to work with Funtley Village Society and Hampshire County Council to determine whether further traffic calming measures are necessary in the future. Street lighting is also looked after by Hampshire County Council.
82. It is the Council’s belief that the requirements of the Funtley Village Society and Funtley residents, as identified through the consultations, can be met by existing arrangements, without the need for imposing any additional costs on residents. There is a plausible concern about the potential for unchecked increases in precept levels as has been experienced in neighbouring Parish Council areas.
83. Looking to the future however, it is vital that Fareham Borough Council supports and builds on the valuable work Funtley Village Society has achieved through

engaging with its community, and to continue to strengthen the working relationship with both FVS as a significant interested party and with all Funtley residents.

Options

84. The recommendations of this report is for Council to :
- (a) note the results of the consultations and considers the representations received; and
 - (b) consider the contents of this report and resolve to approve one of the following options:
 - i. make no change to the existing governance arrangements;
 - ii. establish a parish and form a Parish Council; or
 - iii. establish a parish and form a Parish Meeting.
85. The preferred option is to make no change to the existing governance arrangements and thereby not to create a Parish Council but to enable the residents of Funtley to have a greater say through the work of ward Councillors and Funtley Village Society, thus cementing community cohesion.

Appendices:

- A – Funtley Village Society petition leaflet
- B – Questionnaire
- C – Minutes of the CAT meeting 24 November 2015
- D – Consultation responses
- D1 – Funtley Village Society Consultation Response
- E – Examples of Parish Council precepts within Hampshire
- F – Year on year rise in precept of Whiteley Town Council
- G – Map showing the proposed parish boundaries, as revised by Fareham Borough Council.
- H – Information booklet on Local Councils (produced by the National Association of Local Councils)

Background papers: Petition and file of correspondence

Reference Papers: Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
Guidance on Community Governance Reviews (Dept for Communities and Local Government & Local Government Boundary Commission for England)
Report to Council 30 July 2015 – Community Governance Review - Funtley

Contact: For further information please contact Leigh Usher, Ext 4553