

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL
COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF THE PARISHES OF ALBRIGHTON,
DONINGTON AND BOSCOBEL
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007
DRAFT PROPOSALS

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 Shropshire Council has resolved to undertake a Community Governance Review of the Parishes of Albrighton, Donington and Boscobel. The area to be included in the review is the whole of the Parishes of Albrighton, Donington and Boscobel.
- 1.2 The Council gave public notice of a Community Governance Review and published the Terms of Reference for the review of the Parishes of Albrighton and Donington and in December 2023. Copies of the Terms of Reference were sent by e-mail to the Parish Councils and to other stakeholders in the area. Information on the effect of the review was also available for inspection at the Councils offices at Shirehall, Shrewsbury and on the Council's website.
- 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 its Draft Proposal Document. All concerned were invited to submit their comments in writing by 26 January 2024.
- 1.4 Following the consultation, it was agreed to extend the area under review to include the Parish of Boscobel, which jointly forms the Parish Council of Donington with Boscobel.
- 1.4 A resident of Donington with Boscobel who is also a Parish Councillor indicated her support for the retention of two Parish Councils with a slight increase to the size of Albrighton. They suggested that one large parish risks benefitting the residents of Albrighton to the detriment of the residents of Donington with Boscobel.
- 1.5 Another resident of Donington recognised the need to change and presented arguments for both one council and for a smaller adjustment to the Parish Boundaries.

- 1.6 A resident of Albrighton who is also a Parish Councillor suggested that the Parish of Albrighton should be extended to include not only Donington with Boscobel, but also Boningale, and Cosford. She suggested that the facilities of Albrighton were relied upon by residents of all these areas and that they would be better served by one Parish Council.
- 1.6 Albrighton Parish Council indicated that a joint meeting had been facilitated with Donington with Boscobel Parish Council and preferred an amalgamation of the Parishes into one with no wards.
- 1.7 Nigel Lumby, Shropshire Councillor for Albrighton, indicated support for the views expressed by the Parish Councils.

2.0 **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Parish of Albrighton is currently represented by 15 Councillors, split over two wards. The Donington with Boscobel Parish Council is comprised of 10 Councillors representing 3 parishes/parish wards.
- 2.2 The current and projected electorate figures for the Parishes of Albrighton, Donington and Boscobel are set out in the tables below:

| Parish | Number of Councillors | Number of Electors (October 2023) | No of Electors (April 2028) | Ratio of Electors per Councillor |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Albrighton | 15 | 3,421 | 3,778 | 1: 252 |
| Donington | 9 | 1,073 | 1,084 | 1: 120 |
| Boscobel | 1 | 21 | 31 | 1:31 |

- 2.3 The current Shropshire Council division boundaries were made by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England during its recent review and necessitated the boundaries crossing several Parishes. Unless they are amended by order following a Community Governance Review, the new boundaries may not

provide for effective and convenient local governance or reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area.

- 2.4 To avoid this situation arising at the next ordinary elections due to be held in May 2025, Shropshire Council is undertaking a review of the electoral arrangements for the Parishes of Albrighton, Donington and Boscobel under the provisions of Section 82 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, as well as the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in accordance with Section 100(4) of the Act by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Electoral Commission (Revised March 2010).
- 2.6 The review also provides an opportunity to consider whether the historic electoral boundaries for Albrighton, Donington and Boscobel remain appropriate, after taking account of recent residential development as well as that proposed by 2029 and beyond. The provision of more obvious and appropriate external boundaries for the parishes have been considered in the interests of community identity and community cohesion. In accordance with statutory guidance the review is seeking to establish boundaries which follow the line of permanent or established physical features, rather than the ancient field boundaries which mean little to today's residents, where possible
- 2.7 The Terms of Reference document published in December 2023 set out the objective of the review to consider whether there should be any changes to the boundaries between the parishes of Albrighton and Donington, Following the conclusion of the consultation, it was decided to extend the area under review to include also the Parish of Boscobel.
- 2.8 During the preparation of these draft recommendations, the Council has taken account of the comments received from the Parish Councils, residents and the Shropshire Councillor for the area.

3.0 PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES

3.1 It is proposed that the Parishes of Albrighton, Donington and Boscobel be abolished and a new single Parish created, known as the Parish of Albrighton and Donington with a new Parish Council.

3.2 It is proposed that the Parish of Albrighton and Donington have three wards – the Donington and Boscobel Ward, coloured green on Plan A, attached; the Albrighton Village East ward, coloured blue on Plan A, attached; and the Albrighton Village West ward, coloured red on Plan A attached.

3.4 The current and projected electorate figures for the proposed wards in the Parish of Albrighton and Donington are set out in the table below:

| Proposed Parish | Number of Councillors | Number of Electors (October 2023) | No of Electors (April 2028) | Ratio of Electors per Councillor |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Albrighton, Donington and Boscobel | 16 | 4,515 | 4,893 | 1: 306 |

| Proposed Parish Wards | Number of Councillors | Number of Electors (October 2023) | No of Electors (April 2028) | Ratio of Electors per Councillor |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Albrighton Village East | 6 | 1,457 | 1,789 | 1:298 |
| Albrighton Village West | 7 | 2,173 | 2,195 | 1:313 |
| Donington and Boscobel | 3 | 885 | 909 | 1:303 |

4.0 PARISH COUNCIL SIZE:

4.1 The law requires that when considering whether to establish a pattern of wards for the purposes for elections, the Council must first consider whether it is desirable for any part of the parish to be separately represented on the Parish/Town Council. Secondly, it is necessary to consider whether the number or distribution of electors within the parish/town would make a single election of councillors impracticable.

4.2 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

4.3 The Aston Business School has also published research on the appropriate levels of representation.

4.4 In large parishes such as Albrighton and Donington there is a very strong case for dividing the parish into electoral wards, as community identity and community interests tend to focus on a locality or neighbourhood. This can be an existing housing estate, a shopping centre or some community facility. Where there is evidence that different parts of a town have had their own sense of identity historically this supports the establishment or retention of electoral wards.

4.5 It is proposed that the Parish of Albrighton comprises of 16 Councillors Split over 3 wards:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Donington and Boscobel | 3 |
| Albrighton East | 6 |
| Albrighton West | 7 |

5.0 **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

5.1 An initial timetable for this review was outlined in the Terms of Reference document published in December 2023 but has been extended to allow for a longer period of consultation as follows:-

| Stage | What happens? | Timescales |
|--------------|--|--|
| Commencement | Terms of Reference are published | 14 December 2023 |
| Stage one | Initial Submissions are invited | 15 December 2023 to 26 January 2024 |
| Stage two | Consideration of submissions received – Draft Recommendations are prepared | 27 January 2024 to 20 March 2024 |

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|-------------|---|------------------------------|
| Stage three | Draft Recommendations are published – consultations on them | 21 March 2024 to 10 May 2024 |
| Stage four | Considerations of submissions received – final recommendations are prepared | 11 May 2024 to 31 May 2024 |
| | Final recommendations are published – concluding review | End June 2024 |
| | Council resolves to make a Reorganisation Order | July 2024 |
| | | |

5.2 These draft proposals set out Shropshire Councils initial recommendations for the future of Community Governance for Albrighton, Donington and Boscobel. The Council will now allow a further period, in accordance with the above timetable for public consultation.

5.3 Final Proposals will be made in response to the outcome of these consultations and they may wholly change the Draft Proposals to encompass the broadly held views of the residents of the affected areas, insofar as they are compatible with the legal tests and principles referred to throughout this document.

5.4 There will then be a short period after the final proposals are published before the Shropshire Council approves the recommendations and then seeks the consent of the LGBCE to make the formal Order. This period will allow further time for any final submissions and arguments to be made covering matters which did not arise during earlier stages of the review.

5.5 A period for comments on the draft proposals has now opened and this lasts until 10 May 2024.

6.0 HOW TO CONTACT US

6.1 Comments should be submitted to the Democratic Services Section of Shropshire Council by e-mail at communitygovernance@shropshire.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can contact us at the following address:

Democratic and Electoral Services

Shropshire Council

The Shirehall

Abbey Foregate

Shrewsbury

SY2 6ND

Should you require any further information or need clarification on the review process, please the above contact details.