

**SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF
THE PARISH OF TASLEY**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PARISH AND PARISH COUNCILS (ENGLAND)
REGULATION 2008**

FINAL PROPOSALS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Tasley Parish Council, which at present comprises five councillors, has requested Shropshire Council (the Council) to consent to the number of parish councillors being increased by two to seven.
- 1.2 The Council gave public notice of a Community Governance Review of Tasley on 1 August 2011 and also published the Terms of Reference for the review on that date. Notices inviting comments from local residents were displayed in the area and copies of the Terms of Reference were also sent to stakeholders and interested parties. Information on the effect of the review was also available for inspection at its offices at Westgate, Bridgnorth and Shirehall, Shrewsbury, the Council's website as well as local libraries
- 1.3 The Terms of Reference were intended to prompt local consideration and initiate discussion in order that the Council could take account of local feeling when preparing of its Draft Proposal Document. All concerned were invited to submit their comments in writing by 30 November 2011. However, only the local Shropshire councillors have responded, both of whom support the proposal to increase the number of parish councillors.
- 1.4 The Draft Proposals were published on 6 December 2011 and local residents, the Parish Council, local Councillors and other stakeholders had until Thursday 5 January 2012 to submit any comments on them. Comments were received from Tasley Parish indicating that the Parish Council fully supported the proposal to increase the number of councillors by two from five to seven.

2. Proposed Changes to the Electoral Arrangements

- 2.1 Tasley Parish Council's five members presently represent 627 electors, giving a ratio of 125.4 electors per councillor. The number of electors in Tasley is set to increase

by 60% to 1,042 electors by 2016, resulting in the ratio increasing to 208.4 electors per councillor unless the number of councillors is increased.

- 2.2 Tasley Parish Council considers it appropriate to increase its membership to seven because, although committed to their duties, the councillors are not able to attend every meeting. Increasing the number from five to seven would significantly improve this situation and ensure that there were always sufficient councillors present for a quorum and to promote debate of the issues arising. The projected increase in the number of electors could also put undue strain on the existing parish councillors such that they will be unable to undertake all the worthwhile projects the Council wishes to support through the lack of someone to champion them. Adding a further two members to the existing complement, of parish councillors will reduce the ratio to 148.8 electors per councillors; a number which is much closer to the current level of representation.
- 2.3 There is little guidance on the appropriate number of councillors required to represent a parish, other than there not being any less than five councillors. Where there is no maximum number and no rules on the allocation of councillors, in recent years the Council has used the National Association of Local Councils' formula as a guide.
- 2.4 This suggests that a parish council with up to 900 electors should have seven councillors, whereas one with 2,000 electors should have nine councillors. The Aston Business School has also published research on the levels of representation which point to between 6-12 councillors being appropriate for representing between 501-2,500 electors.
- 2.5 Consequently, seven councillors for the increasing population of Tasley would appear to be warranted, although at the last ordinary elections in May 2007 only two nominations were received for the five available seats. This was an insufficient number to form a quorum so a further notice of election had to be given after which a candidate was elected. This then enabled the Parish Council to co-opt the two remaining vacancies.
- 2.6 Since 2007 there have been several casual vacancies all of which have been filled by co-option. But, despite this, the Council considers that the significant increase in Tasley's population over the next five years should generate sufficient interest and engagement in the work of the Parish Council to sustain two additional parish councillors. The Council therefore supports an increase in the size of the Tasley

Parish Council from five to seven members with effect from the 2013 local government elections.

3. **What Happens Next**

3.1 An initial timetable for this review was outlined in the Terms of Reference document published on 1 August 2011. However, it has been possible to foreshorten the period required to prepare both the draft and final proposals and the Community Governance Working Party has set a revised timetable for completing the review which is as follows:-

| <u>Stage</u> | <u>What Happens?</u> | <u>Timescales</u> |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Commencement | Terms of Reference are published | 1 August 2011 |
| Preliminary stage | Local briefings and meetings | One month 1 August to 31 August 2011 |
| Stage One | Initial Submissions are invited | Three months 1 September to 30 November 2011 |
| Stage Two | Consideration of submissions received – Draft Recommendations are prepared | 1 December to 4 December 2012 |
| Stage Three | Draft Recommendations are published – Consultations on them | One month 6 December to 5 January 2012 |
| Stage Four | Consideration of submissions received – final recommendations are prepared | 6 January to 20 January 2012 |
| | Final Recommendations are published – concluding review | 21 January 2012 |
| | Council resolves to make Reorganisation Order | One Month later 21 February 2012 |

4.0 **Summary of Final Recommendations**

4.1 For the reasons outlined above, the Community Governance Working Party considers that a council size of seven councillors can provide for effective and convenient community governance for the whole of the Tasley Parish area and these draft proposals explain its initial recommendation for the future of community governance for Tasley.

4.2 There will be a short period after the final proposals are published before the Council approves the recommendations. This will allow further time for any final submissions and/or arguments to be made covering matters which did not arise during earlier stages of the review.

5. **How to contact us**

5.1 Comments should be submitted to the Democratic Services Section of Shropshire Council. They can be submitted either by letter or email.

5.2 You can contact us at:

Democratic and Electoral Services
Shropshire Council
The Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Telephone No : 01743 252725

Email : democracy@shropshire.gov.uk

Web : www.shropshire.gov.uk

Details of officer contacts are as follows:

Richard Thomas – Democratic Services and Elections Manager

Telephone No : 01743 252725

Email : richard.thomas@shropshire.gov.uk

Adrian Dean – Senior Committee Officer

Telephone No : 01743 252893

Email : adrian.dean@shropshire.gov.uk

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – TASLEY

Schedule of comments received

| | Comments from | Summary of Comments Received | Officer Response |
|----|--|--|-------------------------|
| 1. | Les Winwood (Shropshire Councillor – Bridgnorth West and Tasley) | I do believe that an increase in Councillors is necessary for Tasley, they are a hard working Parish Council but would benefit from extra numbers. | |
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| 2. | John Hurst-Knight (Shropshire Councillor – Bridgnorth West and Tasley) | It makes sense to increase the number with the number of new homes in the parish. | |

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – TASLEY**Schedule of comments received**

| | Comments from | Summary of Comments Received | Officer Response |
|----|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|
| 1. | Tasley Parish Council | Tasley Parish Council decided to support the Community Governance Review for Tasley at their meeting of 20th December and favour the increase in the number of councillors from 5 - 7. | |
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