

APPENDIX 1

Terms of Reference - Community Governance Review

Introduction

Cumberland Council has decided to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) under the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ("the 2007 Act"), to consider parish election dates in the local authority area.

Why undertake a Community Governance review?

A CGR provides an opportunity for councils to review and make changes to community governance within their area.

When Cumberland Council was established through local government reorganisation, the scheduled election dates for a number of parish and town councils remained unchanged. Due to the former Carlisle City council electoral cycle of electing by thirds (as opposed to all-out elections), some parish council elections are currently scheduled to take place in years where there is no election to this Council.

The next scheduled elections for this authority are in May 2027 (The Cumbria (Structural Changes) Order 2022). Scheduled elections to parish and town councils in the authority area are due to take place in 2026, 2027, and 2028.

A CGR can be undertaken to review and resolve this anomaly.

Scope of the review

Cumberland Council has decided to undertake a CGR to consider the scheduled election dates for parish councils who are due to have scheduled elections in 2026 and 2028.

The affected Parish Councils, (and the date of next scheduled election)

- Dalston Parish Council (2026)
- Brampton Parish Council (2028)
- Carlatten and Cumrew Parish Council (2028)
- Castle Carrock Parish Council (2028)
- Cumwhitton Parish Council (2028)
- Hayton Parish Council (2028)
- Wetheral Parish Council (2028)

No other electoral arrangements will be included in the scope of this CGR.

Who will undertake the community governance review

As the principal authority, Cumberland Council is responsible for undertaking any CGR within its electoral area.

The review will comply with the legislative and procedural requirements set out in the 2007 Act, as well as statutory guidance and best practice models. This includes guidance produced jointly by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). This review will follow the approach set out in these Terms of Reference, including the indicative timetable.

Timetable

The indicative timetable for the review is as follows.

Date	Action
July 2025	Full Council approves the Terms of Reference, signifying the start of the CGR, and Draft Recommendations.
August to September 2025	Public consultation, lasting 2 months, allowing affected parish and town councils to meet and discuss.
October to November 2025	Review by Officers and development of Final Recommendations.
November 2025	Full Council discuss and agree Final Recommendations.
December 2025	Reorganisation Order made.

Consultation

Before making or publishing final Proposals, in line with legislative requirements, the Council will take full account of the views of local people. The Council will comply with legislative requirements by;

- a) consulting local government electors for areas under review;
- b) consulting any other person or body (including a local authority or elected representative) which appears to the principal council to have an interest in the review; and
- c) taking into account any representations received in connection with the review.

When taking account of written representations, the Council is bound to have regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review is;

- reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- effective and convenient to the community in that area.

To ensure that this review is conducted transparently, as soon as practicable the Council will publish its recommendations and take such steps as it considers sufficient to ensure that persons who may be interested in the review are informed of the recommendations and the reasons behind them.

The value of local councils

The Council believes that local parish and town councils play an important role in terms of community empowerment at a local level and want to ensure that local governance in the areas subject to this review continue to be robust, representative and enabled to meet the challenges that lie before it.

Parish and town councils have a key role to play in representing the views, promoting the needs of the local communities and neighbourhoods and that every opportunity should be afforded to them to express such views to the Council prior to any decisions taken which might affect local circumstances.

Parish election dates

Districts that, through Local Government Reorganisation, merged to form Cumberland Council previously elected 'by thirds', with elections taking place in three out of every four years. In line with these arrangements, scheduled parish elections also took place in three out of every four years, with some parish councils electing in each of those three years. Cumberland Council elects all Councillors in one scheduled election every four years.

It may be prudent for scheduled elections for parish councils to be aligned with the Cumberland Council election dates. This can save considerable money for parish councils, who will then all share their election dates, and makes the democratic process easier and more accessible for electors. If election dates change for any parish council, the term of office for parish councillors in affected parishes will be shorter or longer than four years after the completion of the Review.

How to contact us

If you would like to say how you view potential future arrangements under these Terms of Reference please respond to the online consultations on the Cumberland Council website, [\[LINK HERE\]](#)