



Harborough District Council Community Governance Review 2026

A review of parishes under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

Background

In accordance with Section 83(2) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 Harborough District Council has received a valid petition from registered electors within the relevant wards to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) of all unparished areas of Market Harborough Town comprising -

- Market Harborough Logan Ward
- Market Harborough Little Bowden Ward
- Market Harborough Great Bowden & Arden Ward excluding Great Bowden Parish area
- Market Harborough Welland Ward
- Part of Lubenham Ward which is unparished

In undertaking the review the Council will be guided by:

- Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (will now be referred to as 'the 2007 Act')
- the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972
- Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in accordance with section 100(4) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in March 2010
- Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008
- Local Government Finance (New Parishes) Regulations 2008

Section 81 of the 2007 Act requires the Council to publish its Terms of Reference for the Review which clearly set out the focus of the review. This document will fulfil this requirement.

Why is Harborough District Council undertaking this review?

A CGR provides principal councils with an opportunity to make changes to community governance arrangements in their area and ensure that such

arrangements provide cohesive communities, improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in improved effective and convenient delivery of local services.

A valid petition for the Market Harborough Town unparished ward areas has been received which begins the process of undertaking a review of the specific area.

What is the Review Looking at?

A community governance review is the process used to consider parish arrangements. On this occasion the review will consider the following -

- The possible creation of a Parish Council or alternative style of governance in the unparished area of Market Harborough Town.
- The council size, number of councillors to be elected to the council and name
- Parish warding arrangements
- Timing of elections for these arrangements

Current Parish governance within Harborough District

Harborough District Council believes parish councils play an important role in terms of community empowerment at a local level. The District is 230 square miles in size and mainly rural with a number of larger settlements. There are almost 100 parishes within the district at this time fairly equally split between parish councils and parish meetings. Of the two main towns, Market Harborough and Lutterworth, Lutterworth has a Town Council but Market Harborough, the largest, is the only area which remains unparished. The Town has an active community forum and appointed neighbourhood forums.

The proposed Local Government Reorganisation across England has caused local authorities to look at their governance arrangement to ensure that their communities continue to have a local voice regarding services within their area. Though we are not clear on the arrangements going forward within Leicestershire, the abolishment of both County and District Councils to set up a Unitary style Council makes it more important to ensure that the governance arrangements in place within Harborough District are both robust and appropriate for any future changes.

Who will undertake the review?

As the principal authority, Harborough District Council is responsible for undertaking CGRs within its area. The Council will set up an advisory committee (The Community Governance Review Committee) to oversee the review process and to make recommendations following extensive consultation. Final recommendations will be submitted to Council for approval.

The primary contacts for the review are :

- Sheena Mortimer, Electoral Services Manager
- Leah Mickleborough, Head of Democratic Services, Elections and Monitoring Officer

Consultation

These terms of reference provide the aims of the review, the legislation that guides the process and the areas that the council will consider as part of the review process. The Council will consult widely on the review including, but not limited to:

- Local government electors/residents of the district
- Parish councils/Parish meetings where boundaries adjoin the CGR area
- District councillors/County councillors
- Members of Parliament
- Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils
- Community groups & Forums

The Council will carry out the following methods of consultation:

- Contact with interested parties signposting to our website pages
- Attend community events with awareness materials/presentations
- creation of pages in the consultation area of the website with Terms of Reference, interactive maps & Frequently Asked Questions, all documents relating to the review will be found on this site
- An online consultation questionnaire as well as a paper version available
- use of HDC social media
- leaflet to all households in the area under review with council tax bills
- HDC monthly emailed newsletter
- local area magazines articles
- Information to councillors and at all staff briefings to share message
- The undertaking of a non-binding local poll to enable all electors to vote on the proposal

Community governance reviews should be conducted transparently so that local people and other local stakeholders who may have an interest are made aware of the outcome of the decisions taken on them and the reasons behind these decisions. Before making any recommendation or publishing final proposals the Council will take full account of the views and suggestions put forward by local people and organisations and will comply with the statutory consultation requirements by:

- Consulting local government electors and other persons or bodies which appear to the Council to have an interest in the review (see above),
- Taking into account any representations received in connection with the review,
- Notifying consultees of the outcome of the review,
- Publishing all decisions taken and the reasons for such decisions.

Information about each stage of the review will be published on the Council's website at www.harborough.gov.uk/cgr25 and be available for inspection at The Symington

Building, Adam and Eve Street, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 7AG.
Press releases and other publicity will be issued where appropriate.

Timeline and Key Stages

Stage	Action	Dates
Petition received from Market Harborough electorate to request a CGR	Elector details are checked against the electoral register to confirm eligibility and confirm that petition is valid.	28 th November 2025 to 5 th December
Authorisation	1. To approve the Terms of Reference 2. Advisory Committee established	15 th December 2025
Preliminary stage	1. Awareness campaign created 2. Leaflets created for parish/general public 3. Social media used	17 th December to 23 rd January 2026
Commencement	Notice of Review published (Review should be completed with 12 months of this date)	23 rd January 2026
Stage One	1. 1 st period of consultation with stakeholders – initial submissions invited on future arrangements in accordance with terms of reference	23 rd January to 13 th April 2026
	Local Poll on whether to have a Town Council for Market Harborough	30 th April 2026
Stage Two	1. Consideration of submissions received 2. Draft recommendations prepared	13 th April to 22 nd May 2026
Stage Three	Draft recommendations to be considered by Council and approved for further consultation	Anticipated to be 1 st June 2026

Stage Four	1. 2 nd period of consultation with stakeholders on draft recommendations 2. Final recommendations prepared	Anticipated to be 12 th June to 9 August 2026
Stage Five	Final recommendations to be considered by Council with resolution to make a Re-organisation Order	Council – September 2026
Stage Six	Re-organisation Order made	September 2026
Stage Seven	New council comes into being	April 2027
Stage Eight	First elections to the new Council	May 2027

What the District Council may take into account in making a decision

We appreciate that for many people, the most important factor is matters such as the level of council tax they will be required to pay to each Council. However, the law requires that in making decisions, Harborough District Council must 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.

Rather than matters such as council tax, which is a decision for individual authorities to make. Consultation documents will reflect this requirement and encourage respondents to provide feedback based on the criteria the Council must make decisions on.

Electoral Forecasts

When considering the electoral arrangements within the Harborough Town area the Council must consider any likely future change in the number and distribution of electors within five years from the day the review commences.

The review will use the latest electorate figures available at a ward level. Further information will be taken from emerging development strategy to establish a 5-year housing supply which will be coming forward through the council new district-wide local plan 2020 to 2041. This will set out allocations for the development new communities in sustainable locations supported by necessary and appropriate infrastructure. This review will cross-refer to the new local plan and associated and supporting documents it emerges.

Previously unparished areas

The Council must take into consideration whether parish governance is most appropriate for unparished areas. These can also take the form of community associations, area committees and community forums. One thing that should be remembered is that parish/town councils are democratically elected by the people that they represent. Parish/town councils can be warded if they are of a large enough size, two examples of this are Broughton Astley Parish Council and Lutterworth Town Council.

Boundaries

The Council is able to move and change boundaries between settlements within the district. They will endeavour to ensure that these boundaries are easily identifiable and unlikely to change, such as roads, rivers and railways. The Council cannot change district, county or parliamentary boundaries.

Electoral arrangements

Electoral arrangements cover a number of areas listed below

- Year in which elections are held
- Number of councillors elected
- Warding arrangements for a parish and the ward boundaries
- Naming of the wards

Completion of the review

At the completion of the review the Council will adopt a Reorganisation of Community Governance Order. Copies of the order will be available to inspect at The Symington Building, Adam & Eve Street, Market Harborough LE16 7AG.

Details of the financial and administrative provisions of the order and electoral arrangements will be made available at the end of the review.

Consequential Matters

A reorganisation Order may cover any consequential matters necessary to give effect of the order. These may include:

- Transfer and management of property*
- Setting of precepts for new parishes
- Transfer of functions, property, rights and liabilities*
- Transfer of staff, pensions and other staffing matters*

Those items marked * are not obligatory and may be subject to later decisions by the District Council, in consultation with any future Town Council.

In these matters the Council will be guided by Regulations that have been issued following the 2007 Act. Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008 and Local Government Finance (New Parishes) Regulations 2008