

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF GOVERNANCE	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	25 JUNE 2024	4

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE – PARISHING OF ANSDELL AND LYTHAM

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources, Councillor Ellie Gaunt.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Legislation allows the council to review the pattern of community governance in its area. A review can recommend the establishment or abolition of parish councils, re-align boundaries between them and change the number of parish councillors.

A community governance review was undertaken in 2022, with terms of reference comprising the whole of the council's district with a focus on the unparished areas of Lytham and Ansdell. Amongst other things, the review recommended establishing parish councils for each of the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham.

Members felt that there needed to be a more wide-ranging consultation within the localities concerned prior to a decision being reached with regard to the elements relating to Ansdell and Lytham.

A further consultation has now taken place and this report outlines the consultation process and its outcomes.

In light of this the Executive Committee is invited to consider this matter with a view to making recommendations on this matter. The Executive Committee is recommended to adopt the recommendations of the community governance review and establish parish councils for each of the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To recommend to council that it adopts and implements the recommendations of the community governance review to establish parish councils for each of the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham.
2. To recommend to council that it approves an order establishing the new parishes of Ansdell and Lytham includes the provisions for interim councillors.
3. To recommend to council one of the Band D precept options set out in Table 1 of the report (which will in turn generate the resultant estimated precepts for the new parishes as shown in the table), or any other Band D precept as the committee feels is appropriate.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

1. On 28 September 2020 the former Finance and Democracy Committee recommended that a review be undertaken of the pattern of community governance across the borough, and in doing so asked that initial attention be given to the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham.
2. As Fylde was then undergoing a Local Government Boundary Commission review of borough electoral arrangements, Council agreed on 19 October 2020 that the timetable for the community governance review would be moved back, so that the review started on completion of the Boundary Commission review. A consultation subsequently took place with borough councillors whose wards would be affected by proposed changes together with an online questionnaire for residents which was publicised through social media and other council communications channels. The outcome was recommendations for Parish Councils to be established in both Ansdell and Lytham by way of a community governance review and the details regarding this are attached at **Appendix 1**. However, members felt that as the on-line survey had a response rate of just below 100 that a more-wide ranging consultation was required to encourage broader views prior to a decision being reached.
3. A second consultation therefore took place during March and April of this year over a six-week period and the extent, and outcome, of this consultation is set out in **Appendix 2**. For completeness, a copy of the questionnaire used in the consultation is attached at **Appendix 3**.
4. A community governance review is a review of the pattern of parishes and parish councils in the whole or part of a district. The legal framework for reviews is set out in part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The terms of reference for the review in Fylde were to consider whether to create a parish council or councils to cover the unparished area of the district, and the outcome of the most recent consultation supports the outcomes of the original community governance review to establish parishes in the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

5. The review has so far consisted of four stages: initiation, stakeholder and community consultation x 2, and writing the report and recommendations. The final stage, if the recommendations are accepted, would be implementation.
6. The most recent consultation built on the earlier consultation conducted in 2022 (appendix 2). Well over a thousand local people took part in the second consultation. A letter informing residents of the consultation was sent to all households in the areas asking them to take part in the consultation via an online survey, paper survey or by contacting the council directly. Four in-person community events were held in Ansdell and Lytham. 1,165 survey responses were received and over 200 people engaged at the in-person events. 98 per cent of the survey responses were from residents, with an even mix from the wards covering the proposed parished areas. 78 per cent of survey respondents would prefer some form of parish council across Ansdell and Lytham and overall, more people were in favour of creating two parish councils. As a result, this report makes recommendations to establish parish councils for both Ansdell and Lytham.
 - [Proposal A1](#): A new parish council for Ansdell.
 - [Proposal L1](#): A new parish council for Lytham.
7. The Executive Committee is now asked to consider making formal recommendations implement the recommendations of the earlier community governance review to create parishes in Ansdell and Lytham and to approve the necessary formalities associated with this.

IMPLEMENTATION

8. If the Council agrees to create parishes in both Ansdell and Lytham, these would be implemented by an order. The order would be based on the relevant parts of the [model community governance reorganisation order](#) published by the Government.
9. The order would provide for the two new parishes to come into existence on 1 April 2025, and for elections to be held on 1st May 2025. Subsequent elections would be held in May 2027 and then every fourth year. This is the same pattern of elections as for other parish councils in the borough. In the short period between the councils coming into existence and the newly elected councillors coming into office, the order would provide for the borough councillors for the area covered by each new parish to be interim councillors¹.
10. The order would not automatically transfer any property or assets to the new parish councils, except for allotments. Any property or asset transfer would need to be negotiated and agreed between the borough council and the parish council concerned, after parish councillors have been elected.
11. District councils and parish councils are both allotment authorities. But a district council cannot exercise its powers as an allotment authority in an area that has a parish council². Consequently, responsibility for the allotments at Mythop Road and Moss Hall Lane would transfer³ to the new Lytham and Ansdell parish councils when the new councils are established.
12. 4,661 properties will be created into the new Lytham parish and the special expenses will continue to be charged in addition to the new parish precept. 4,385 properties will be created into a Ansdell parish and special expenses will continue to be charged in addition to the new parish precept.
13. The Revenues and Benefits Shared Service has advised the anticipated systems costs for this work, provided by Capita, will be chargeable. Costs will be sought from Capita and will be shared at the meeting if available. However, these costs are likely to run to several thousand pounds. There will also be the need to buy consultancy days for stationery changes and these costs are estimated to be circa £6,000.
14. The Revenues and Benefits Service also outlines that this is not an insignificant amount of work, and it is likely to impact on the timing of the main council tax billing process for 2025/26. As a result the service may have to reschedule other planned work possibly until the following year. There may also be additional overtime costs to undertake manual work required prior to any system changes.

FINANCIAL PROVISION

15. Parish councils are financed by a parish precept, which is collected by the borough council as part of the council tax in the relevant parish area. The parish council decides on the amount of the precept which the borough council then collects and passes on to the parish council. Because any new parish councils would not be in existence in time to decide on their precepts for 2025/26, legislation⁴ provides for the borough council to anticipate a precept.
16. The amount of the anticipated precept would be set out in the order establishing the new parish councils. The council tax calculation for each newly-parished area would treat the anticipated precept as if it were a precept issued by the new parish council. Detailed regulations provide for the transfer of the “precepted” funds to the new parish council, for the parish council to issue a precept by October (2025) of an amount not more than the anticipated precept, and for consequential adjustments.
17. It is proposed that the most appropriate town/parish precept upon which to base an estimated precept for the new parishes is St Annes. This is because St Annes is covered by the special expenses charges for open spaces maintenance just like the currently un-parished area of Lytham and Ansdell. In all other parishes in the borough

¹ The borough councillors for the wards of Lytham East and Lytham West would be the interim councillors for Lytham Parish Council and the borough councillors for the wards of Ansdell and Fairhaven and Park would be the interim councillors for Ansdell Parish Council.

² See paragraph 9 of schedule 29 to the Local Government Act 1972

³ In practice, the borough council would continue to manage the allotments on behalf of the parish councils until the parish councils put in place their own arrangements.

⁴ See the Local Government Finance (New Parishes) (England) Regulations 2008

the charge for open spaces maintenance is included within their precept, so there would be an element of doubling-up if any other parish precept was to be used.

18. St Annes Town Council has set the following precepts in recent years (band D figures):

- 2021/22 £22.64
- 2022/23 £23.58
- 2023/24 £24.73
- 2024/25 £37.03

19. The actual total precept for each of the new parishes can only be established once the tax base for the 2025/26 financial year has been confirmed in December 2024. In the absence of actual tax base data for the two new areas for 2025/26, the following table shows INDICATIVE ESTIMATES of the total precept receivable by each of the two new parishes based on the respective number of properties on the electoral roll for the areas of Lytham and Ansdell in June 2024:

Table 1: INDICATIVE PRECEPTS FOR NEW PARISHES BASED ON ST ANNES BAND D PRECEPT FOR THE LAST 4 YEARS AND THE NUMBER OF PROPERTIES ON THE ELECTORAL ROLL IN JUNE 2024:

					ESTIMATED SPLIT*	
	Year	St Annes Town Council Band D Precept	Lytham and Ansdell Tax Base for the current year (2024/25)	Estimated Total Precept Receivable By the New Parishes 2025/26	Estimated Lytham Parish Precept 2025/26	Estimated Ansdell Parish Precept 2025/26
OPTION 1	2021/22	£22.64	7,747	£175,392	£90,372	£85,020
OPTION 2	2022/23	£23.58	7,747	£182,674	£94,124	£88,550
OPTION 3	2023/24	£24.73	7,747	£191,583	£98,714	£92,869
OPTION 4	2024/25	£37.03	7,747	£286,871	£147,812	£139,059

* The estimated split between the two new parishes has been calculated based on the property numbers on the electoral roll as at June 2024, those being 4,661 for Lytham and 4,385 for Ansdell.

20. **The committee is requested to determine which of the 4 Band D precept options in Table 1 is the most appropriate to set as the precept level for the new parish councils for the financial year 2025/26, ranging from £22.64 per property to £37.03 (at Band D), or any other precept as the committee feels is appropriate. Setting precepts for subsequent years will be a matter for each of the new parish councils to determine.**

21. It should be noted that the two new parish precepts identified above will be charged **in addition to** the existing charges which are levied in these areas, including the FBC borough wide council tax charge and the FBC Special Expenses charge (which is charged primarily to pay for the costs of maintaining parks and opens spaces owned by FBC across the area of Lytham, Ansdell and St Annes).

CONCLUSION

22. The community governance review recommended the establishment of new parish councils in Lytham and Ansdell in light of the initial consultation, and the second consultation supports this. The committee is therefore asked to endorse the recommendations as set out and refer the matter to the council for its decision.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	✓

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The financial provisions including the mechanism for anticipating and charging precepts for the newly established parish councils are set out in the body of the report. The new precepts will be charged in addition to existing council tax and special expenses charged in Lytham and Ansdell. There may be some software costs associated with setting up the new parishes in the council tax system and allocating the relevant properties to their respective new parishes. It is anticipated that these costs can be met from existing budget provision, together with any additional costs incurred by the Revenue and Benefits Shared Service.
Legal	The legal provisions governing community governance reviews are contained in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
Community Safety	None arising directly from this report.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights or equalities implications.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	New parish councils will be able to contribute to achieving environmental sustainability at a local and community level.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No implications.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
<p>Community Outlook Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 14 May 2009: received a report recommending a community governance review of the whole of the council’s district. Recommended that a review be not carried out.</p> <p>Council, 27 July 2009: Commissioned a review of the whole of the council’s district.</p> <p>Council, 26 July 2010: Received the review; deferred consideration until further consultation had taken place.</p> <p>Council, 27 September 2010: Accepted the recommendation of the review to increase the council size of St Annes on the Sea Town Council; declined to go ahead with the remaining recommendations.</p> <p>Finance & Democracy Committee, 28 September 2020: Recommended a community governance review be undertaken of the whole district with a focus on the unparished areas of Lytham and Ansdell and areas of high development.</p> <p>Council, 19 October 2020: Commissioned the review with an amended indicative timetable to take into account the Local Government Boundary Commission for England’s electoral review of the council.</p>

Finance and Democracy Committee, 23 June 2022:

1. To note the recommendations of the community governance review as set out in pages 33-36 of the review report for adoption and further consideration by full council.
2. To arrange a Member Briefing on the matter to allow full consideration of the impact of this review prior to a future Council meeting.

Council from 12 October 2022:

Community Governance Review

Councillor Buckley introduced the report that detailed the finding of a received community government review with terms of reference comprising the whole of the council's district with a focus on the unparished areas of Lytham and Ansdell. Councillor Buckley proposed an amendment to the recommendation stated with the report to defer the decision to establish new parishes of Ansdell and Lytham until further public consultation had been carried out.

Although the public had already been consulted, in relation to the new parishes, the number of responses returned were so low that it could not be deemed as being an effective mandate from the residents of the areas affected. A wider and more extensive public consultation was therefore proposed.

Councillor Settle seconded the revised recommendations.

Following a brief discussion, it was RESOLVED to:

1. Accept proposals BW3, E1, RW1 and WS4/1 (which is referred to as WP1 in the covering report) as set out in the community governance review report.
2. Defer a decision on proposals A1 and L1 owing to low numbers of respondents from Lytham and Ansdell.
3. Commit to a further and more extensive public consultation in relation to proposals A1 and L1, the details of such consultation to be determined by the Finance & Democracy Committee.

Community Focus Scrutiny – 12 October 2023:

Community Governance Review of Lytham & Ansdell

Further to the resolution of Council on 12 October 2022, Paul Walker (Interim Scrutiny Manager) presented the report which sought to consider a proposal to advise the Executive Committee as to how further and more extensive consultation should be undertaken in relation to proposals to establish parish councils for Ansdell and Lytham.

Ian Curtis (Head of Governance) was invited by the Chairman to further expand on the details contained in the report.

Clarification was sought about the timeline for this review. This was addressed by the

Chairman. Following consideration of this matter it was RESOLVED:

1. A Task and Finish Group be established comprising Councillors Peter Anthony, Chris Dixon, Martin Evans, Gail Goodman, Gavin Harrison and Vince Settle to undertake a spotlight review to look at how further and more extensive consultation should be undertaken in relation to community governance proposals to establish new parish councils for Ansdell and Lytham.
2. That the Task and Finish Group make recommendations direct to the Executive Committee regarding the nature and extent of such public consultation.

Executive Committee – 5 December 2023:

Community Governance Review of Lytham St Annes

Councillor Gaunt, Lead Member for Finance and Resources, introduced the report into a proposed governance review for the unparished areas of Lytham St Annes. She advised that Community Focus Scrutiny Committee had

established a task and finish group to consider the public consultation arrangements for the Community Governance review.

Councillor Settle, Chairman of Community Focus Scrutiny Committee, advised that following detailed consideration of the various options about how further, and more extensive consultation, should be undertaken in relation to community governance proposals to establish new parish councils for Lytham & Ansdell, the Executive Committee was requested to consider recommendations from the scrutiny spotlight review.

Following a brief discussion, it was RESOLVED

1. That Fylde Council runs the proposed consultation via a mix of online and paper-based surveys along with some local events and sessions to promote the consultation exercise.
2. That the Council engage external consultation support to undertake all relevant analysis and reports on the survey data including, preparing and delivering stakeholder engagement sessions, qualitative analysis and reporting, survey project management and feedback session(s). (Identified as level 4 of the options presented to the task and finish group).
3. That if practicable, the Council commission the distribution of promotion of the survey via the Council Tax 2024/25 bills (to affected households only) issued in March 2024 and if that is deemed to be impractical, this be undertaken by a stand-alone mailing exercise to all households in Lytham and Ansdell.
4. That the consultation material should include information on the powers of the new parish councils along with the likely precept which will be set for the first year.
5. That the Executive Committee agree to an indicative timetable for the proposed consultation based on a projected date of Spring 2025 for the creation of any new parish councils.
6. That the consultation exercise (estimated at an appropriate cost of £10,000) be funded from other revenue budget savings.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM

Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Community governance review report	May 2022	Appended
Community questionnaire responses	Open March – April 2022	Town Hall, Lytham St Annes
Community governance reviews: Guidance and model reorganisation order	Updated 2010	www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-governance-reviews-guidance
Consultation on parishing	Open March-April 2024	Attached in appendix to report

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Attached documents.

Appendix One - Extract of Community Governance Review Report 2022

Appendix Two - 2024 Consultation Report

Appendix Three – Consultation Questionnaire

APPENDIX ONE

Extract of Community Governance Review Report 2022

Proposal A1: A new parish council for Ansdell and Fairhaven

1. The proposal is for the creation of a new parish of Ansdell and a new parish council for that parish.
2. The part of the urban area of Lytham St Annes not included in the parish of St Annes on the Sea is Fylde's only unparished area. The unparished area consists of the connected communities of Lytham and Ansdell (including Fairhaven). The population of Ansdell is 7,756⁵.
3. Ansdell is, by any measurement, a large enough community to be able to sustain a parish council. A parish council covering nearly 8,000 people would be one of the largest in the borough by population. A parish council for Ansdell would be "effective and convenient" in that it would be viable in terms of providing at least some local services, and easy to reach and accessible to local people⁶.
4. Ansdell is mainly Victorian in origin. It has a distinct local centre focused on Woodlands Road, serving the locality. Though undoubtedly part of the wider urban area of Lytham St Annes, Ansdell has its own distinct sense of place. The revitalised Ansdell Institute, as well as other local institutions like churches and youth organisations, underpin the local community and show that Ansdell has an identity that is complementary to, but separate from, its neighbours.
5. Despite this, without a parish council Ansdell does not have a permanent, democratically accountable voice that represents the specific interests of the community. This stands in contrast with nearly all of the rest of the borough, including neighbouring St Annes. There does not seem to be a good reason why Ansdell should be at this relative disadvantage in terms of representation. A separate parish council for Ansdell would be the best way of representing its interests and providing a focus for community life in the locality.
6. Proposals elsewhere in this community governance review recommend the formation of a new Lytham parish comprising the new borough wards of Lytham East and Lytham West (see [proposal L1](#)). The remaining unparished part of the borough would comprise the new borough

⁵ ONS Population estimates for 2020

⁶ See paragraph 63 of the DLUHC Guidance.

wards of Ansdell & Fairhaven and Park. The proposal would create a new parish of Ansdell comprising those two new borough wards⁷, except as noted in the paragraph below.

7. The exception is the most northerly part of the unparished area, bounded by Moss Sluice. That very rural area has little in common with the urban and suburban character of most of the unparished area and much more similarity to the scattered rural character of neighbouring Westby with Plumpton. This area would be excluded from the new Ansdell parish and incorporated into Westby with Plumpton (see [proposal WS4/1](#)).
8. The new Ansdell parish would therefore consist of the new borough ward of Ansdell & Fairhaven, together with the new borough ward of Park except for the part to the north of Moss Sluice.
9. A new parish council for Ansdell would represent a population of approximately 8,000. Most parish councils representing a population in the range 2,501 to 10,000 have a council size of between 9 to 16 councillors⁸. In Fylde, the closest three existing parish councils by population size to the proposed new council are:

Council	Population ⁹	Number of councillors
Kirkham	8,000	10
Freckleton	6,000	12
Bryning-with-Warton	4,000	9

10. Advice from the National Association of Local Councils, endorsed in the guidance, says that the minimum size for a parish council should be seven, with a maximum of 25. Having regard to this guidance and the size of existing parish councils in Fylde, the new parish council is recommended to have a council size of ten and to be divided into two parish wards, based on the new borough wards, with each electing five parish councillors.
11. The review must recommend a name for each new parish. The new parish could be called “Ansdell” to reflect the name of the most populous and central part of the parish where most services are concentrated. An alternative would be for the new parish to be called “Ansdell and Fairhaven”. The latter would reflect the name of the railway station and acknowledge that parts of the new parish are commonly referred to as “Fairhaven” and that places like Fairhaven Lake and the Fairhaven pub are important within the new parish. On balance, the shorter name “Ansdell” is considered to be preferable. The new parish council could resolve after its

⁷ It is noted that there is an incongruity between a borough ward called “Ansdell & Fairhaven” forming part of a parish called “Ansdell”, but the naming of borough wards is outside the scope of this review.

⁸ See paragraph 63 of the DLUHC Guidance

⁹ 2020 population as estimated by the Office of National Statistics, to the nearest thousand

formation to change its name if it preferred the longer name.

12. The review is also required to recommend whether a new parish council should have one of the alternative styles of “neighbourhood council”, “village council” or “community council”. The alternative styles were introduced by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. No existing parish council in Fylde has taken up any of the alternative styles. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the alternative styles have had minimal use across the country.
13. It is not proposed that the new parish council for Ansdell should have one of the alternative styles. This means that the new council would be known as “Ansdell Parish Council”¹⁰.

Proposal L1: A new parish council for Lytham

14. The proposal is for the creation of a new parish of Lytham and a new parish council for that parish.
15. The part of the urban area of Lytham St Anne’s not included in the parish of St Anne’s on the Sea is Fylde’s only unparished area. The unparished area consists of the connected communities of Lytham and Ansdell (including Fairhaven). The population of Lytham is 9,044¹¹.
16. Lytham, like Ansdell, is comfortably a large enough community to be able to sustain a parish council. A parish council covering more than 9,000 people would be the second largest in the borough by population. A parish council for Lytham would be “effective and convenient” in that it would be viable in terms of providing at least some local services, and easy to reach and accessible to local people¹².
17. People in Lytham are proud of their local area. Local groups such as the Civic Society work to preserve and maintain the built environment and heritage. Others like Park View 4U have engaged and energised the local community to provide public amenities. Campaign groups have mobilised the local population in opposition to development proposals that have been perceived as threatening to the character of the area.
18. Despite the successes and commitment of local groups and campaigns such as these, without a parish council Lytham does not have a permanent, democratically accountable voice that represents the specific interests of the town. This stands in contrast with nearly all of the rest

¹⁰ The new council could decide itself to adopt one of the alternative styles. It could also pass a resolution under section 245 of the Local Government Act 1972 to have the status of a town and would then be known as “Ansdell Town Council”.

¹¹ ONS population estimates for 2020.

¹² See paragraph 63 of the guidance

of the borough, including St Annes, which forms part of the same contiguous urban area. There does not seem to be a good reason why Lytham should be at this relative disadvantage in terms of representation. A parish council would fill this democratic deficit.

19. The unparished area presently comprises the new borough wards of Lytham East and Lytham West, together with Ansdell & Fairhaven and Park. It is notable that, apart from a very small-scale change around Church Road, the western boundary of the new Lytham West borough ward has been left unchanged by the 2021 review of borough wards. This is unsurprising, as the boundary runs for the most part through open land dividing Lytham from surrounding communities. It is recommended that the western boundary of Lytham parish should reflect that pattern and be coterminous with the boundary of the new Lytham West borough ward, The new Lytham parish would therefore comprise the new Lytham East and Lytham West borough wards.
20. A new parish council for Lytham would represent a population of approximately 9,000. The matters discussed in [paragraphs 29](#) and 30 in relation to Ansdell apply equally to Lytham. The proposal is therefore that the new parish council should have a council size of ten, that it be divided into two parish wards, coterminous with the new borough wards and with each parish ward electing five parish councillors.
21. For the same reasons as set out in [paragraph 32](#), it is not proposed that the new parish council for Lytham should have one of the alternative styles. This means that the new council would be known as “Lytham Parish Council”¹³.

¹³ The new council could pass a resolution under section 245 of the Local Government Act 1972 to have the status of a town and would then be known as “Lytham Town Council”.