

Report to: Council

Report Ref: C1924
Meeting Date: 6th January 2020
Agenda Item: 9
Prepared By: Town Clerk



Subject: Community Governance Review

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the November meeting, Council established a working group (comprising Cllrs Dalzell, Forbes, Houghton, Robertson and Gray) to consider the community governance issues in Knutsford and prepare a submission to the initial Cheshire East Council consultation on its borough wide community governance review.

The working group met in December and agreed the town council's principal aims should be to ensure that the governance arrangements are straight forward for residents, equitable for councillors and maximise the potential community infrastructure levy receipts.

2.0 PROPOSED SUBMISSION

2.1 CHALLENGE THE BASIS

The background information published by Cheshire East Council includes elector forecasts to 2025 based on approvals as to March 2019. The council has stated it will not be updating the forecasts and they exclude all strategic housing sites exempt *Land North of Parkgate* and do not include the development of retirement accommodation at Memorial House. It is noted that all strategic development sites are being prepared:

Site	Location	Status
LPS37	North of Parkgate	Outline secured, reserved matters application being prepared
LPS36A	North of Northwich Road	Outline secured, reserved matters application being revised
LPS36B	West of Manchester Road	Outline application submitted, decision delayed
LPS36C	East of Manchester Road	Outline application submitted, decision deferred March 2019
LPS38	South of Longridge	Outline application being prepared

Table One: Local Plan Housing Sites Planning Status'

The reports to the Cheshire East Council Community Governance Review Sub-Committee state that the next review is not anticipated until at least 2035-2040. If proper consideration is not given to the above developments the governance review's findings will be flawed and quickly out of date.

Recommendation 1:



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That the council strongly challenges the electoral forecast model as it fails to consider all development coming forward within the Local Plan period and will require further governance reviews to be triggered by petition as each site comes forward.

2.2 REVISED PARISH BOUNDARY - TABLEY

The council has previously identified that the majority of the Northwich Road development site and the safeguarded site at Tabley Road fall outside Knutsford Parish and are predominantly within Tabley Parish. The Neighbourhood Plan boundary was designated to include this area with the approval of Tabley Parish Council.

Recommendation 2:

That the council requests that the Knutsford Parish boundary be extended to include the whole of the local plan site allocation and safeguarded land as demarked in the Cheshire East Local Plan as sites LPS36A and LPS39.

2.3 REVISED WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

The working group agreed that the council should comprise five equal wards each represented by three councillors which requires the breaking up of Over Ward into two smaller wards. The working group agreed that this was clearer for both councillors and residents when working on ward issues.

The working group noted the current anomalies that the Land South of Longridge site would be split between Norbury Booths and Over wards and that Aylesbury Close is split between the same. The working group recognised that Bexton ward generates the lowest volume of casework and the town centre a much higher volume.

The Town Clerk used the calculations set out in Cheshire East Council's electoral forecast report to design new warding arrangements to meet the council's objective. This factors in all strategic development sites as per table one. This generates five wards, each with three councillors and councillor to elector ratios within 10% (range 1:763 to 1:841). The proposed wards would be: Nether; Bexton and Town Centre; Norbury Booths; Cross Town; and St Johns Wood.

Maps of the wards are shown in Appendix A. The principal changes are:

- The Town Centre is removed from Nether and put with Bexton
- The boundary between Bexton and Nether moves southwards from Northwich Road to Westfield Drive
- The boundary between Bexton and Norbury Booths moves eastwards to include the whole of Bexton Lane and Glebelands Road
- Over is split into two along Boothfields, the whole of Boothfields and the playing field on the south of Longridge is within Cross Town. All properties on Shaw Drive are within St Johns Wood and the boundary extends along Parkgate Lane.
- The Longridge strategic development site and associated open space is wholly within St Johns Wood.
- Aylesbury Close is wholly within Cross Town



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Recommendation 3:

That the council proposes the revised warding arrangements to Cheshire East Council.

2.4 REVISED PARISH BOUNDARY – LONGRIDGE BUSINESS PARK

The working group noted that a small part of the Longridge Business Park falls outside the Knutsford parish boundary into Mobberley parish. Whilst this affects no electors, it is considered prudent to include this within Knutsford.

Recommendation 4:

That the council suggests the parish boundary be extended to include the whole of the Longridge business park.

2.5 REVISED PARISH BOUNDARY - TATTON PARK

The southern portion of Tatton Park falls within Knutsford's parish boundary, but the majority of the park falls within Tatton Parish. Tatton Parish does not have a parish meeting nor a parish council and comprises around 25 electors.

Whilst of the lowest importance in the working groups recommendations, the working group considered it would be advantageous for the council's area to cover the whole of Tatton Park. This would ensure the electors have local representation through the council and that the council can continue to represent the wider community in matters in Tatton Park which affect the Town.

A plan showing the Tatton Parish boundary is in Appendix B.

Recommendation 5:

That the council suggests that Tatton Parish be merged into Knutsford Parish such that Knutsford includes the entirety of Tatton Park.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approves the five recommendations outlined in this report.



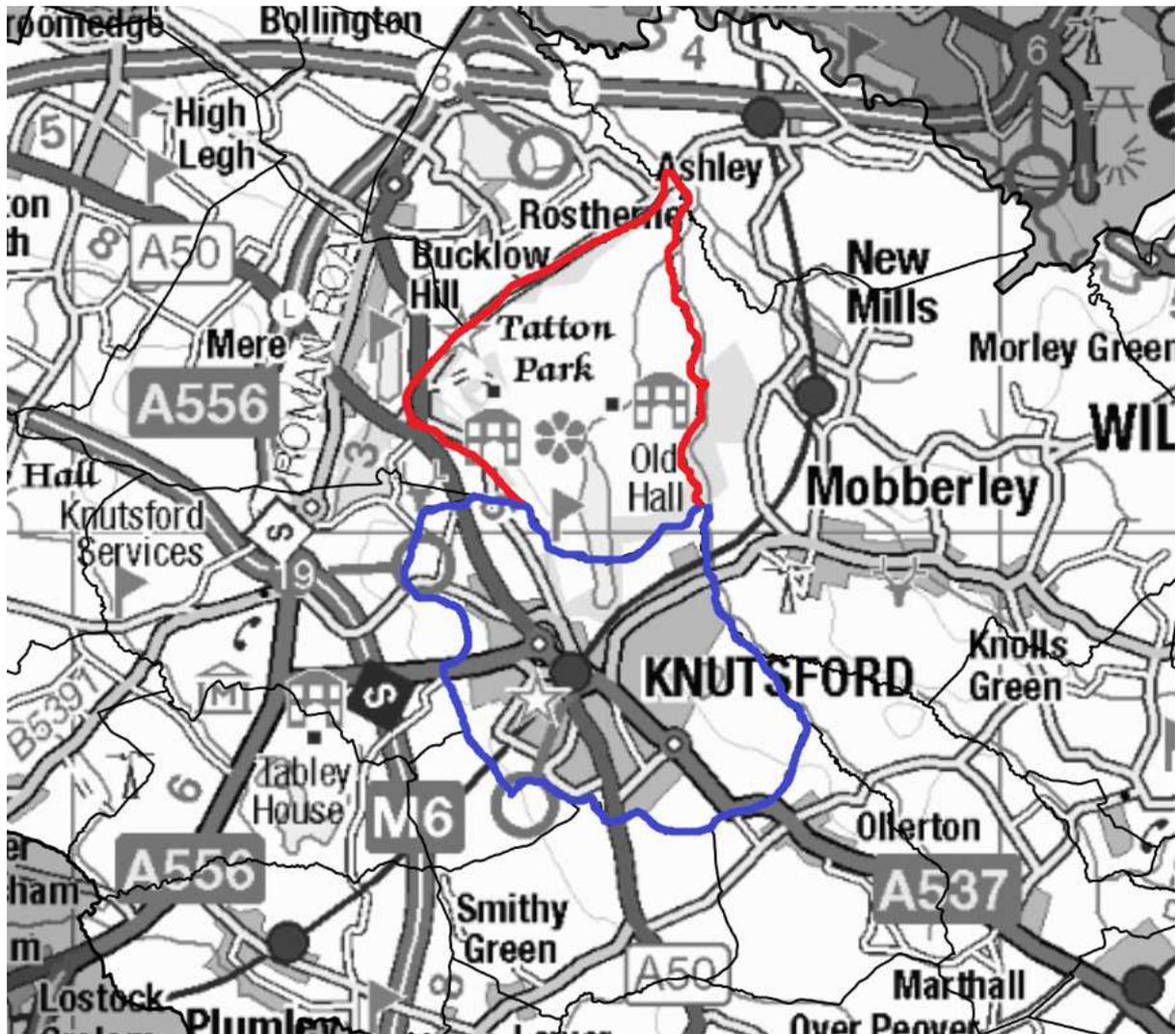
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Appendix A: REVISED WARD BOUNDARY MAPS



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Appendix B: BOUNDARIES OF KNUTSFORD PARISH AND TATTON PARISH



Tatton Parish **Red**
Knutsford Parish **Blue**



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