



Community Governance Review (2017/18)

Final Recommendations (Revised)

1 Introduction

1.1 Central Bedfordshire Council, at its meeting on Thursday 26 October 2017 resolved that a Community Governance Review be conducted for the whole of the Council's area in accordance with Part 4 Chapter 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement and Health (LGPIH) Act 2007

2 The Review

2.1 The Review commenced on 1 November 2017, when the Council published a Terms of Reference document and invited initial submissions from individuals or organisations who had an interest in the Review. In the Terms of Reference, the Council published a timetable for the Review.

2.2 A briefing session was held at the Town and Parish Council Conference on 21 November 2017. All parish and town councils were invited to attend with the majority of the towns and parishes being represented. Officers also attended, by invitation, Houghton Regis Town Council, Leighton-Linslade Town Council, Houghton Conquest Parish Council and Eggington Parish Council to outline the remit of the review and process.

2.3 The formal consultation period, inviting interested parties to make initial submissions, commenced on 1 November 2017 and closed on 1 February 2018. The second consultation phase ran from 14 May 2018 to 6 July 2018. Consultation was published on the Council's web site, local libraries and public notice boards, but more targeted engagement was sent to:

- All Central Bedfordshire Councillors;
- All Town and Parish Councils;
- Bedfordshire Association of Town/Parish Councils;
- Central Bedfordshire Members of Parliament;
- Residents'/Tenants' Associations;
- Businesses/Business Forums/Small Business Federations/Area Forums;
- Bedfordshire Green Business Network;
- Bedfordshire & Luton Chamber of Business;
- Leighton Buzzard Business Club;
- Chambers of Trade/Commerce;
- Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charities;
- Community Voluntary Services;
- Voluntary Community Action;
- Citizens Advice Bureau – local offices;

- Campaign to Protect Rural England (Bedfordshire);
- Age Concern/Golden years/Over 60's Groups/Senior Citizens;
- Bedfordshire Police;
- Bedfordshire Police & Crime Commissioner;
- Bedfordshire and Luton Fire & Rescue Service
- Acting Returning Officer, Bedford Borough Council; and
- Acting Returning Officer, Luton Borough Council.

2.4 In preparing these final recommendations, the Council has been mindful of the initial and second stage submissions that have been received, which are referenced in this document. The Council also has the role of balancing these submissions against the wider requirements and duties that are placed upon it in the 2007 Act. In particular, the Council has a duty to ensure that community governance within its area under review reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area; and is effective and convenient.

2.5 In assessing these criteria, the community governance review is required to consider:

- The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- The size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

3 Parish and Ward Boundaries

3.1 Principal council wards cannot be altered by the principal council in a Community Governance Order. However, consequential arrangements can be made by the Local Government Boundary Committee for England (LGBCE) as to what related alterations should be made to the boundaries of the principal council wards, and the LGBCE may by order give effect to these recommendations.

4 Final Recommendations by Parish

4.1 As the Community Governance Review includes a review of the whole of the Central Bedfordshire Council area, this document is divided into sections relating to each parish to assist the reader to follow the proposed changes.

4.2 Each section follows a consistent structure, including a summary of the existing boundary areas, warding, the total number of councillors, the baseline electorate (September 2017) the projected 5-year electorate forecasts, the ratio of electors per councillor and the variance of the ratio from the average. Details of any representations received have been referenced, and an explanation for any changes have also been included.

SUMMARY OF FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Parish	Ampthill
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	12	6250	6881	521	573	+80%	Ampthill

Comments
<p>Town Council</p> <p>The Town Council at their meeting on 30 May 2018 accepted the 3 draft recommendations</p> <p>Consultation Responses (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the parish name of Ampthill should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree That the number of parish councillors on Ampthill Town Council remain unchanged (twelve): 1 agree, 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree That the boundaries of the parish be changed to incorporate the properties at Numbers 1 to 8 Yew Walk; 8 to 68 (evens) Cherry Tree Way; 7, 9 & 27 Exton Close and 1 to 7 (odds) Ailesbury Road together with the properties Houghton Park Farm, Houghton Park House and The Old Stables: 2 neither, 1 strongly disagree <i>“The town council should ask the residents if there wish to see parts of Maulden enter Ampthill parish and if not both council need to keep a border line between themselves”</i>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Ampthill should remain unchanged.
2. That the number of parish councillors on Ampthill Town Council remain unchanged (twelve).
3 That the boundaries of the parish be changed to add the properties at Numbers 1 to 8 Yew Walk; 8 to 68 (evens) Cherry Tree Way; 7, 9 & 27 Exton Close and 1 to 7 (odds) Ailesbury Road, currently within the parish of Maulden, together with the properties Houghton Park Farm, Houghton Park House and The Old Stables, currently within the parish of Houghton Conquest, and for the properties to be omitted from the parishes of Maulden and Houghton Conquest respectively.

Reason for the decisions
Developments in the 1980's and 90's extended across the parish boundaries of Ampthill and Maulden. Additionally, the more recent development at Houghton Park Farm has extended across the parish boundaries of Ampthill and Houghton Conquest. The changes rectify these anomalies.

Parish	Arlesey
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	15	4424	4682	295	312	-2%	Arlesey

Comments
<p>Town Council</p> <p>Recommends a reduction in councillors from 15 to 12. The Council has struggled to maintain its full quota of Councillors, with resignations mid-term resulting by-elections and/or calls for co-option.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1)</p> <p>One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Arlesey should remain unchanged
2. That the number of parish councillors on Arlesey Town Council be reduced to twelve; and
3 That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Arlesey.

Reason for the decisions
To implement the proposal of Arlesey Town Council that the number of parish councillors be reduced by three.

Parish	Aspley Guise
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Parish Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	12	1818	1833	152	153	-52%	Aspley & Woburn

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The parish Council agree to no change to parish name or boundary. They object to a reduction in parish councillors. The workload on councillors continues to grow. They are volunteers and a smaller number would put increased workload on those remaining</p> <p>Consultation Responses (30)</p> <p>Thirty responses were received with general agreement for all proposals. Respondents were in favour of reducing the number of parish councillors (77%). This was also reiterated in a number of the free text comments received. Within the 13 free text comments received, there were several on themes of agreement with reducing the number of councillors, and concerns about the way members are currently serving without being elected,</p> <p><i>"12 Parish Councillors. There are far too many councillors. Currently meetings are poorly attended, cumbersome and not fit for purpose. Currently there is a vacancy that has been filled. Reduce to 7!"</i></p> <p><i>"Councillors should be elected"</i></p> <p>Individual submissions</p> <p>I am responding to a recent document regarding the make-up proposal for Aspley Guise Parish Council. I was until recently a Parish Councillor and intend on re-joining shortly. I have to say that the proposed reduction of councillors to 12 to 7 is a fantastic proposal and one that I support wholeheartedly. The current running of the council is a shambles and is due in part to the number of councillors. There are too many on the council with vested interests and agendas that are not conducive to a smooth running parish. In principle, there is a lot we can do as a community that we are not doing; engagement with the parish is a particular bugbear to me. Currently the council is wasting time effort and money on projects and activity that are not aligned with what the village needs (in my opinion); a reduction will streamline the decision making process, clear out the 'dead wood' and enhance the experience of those participating in parish council meetings.</p> <p>I welcome your proposals to reduce the number of Councillors to seven for the reasons set out below.</p> <p>The current ratio of 1 Councillor to 152 Electors is woefully inadequate and inefficient. 152 electors is approximately 70 homes. I see no reason why an increased ratio of 1 to 262 would have an impact on the ability of a Councillor to perform their community role. The Parish Council, with 12 members, has always felt large and has a high turnover of Parish Councillors. Most recently, a new Parish Councillor lasted just three meetings before resigning! The Parish Council seems to be endlessly co-opting people. Too many people make it difficult for effective decisions to be made.</p> <p>The Parish Council will object to your proposal stating that it would increase the workload on Parish Councillors, yet a glance at a year of meeting minutes evidences little resident involvement (because many Parish Councillors do not talk to residents), and little is achieved. Perhaps the most damning evidence that your proposal</p>

is correct would be the attendance at the 14th May AGPC meeting where the proposal was discussed (and rejected): a third (4) of the Parish Councillors were not present, and given one vacancy, meant just 7 people were present!

In Aspley Guise (and this may well be a wider problem within CBC), there is little engagement from both the public and Ward Councillors - who in large - do not communicate with residents. Yet people are clearly keen to make a difference, because so many join - and quit - the Parish Council! If you look carefully at the current membership, it is largely a collection of people living near or next door to each other, which I also believe does not help promote democracy. For example, there are two members that live north of the railway line representing approximately 15% of residents, yet there only a dozen or so people living north of the railway line!

It is therefore my view that by reducing the number of Councillors on AGPC to seven, and hence introducing competition, you will vastly increase the chances of an election in 2019. It will encourage people to debate ideas and seek office, because the Parish Council will be smaller, more accountable and better able to make decisions. At present, AGPC is a very poor Parish Council and essentially unrepresentative of the wider community. I look forward to your change being implemented in time for the 2019 elections.

Final Recommendations

1. That the parish name of Aspley Guise should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Aspley Guise Parish Council remain unchanged (twelve); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Aspley Guise.

Reason for the decisions

The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Aspley Heath
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	9	521	536	58	60	-81%	Aspley & Woburn

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>I would like to confirm that Aspley Heath Parish Council wishes to remain with 9 members.</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Aspley Heath should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Aspley Heath Parish Council remain unchanged (nine); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Aspley Heath.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Barton-Le-Clay
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	13	4081	4100	314	315	-1%	Barton-Le-Clay

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The projected household development within Barton-le-Clay as referenced within the Local Plan is significantly higher than outlined within the Barton-le-Clay profile that forms part of the Governance review. The proposed increase in household numbers would make the ratio of electors to seats and the variance from average significantly different to the figures presented within the village profile. Any reduction in the number of Parish Councillors would result in a net increase in workload being distributed to fewer members. The proposed decrease in Parish Councillors may result in a weaker democratic process given that at committee stage less members would be required to be quorate and less members would be available to debate the agenda items in question.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1)</p> <p>One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Barton-Le-Clay should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Barton-Le-Clay Parish Council remain unchanged (thirteen); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Barton-Le-Clay.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

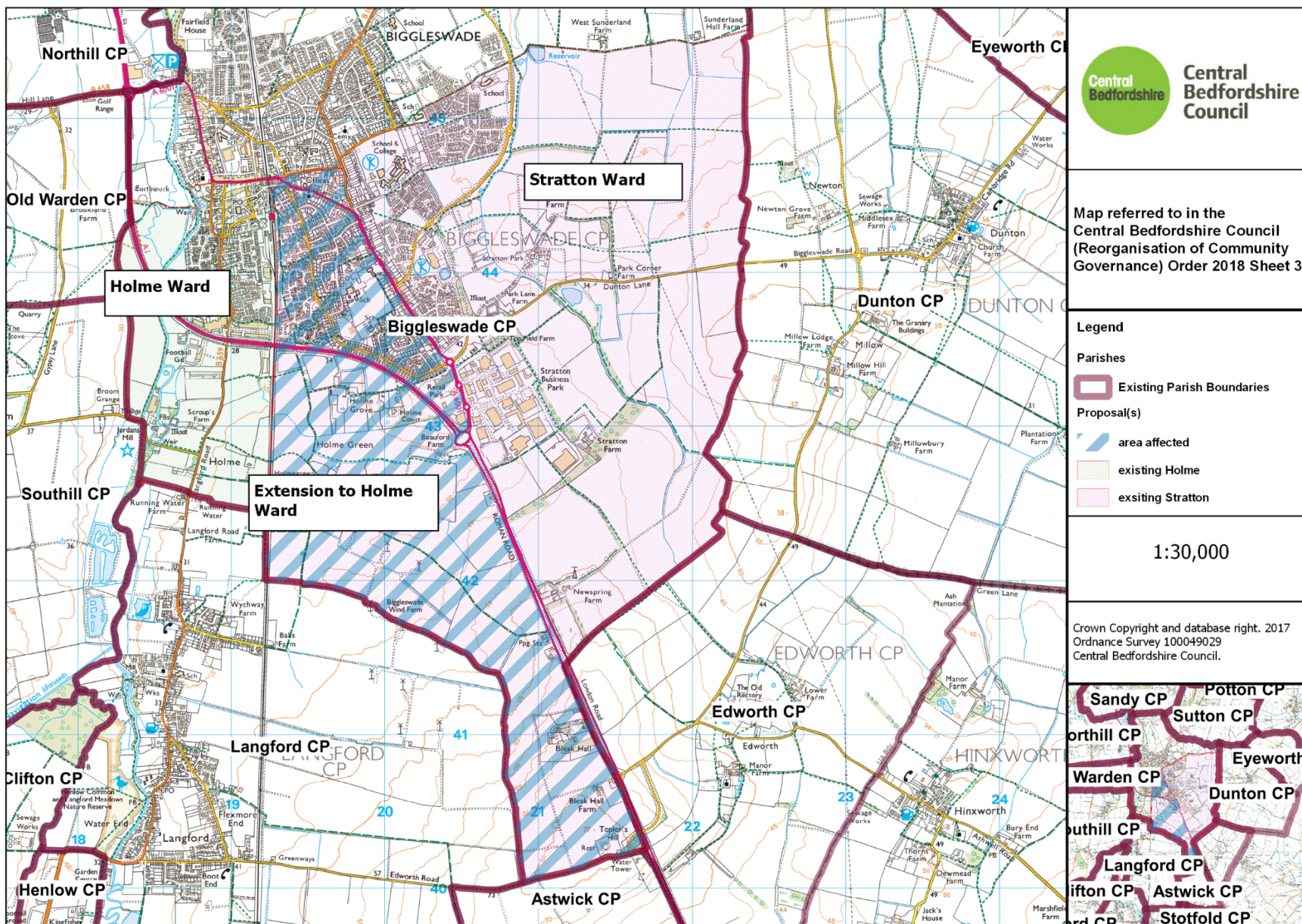
Parish	Biggleswade
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Holme	3	1834	1849	611	616	+93%	Biggleswade North
Ivel	7	6769	8284	967	1183	+271%	Biggleswade South
Stratton	5	6801	6801	1360	1360	+326%	Biggleswade South

Comments
<p>Town Council</p> <p>Propose to increase the area of the Holme Ward, based on the information we have, the electorate is currently 1804 with 3 Town councillors. The Holme boundary move would increase the electorate to around 4629 with the proposal that Holme ward has 5 Town councillors. The implication of moving the Holme boundary would be that the Stratton ward, current electorate 6793, would reduce to around 4379 with the 5 Stratton Town councillor positions remaining the same. Ivel ward, current electorate 6650, would reduce to around 6342 with the proposal that the ward has 5 Town councillors.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Biggleswade should remain unchanged: 2 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Biggleswade Town Council remain unchanged (fifteen) but amended to (Holme ward 5, Ivel ward 5 and Stratton ward 5): 2 neither, 1 disagree • That the parish ward boundaries, for the parish wards of Holme and Stratton be changed to provide a more equitable ratio of electors to seats:2 neither, 1 disagree • That the parish boundaries between Northhill and Biggleswade be redrawn to incorporate the Sainsbury's Supermarket, Tidy Tip and the properties 3 Bells Brook House and Numbers 1 to 18 Riverside Court into the parish of Biggleswade:2 neither, 2 strongly disagree • <i>"With new housing coming to Biggleswade Holme ward the council could lose two from the Ivel ward and put six councillors into Holme ward and four into Stratton ward reducing it to twelve and the changes with the tidy tip should go to the residents first as it would benefit Northhill and Biggleswade part of Central Bedfordshire in all."</i> • <i>"The River Ivel should remain as the boundary."</i>

Final Recommendations	
1.	That the parish name of Biggleswade should remain unchanged;
2.	That the number of parish councillors on Biggleswade Town Council remain unchanged (fifteen) but amended to (Holme ward 5, Ivel ward 5 and Stratton ward 5;
3.	That the parish ward boundaries, for the parish wards of Holme and Stratton be changed (as shown at map 3) to provide a more equitable ratio of electors to seats; and.
4.	That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Biggleswade.

Reason for the decisions	
<p>The draft recommendation to extend the parish boundary to incorporate the Sainsbury's Supermarket, Tidy Tip and the properties 3 Bells Brook House and Numbers 1 to 18 Riverside Court, currently in the parish of Northill, was rejected as the Committee accepts the argument that such a move would contradict the principles of natural boundaries; in this case the river Ivel.</p> <p>However, it was agreed that the proposal from the Town Council to amend the ward boundaries of Holme and Stratton together with a redistribution of seats across all 3 wards would provide a more equitable ratio of electors to seats.</p>	



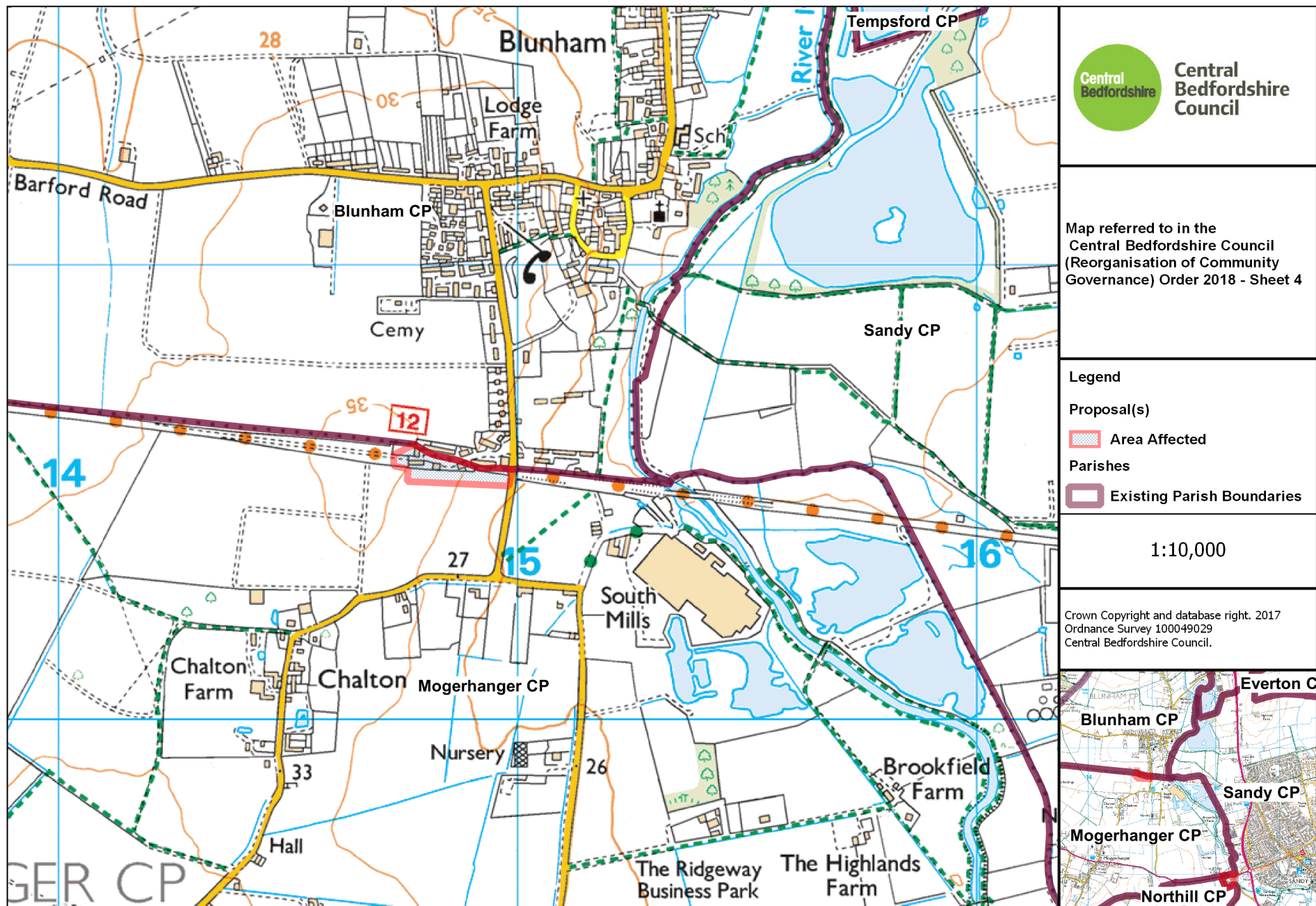
Parish	Blunham
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	827	1036	83	104	-67%	Sandy

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Blunham Parish Council has considered the proposals and would comment that the boundary change to incorporate the Old Station Court is supported. However, the reduction in Councillor numbers to 7 is not supported. Councillors would prefer to remain at 10. This gives enough councillors to spread over the various committees and roles without placing too great a burden. A Smaller number would mean far more responsibility for each Councillor, which would be too onerous and make it difficult to attract new members.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Blunham should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Blunham Parish Council be reduced to seven: 1 neither, 1 strongly agree • That the boundary of the parish be changed to incorporate the properties at numbers 7 to 17 (odds) and number 18 Old Station Court: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Blunham should remain unchanged
2. That the number of parish councillors on Blunham Parish Council remain unchanged (ten); and
3. That the boundary of the parish be changed to add the properties at numbers 7 to 17 (odds) and number 18 Old Station Court and to omit the properties from Moggerhanger parish.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government. Additionally, no objections have been received to the proposal to change the parish boundary, which has the support of both parish councils.



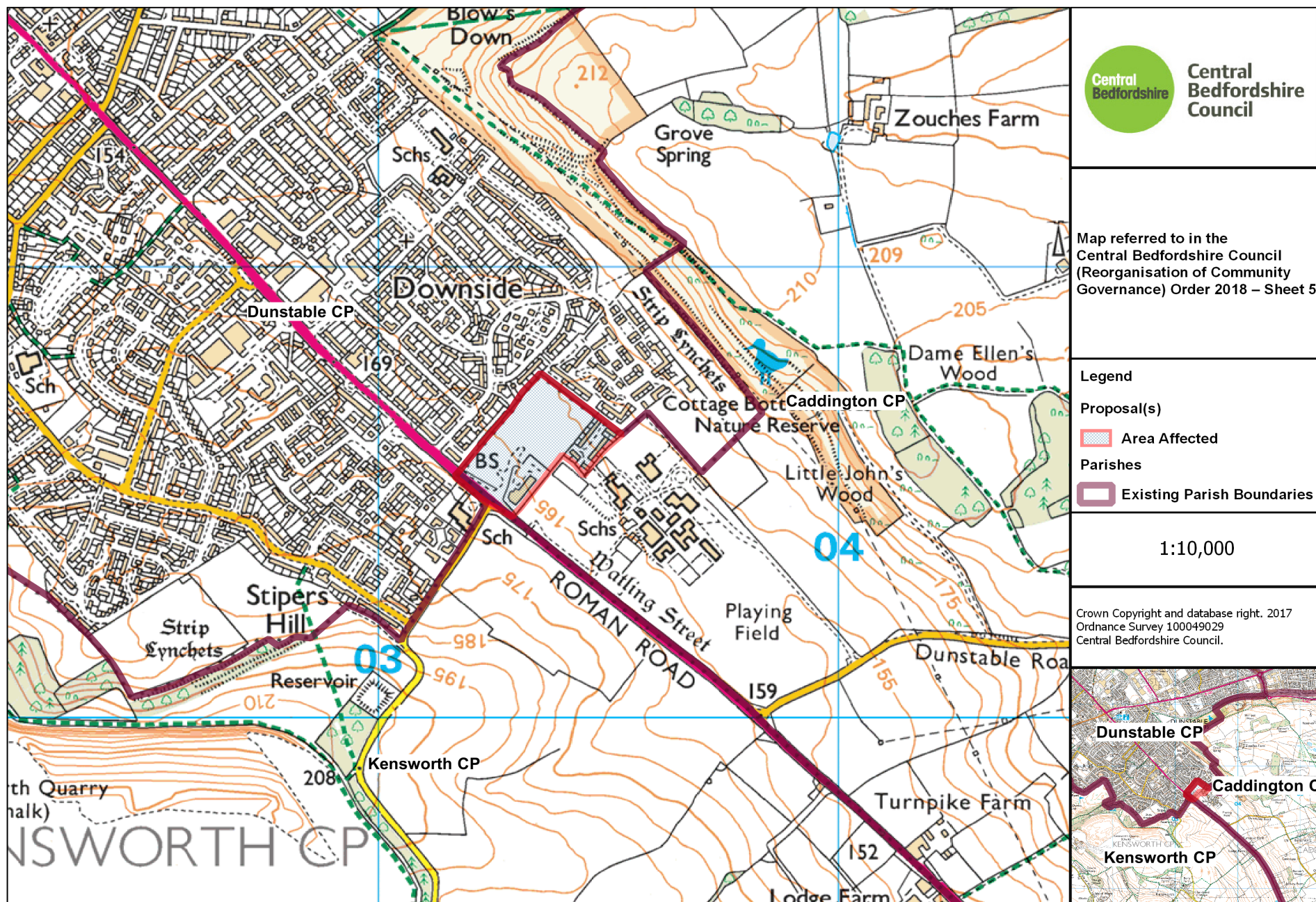
Parish	Caddington
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	3209	3675	320	368	+15%	Caddington, Hyde & Slip End

Comments
<p>Parish Council No response Consultation Responses (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the parish name of Caddington should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither That the number of parish councillors on Caddington Parish Council remain unchanged (ten): 1 strongly agree, 1 neither That the boundary of the parish be changed to remove the properties at Numbers 19 to 73 (odds) Norfolk Road together with the properties at Fossett Grove, Goodhart Crescent, Montgomery Grove, Renner Croft and Numbers 177 to 233 (odds) London Road: 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree <i>“There should be no plans to put the new housing estate built around the new travel lodge of the A5 coming into Dunstable part of Manshead for Caddington as it sits next to Downside and would cause upset with the residents on that side of Dunstable.”</i>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Caddington should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Caddington Parish Council remain unchanged (ten); and
3. That the boundary of the parish be changed to omit the properties at Numbers 19 to 73 (odds) Norfolk Road together with the properties at Fossett Grove, Goodhart Crescent, Montgomery Grove, Renner Croft and Numbers 177 to 233 (odds) London Road and to add the properties to the parish of Dunstable.

Reason for the decisions
Developments in the 1990's and in 2016/17 have extended across the parish boundaries of Dunstable and Caddington. The changes rectify these anomalies. It was noted that this recommendation to change the boundary would also require the agreement of the Local Government Boundary Committee for England as it affects Central Bedfordshire Council ward boundaries.



Parish	Clifton
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	12	2595	2838	216	237	-26%	Arlesey

Comments
<p>Parish Council I would like to confirm that Clifton Parish Council wishes to remain constituted with 12 members.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1) One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Clifton should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Clifton Parish Council remain unchanged (twelve); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Clifton.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Clophill
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	1420	1444	142	144	-55%	Ampthill

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Clophill Parish Council is very concerned about the recommendation that the number of councillors be reduced for 10 to 7. We believe that this would have a dramatic and detrimental impact on of the current administration of the council and may not allow us to promote the democratic and community involvement we believe we can delivery.</p> <p>We occasionally find that with Councillor commitments this can limit the number at a meeting and reduction to 7 would have a bigger impact on this. It would also limit the range of activities the Councillors can be involved with and place a greater workload on a smaller number of Councillors. It will also reduce potential options on skill sets available. All of the above is going to have a major impact on the demands on the time and resources of the Council Clerk.</p> <p>The number of Councillors will change over a period as this is a voluntary role and people's circumstances change. A large part of recent changes came about with the shift in demographics especially in relation to the age of the Councillors. With Councillors that stay on for a number of years the change can bring challenges when they leave and often recruiting the right Councillor may cause a number of changes in the Council but to date we have not had a situation where an election has been required.</p> <p>The Parish is going to grow and the growth figures supplied do not reflect the proposals that the Council have seen for housing development. The Council must take a long term view and plan for the required service needs of the future. We are concerned that these changes could result in a loss of identity at a local level and confusion amongst residents over responsibility levels. The new Councillors are settling in to their roles and making great strides towards building closer links within the village community and adjacent parish communities.</p> <p>Whilst recognizing the aim for equalizing number of Councillors vs the number of residents and a concern voiced on the cost of local elections on the CBC budgets, this further restructuring will lead to a further loss of identity and alienation within the community.</p> <p>In summary we resolved at the Annual General meeting to maintain the current numbers and stay as we are with 10 members and oppose the proposal by Central Bedfordshire Council. We believe this would lead to confusion in our community and the potential loss of a sense of place. We want to retain and develop strong logical links between the community and the Parish Council and maintain Council at 10 members</p> <p>Boundaries in Clophill with connections to the Parishes of Silsoe and Campton.</p> <p>We would also request that CBC investigate possible changes to the Parish Boundary.</p> <p>It has been noted that a small number of houses on the Old Silsoe Road are in a small enclave and a finger of the Silsoe Parish and the residents would benefit from being in the Clophill Parish.</p> <p>We would also ask if Speedshill Dairy could be included in the Parish of Clophill.</p>

The above suggestions are currently being explored with the adjoining Parishes and if they are willing to support this.

Consultation Responses (2)

- That the parish name of Clophill should remain unchanged: 2 neither
- That the number of parish councillors on Clophill Parish Council be reduced to seven: 1 agree, 1 neither
- That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Clophill: 1 agree, 1 neither

Final Recommendations

1. That the parish name of Clophill should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Clophill Parish Council remain unchanged (ten); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Clophill.

Reason for the decisions

The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Cranfield
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Cranfield	13	3673	4416	283	340	+7%	Cranfield
Wharley End	2	145	145	73	73	-77%	Cranfield

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>I advise that the Council have no objection to abolition of the ward of Wharley End. However, with the continued expansion and ongoing development of Cranfield and the associated increase in workload for Councillors, the Council objects to the reduction in the number of parish councillors to 13 and asks that the number remains at 15.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Cranfield should remain unchanged: 3 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the ward of Cranfield Wharley End be abolished: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither, 2 strongly disagree • That the number of parish councillors on Cranfield Parish Council be reduced to thirteen 1 neither, 3 strongly disagree • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Cranfield 2 strongly agree, 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree • All 3 responses to the free text question indicated a strong theme around growth in Cranfield • <i>"Cranfield is rapidly expanding and these proposed changes do not meet the needs of the area"</i> • <i>"With the increased housing experienced over recent years there is no justification to reduce the size of the parish council"</i> • <i>"How can you think reducing councillors is a good idea when Cranfield is growing at some ridiculous unsustainable rate & we need people to represent us"</i>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Cranfield should remain unchanged;
2. That the ward of Cranfield Wharley End be abolished;
3. That the number of parish councillors on Cranfield Parish Council remain unchanged (fifteen); and
4. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Cranfield.

Reason for the decisions

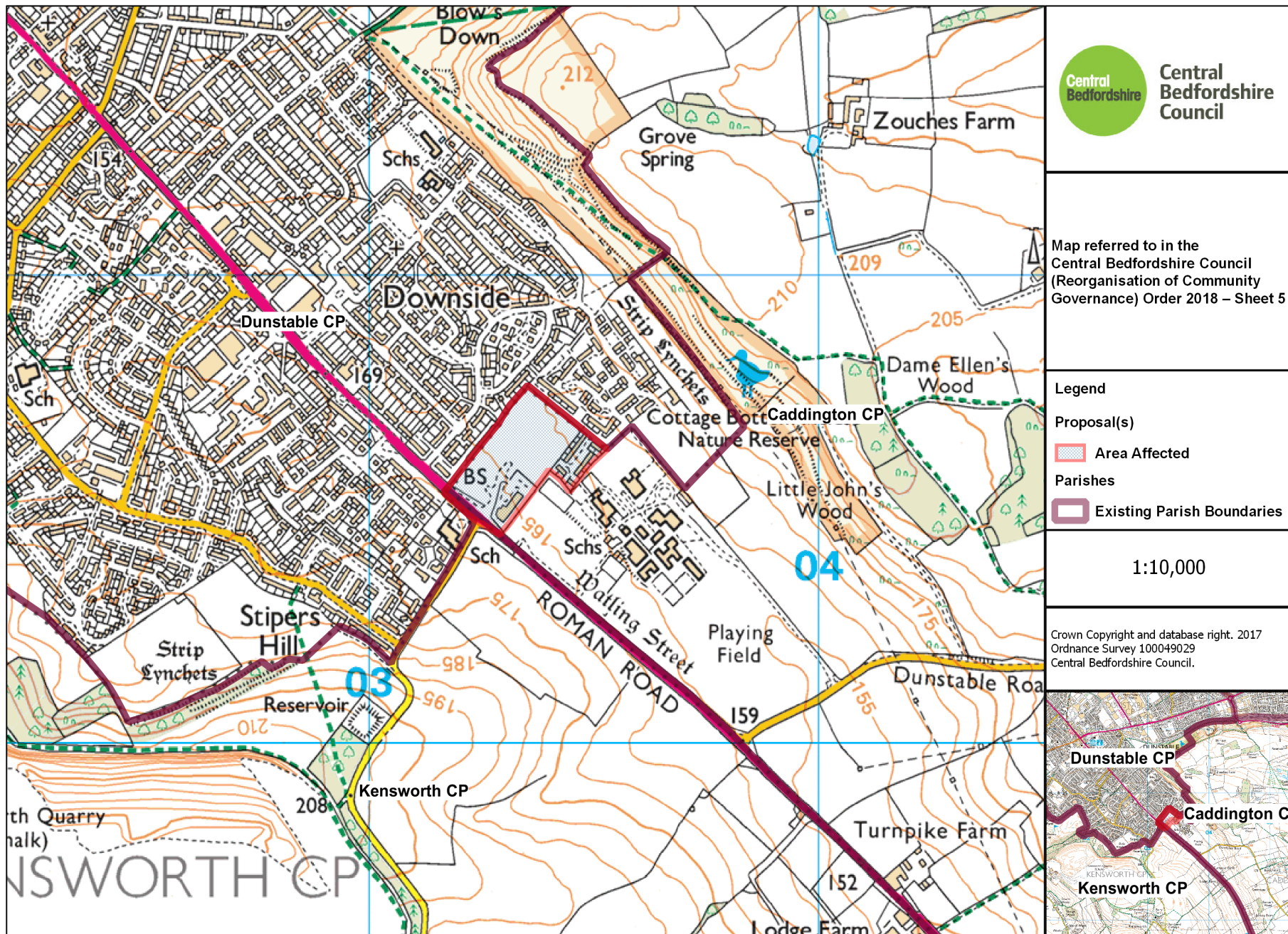
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government. However, it was agreed that the proposal, to which the Parish Council has no objection, that the current warding arrangements does not reflect the current distribution of population within the parish and is therefore unnecessary.

Parish	Dunstable
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Central	3	3775	3819	1258	1273	+299%	Dunstable Central
Icknield	5	6344	6847	1268	1369	+329%	Dunstable Icknield
Manshead	3	3883	3883	1294	1294	+306%	Dunstable Manshead
Northfields	5	7451	7777	1490	1555	+388%	Dunstable Northfields
Watling	5	7739	7739	1548	1548	+385%	Dunstable Watling

Comments
<p>Town Council</p> <p>At the meeting of the Town Council on 18 June 2018 it was agreed that the council was content to accept the GP Committee proposals.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Dunstable should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Dunstable Town Council be reduced to eighteen (Central Ward 3, Icknield Ward 4, Manshead Ward 3, Northfields Ward 4 and Watling Ward 4): 1 strongly agree, 2 neither • That the boundary of the parish be changed to add the properties at Numbers 19 to 73 (odds) Norfolk Road together with the properties at Fossett Grove, Goodhart Crescent, Montgomery Grove, Renner Croft and Numbers 177 to 233 (odds) London Road: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree • That the boundary of the parish be changed to effect the removal of the properties at Numbers 21 to 33 Portland Ride: 1 strongly agree, 2 neither • <i>"The council must have its councillors reduced back down to pre 2011 numbers as of 1988 - 2008 because of the cost to the tax payer and with the area in Manshead should not take in parts of Caddington due to the friction this will cause over both areas."</i>

Final Recommendations	
1.	That the parish name of Dunstable should remain unchanged;
2.	That the number of parish councillors on Dunstable Town Council be reduced to eighteen (Central Ward 3, Icknield Ward 4, Manshead Ward 3, Northfields Ward 4 and Watling Ward 4);
3.	That the boundary of the parish be changed to add the properties at Numbers 19 to 73 (odds) Norfolk Road together with the properties at Fossett Grove, Goodhart Crescent, Montgomery Grove, Renner Croft and Numbers 177 to 233 (odds) London Road and to omit the properties from the parish of Caddington;
4.	That the boundary of the parish be changed to omit the properties at Numbers 21 to 33 Portland Ride and to add the properties to the parish of Houghton Regis.
Reason for the decisions	
To implement the proposal of Dunstable Town Council that the number of parish councillors be reduced by three and to rectify a number of anomalies between the parishes of Dunstable, Caddington and Houghton Regis whereby various developments have traversed existing parish boundaries. It was noted that the recommendation affecting the changes to the boundaries of Dunstable and Caddington would also require the agreement of the Local Government Boundary Committee for England as it affects Central Bedfordshire Council ward boundaries	



Parish	Eaton Bray
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	9	2129	2144	237	238	-25%	Eaton Bray

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The Councillors raised concerns regarding the proposal to cut the number of Parish Councillors from nine Councillors down to seven. Due to the large amount of workload/duties carried out by the Parish Councillors they feel it is very important to maintain the quota of nine Parish Councillors for Eaton Bray Parish Council - to ensure the smooth running of the Council and to be able to give residents the help/support they need.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Eaton Bray should remain unchanged: 3 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Eaton Bray Parish Council be reduced to seven: 1 neither, 1 disagree, 1 strongly disagree • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Eaton Bray: 2 strongly agree, 1 agree, 1 neither • <i>"I believe that reducing the number of parish councillors in Eaton Bray will result in a serious degradation in service. Parish Councillors work hard on a voluntary basis and the proposed reduction in numbers serves no purpose and save little if any money."</i>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Eaton Bray should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Eaton Bray Parish Council remain unchanged (nine); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Eaton Bray.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Eggington
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	7	245	585	35	84	-74%	Heath & Reach

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The Parish Council agrees with the proposals. There is some concern regards the potential future imbalance between "Clipstone Park" and Eggington Village, given the small size of the existing parish. There is a view that having a greater number of residences within the parish will make it more viable as an entity, rather than see it swallowed up by its larger neighbours.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Eggington should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Eggington Parish Council remain unchanged (seven): 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Eggington: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Eggington should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Eggington Parish Council remain unchanged (seven);
3. That a further governance review of the parish be held when a substantial number of the proposed development has taken place; and
4. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Eggington.

Reason for the decisions
The Terms of Reference did not provide for the wholesale review of parish boundaries where there is currently no development.

Parish	Flitton & Greenfield
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Flitton	5	555	577	111	115	-64%	Westoning, Flitton & Greenfield
Greenfield	5	596	596	119	119	-62%	Westoning, Flitton & Greenfield

Comments
<p>Parish Council The Council requests that the number of councillors remains the same</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1) One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish names of Flitton and Greenfield should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Flitton and Greenfield Parish Council remain unchanged (ten); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Flitton and Greenfield.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Great Billington
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	7	280	285	40	41	-87%	Eaton Bray

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>At last night's Billington PC meeting we reviewed the boundary map and it was agreed that the triangle south of the bypass should come within Billington's boundary.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Great Billington be changed to Billington:1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Billington Parish Council remain unchanged (seven):1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Billington: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • <i>"Yes the village must just be titled under Billington and given a community title."</i>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Great Billington be changed to Billington;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Billington Council remain unchanged (seven); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Billington.

Reason for the decisions
The proposed extensions to the parish boundary to incorporate parts of Leighton-Linslade parish and Stanbridge parish is rejected as the proposals are outwith Terms of Reference of the review.

Parish	Harlington
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	12	1832	1857	153	155	-51%	Toddington

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Harlington Parish Council agrees that the parish name of Harlington should remain unchanged and that no change should be made to the parish boundary and after full consideration and minuted vote the Council asks that they require a minimum of 10 Councillors</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1)</p> <p>One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Harlington should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Harlington Parish Council remain unchanged (twelve); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Harlington.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Haynes
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	995	997	100	100	-69%	Houghton Conquest & Haynes

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Haynes Parish Council notes your recommendation that Haynes PC reduces its number of Councillors to 7. Councillors considered that given the disparate hamlets within Haynes, such as Deadmans Cross, West End & Church End, 10 Councillors are still preferred to ensure the best possible effort can be made to achieve representation from each of these areas. We therefore ask that you keep Haynes Parish Council set at 10 Councillors.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Haynes should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Haynes Parish Council be reduced to seven: 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Haynes: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Haynes should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Haynes Parish Council remain unchanged (ten); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Haynes.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Heath & Reach
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	9	1168	1183	130	131	-59%	Heath & Reach

Comments
<p>Parish Council Heath and Reach Parish Council would not like to reduce the number of councillors</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1) One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Heath & Reach should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Heath & Reach Parish Council remain unchanged (nine); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Heath & Reach.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Henlow
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Camp	2	1017	1017	509	509	+60%	Arlesey
Village	10	1819	1841	182	184	-42%	Arlesey

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Henlow Parish Council agrees that the Camp ward should be abolished but requests that the number of Councillors remain at 12. Currently there are many unoccupied dwellings at the RAF base, but there are plans to sell/let these bringing many more residents into the parish of Henlow. Henlow Parish Council also would request that the minor change to the parish boundary to bring the whole of the airfield into Henlow rather than in Clifton and in Henlow be considered.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Henlow should remain unchanged 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the Camp ward be abolished 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Henlow Parish Council be reduced to ten neither, 1 strongly disagree • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Henlow 1 neither, 1 disagree

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Henlow should remain unchanged;
2. That the Camp ward be abolished.
3. That the number of parish councillors on Henlow Parish Council remain unchanged (twelve); and
4. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Henlow.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government. Additionally, the proposal, to which the Parish Council has no objection, that the current warding arrangements does not reflect the current distribution of population within the parish and is therefore unnecessary.

Parish	Houghton Conquest
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	1286	2792	129	279	-13%	Houghton Conquest & Haynes

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The Parish Council is of the view that HCPC will not be sustainable in its current status, once the new developments in the proposed new "Thickthorn Ward" become established.</p> <p>Councillors are very keen to understand how we can move towards forming a new Parish Council for this Ward as soon as is legally & practically possible for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The clear disparity in character between the old village & the new housing makes a logical distinction between the two communities, which have different demands & challenges. b) The physical barrier of the new Country Park. This will completely separate these two communities. c) The different models for managing green space/grass cutting, will have significant financial implications. We understand that residents of Thickthorn Ward are likely to have their green spaces managed privately & will pay for it themselves. Over & above this they will then be obliged to pay towards the Village Ward green spaces, as it will be collected through the Precept. They would therefore in effect be supplementing the costs of running Village Ward. This is a large element of our Precept so it will not be insignificant, & seems unfair on these residents. <p>The fact that the Parish will double in size yet still retain only 10 Councillors is of concern. HCPC is an efficiently run Parish Council with an experienced Clerk, & all Councillors play their part by taking on roles & responsibilities. To have the Parish doubled with the same number of Councillors needs careful consideration. It is possible this would lead to increased staff costs if the Councillors could not cope with the extra responsibility. It may also lead to difficulties recruiting Councillors</p> <p>I can confirm that the Parish Council decided to request that your proposal to ward Houghton Conquest with effect from May 2019 elections be deferred. This is because the housing within your proposed "Thickthorn" Ward will have very few residents by that time. As such it is likely that there would not be any candidates come forward for this ward, whilst "Village" ward would have too many candidates, forcing an election.</p> <p>The inevitable outcome would be that the unsuccessful candidates for Village Ward would simply be co-opted onto Thickthorn Ward. Whilst the Parish Council encourages democratic elections, this does seem somewhat nonsensical, forcing the cost of an unnecessary election.</p>

The Parish Council proposes that it remains in its current set up in the short term until the new housing is more substantially occupied. At that stage, these residents can decide if they would like their own Parish Council. In the meantime, the Parish Council will actively encourage residents living in the new housing to join the Parish Council. If any of them do, they will be given the portfolio to represent the needs of these residents.

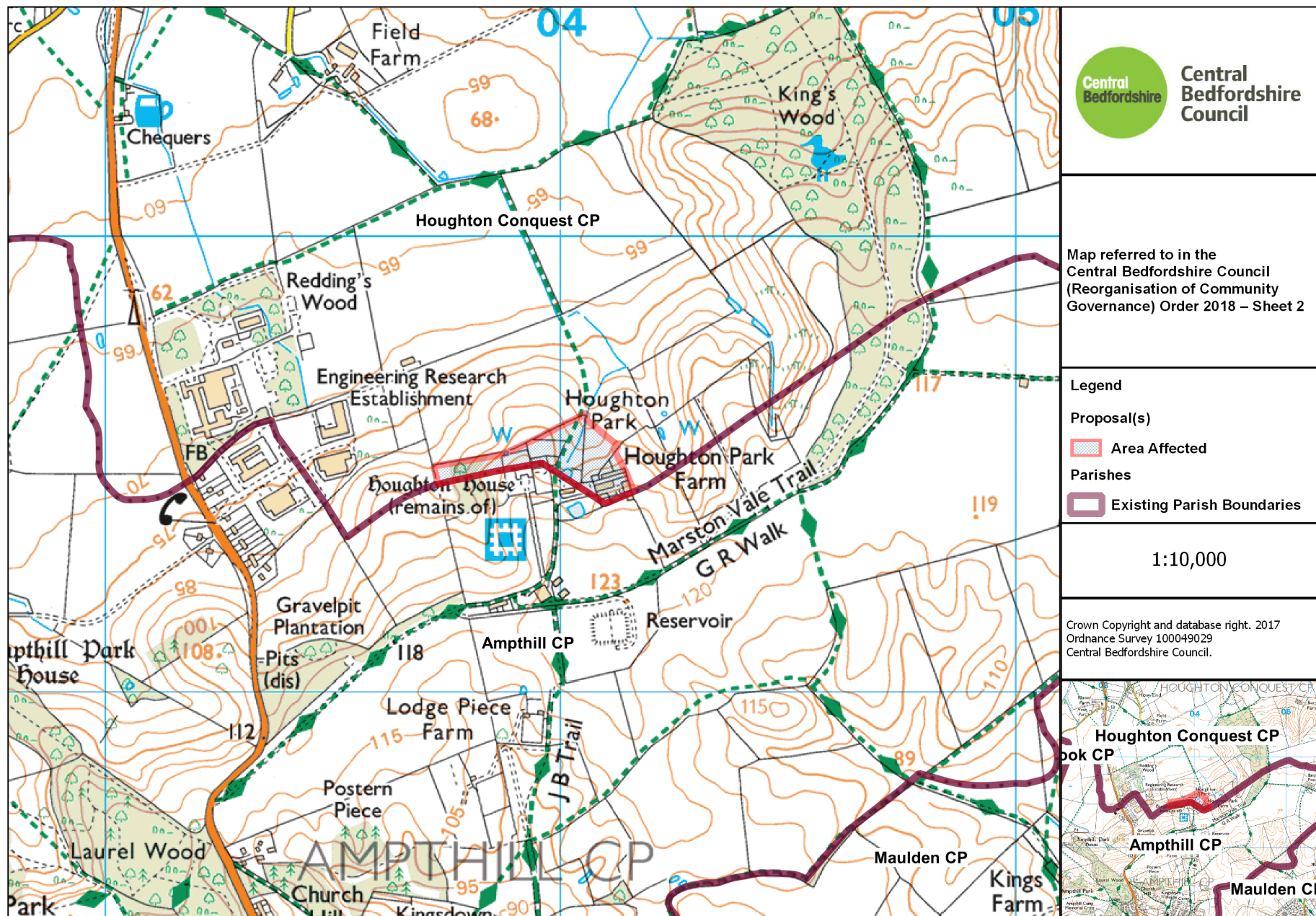
Consultation Responses (5)

- That the parish name of Houghton Conquest should remain unchanged: 4 strongly agree, 1 neither
- That the parish should be divided into two wards named Village and Thickthorn: 1 strongly agree, 1 agree, 2 neither
- That the number of parish councillors on Houghton Conquest Parish Council remain unchanged (ten): 2 neither, 1 disagree, 2 strongly disagree
- That the number of parish councillors for Village ward is five and for the Thickthorn ward is five: 2 neither, 1 disagree, 1 strongly disagree
- That the boundary of the parish be changed to exclude the properties Houghton Park Farm, Houghton Park House and The Old Stables: 1 strongly agree, 2 agree, 2 neither
- *“The Parish Council's aim is to achieve a new Parish be formed for the new housing, at the earliest opportunity. There are merits for the case for a new Parish Council as follows: a) The clear disparity in character between the old village & the new housing b) The physical barrier of the new Country Park which will separate the 2 communities c) The different models for managing green space/grass cutting, which will have significant financial implications. d) The fact that the Parish will double in size yet still retain only 10 Councillors.”*

Individual Submissions

- The council should have the councillors cut from ten to six and the new wards having three representing each one include all properties off Houghton Park Farm, Houghton Park House and the Old Stables.
- I agree with the suggestion of separating the old village and the new housing (Wixams Park, Greenlakes Rise, Thickthorn) as the needs of these communities are very different and the areas are also geographically distinct. The main Houghton Conquest (HC) village and historically-connected How End and Chapel End are currently very well looked after by our 10 hard-working Councillors. Many times, in the past they have had to manage with 7 or 8 members, due to resignations and lack of new people coming forward, and I know it has been a real struggle. The old village population has increased substantially over recent years with developments at Ridge View, Duck End, Bedford Road. Imminent population increase due to the large development on Chapel End Road (Kier) and Mill Lane. I cannot see how the Village could be adequately served by just 5 Councillors. Recruiting people to an existing body of 10 has proved hard enough. If the increased workload of serving a larger population is to be borne by just 5 Councillors, I think there could be great difficulties getting people to take on this responsibility. The needs (and financial requirements) of the two communities will be very different. For instance, the old village pays for its own grass cutting and management of green spaces, but the spaces and other communal areas are well-established. I understand that Thickthorn residents will be paying privately for their own green spaces but I imagine they may also have different requirement regarding getting their new communities going and will be looking for their precept to help towards this. I am not a Parish Councillor, just a resident of Houghton Conquest old village. Please be guided by comments from our current Parish councillors who between them have many years' experience looking after our community and know in detail what this job entails.

Final Recommendations	
1.	That the parish name of Houghton Conquest should remain unchanged;
3.	That the number of parish councillors on Houghton Conquest Parish Council remain unchanged (ten): and
5.	That the boundary of the parish be changed to omit the properties Houghton Park Farm, Houghton Park House and The Old Stables and to add the properties to the parish of Ampthill.
Reason for the decisions	
The draft recommendation to divide the parish into two wards is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that to create a ward for the new development, at this present time, would not be appropriate given the very small number of residents.	

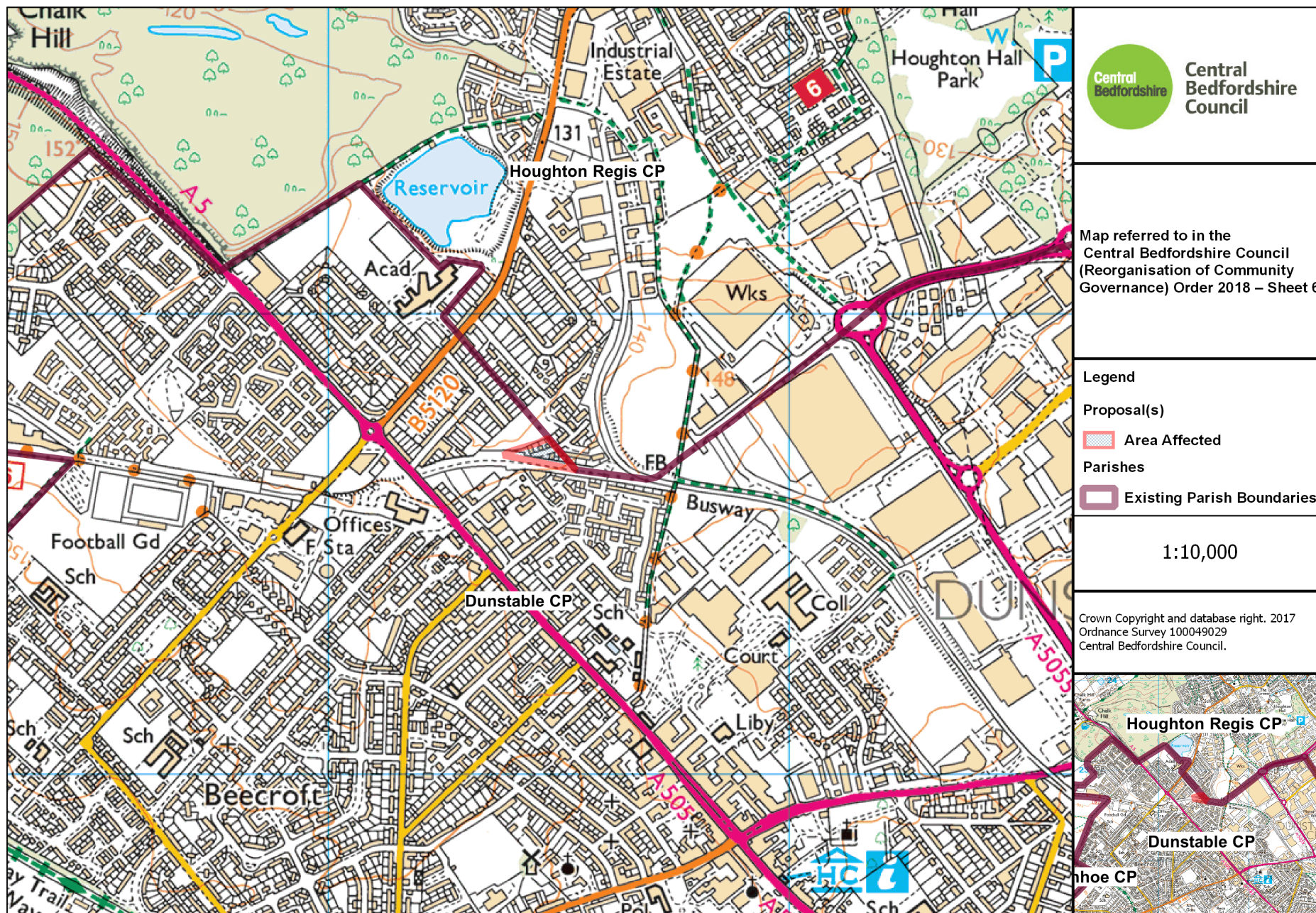


Parish	Houghton Regis
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Houghton Hall	6	6291	7741	1049	1290	304%	Houghton Hall
Parkside	4	3533	3584	883	896	181%	Parkside
Tithe Farm	4	3294	3294	824	824	158%	Tithe Farm

Comments
<p>Town Council</p> <p>The Town Council supports the CBC Stage 3 draft recommendations, namely: That the parish name of Houghton Regis should remain unchanged; that the number of parish councillors on Houghton Regis Town Council remain unchanged (fourteen); that the boundary of the parish be changed to effect the inclusion of the properties at Numbers 21 to 33 Portland Ride; and that a further governance review of the parish be held when a substantial number of the proposed development in the Houghton Hall ward has taken place</p> <p>Consultation Responses (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the parish name of Houghton Regis should remain unchanged: 2 strongly agree, 1 agree, 1 neither That the number of councillors on Houghton Regis Town Council remain unchanged (fourteen): 2 strongly agree, 2 neither That the boundary of the parish be changed to effect the inclusion of the properties at Numbers 21 to 33 Portland Ride: 2 strongly agree, 2 neither <i>“There should be no changes to the number of elected councillors and both Dunstable and Houghton Regis town councils could come to some agreement over the Portland Ride matter.”</i>
Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Houghton Regis should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Houghton Regis Town Council remain unchanged (fourteen);
3. That the boundary of the parish be changed to add the properties at Numbers 21 to 33 Portland Ride, and to omit the properties from the parish of Dunstable; and
4. That a further governance review of the parish be held when a substantial number of the proposed development in the Houghton Hall ward has taken place.

Reason for the decisions
The Development of Portland Ride has extended across the parish boundaries of Dunstable and Houghton Regis. The change rectifies this anomaly.



Parish	Kensworth
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	9	1168	1176	130	131	-59%	Caddington, Hyde and Slip End

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Kensworth Parish Council agreed at their meeting on the 10 May 2018 that they wish to reduce the number of Councillors to 8</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1)</p> <p>One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Kensworth should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Kensworth Parish Council be reduced to (eight); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Kensworth.

Reason for the decisions
To implement the proposal of Kensworth Parish Council that the number of parish councillors be reduced by one.

Parish	Langford
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	13	2590	2950	199	227	-29%	Stotfold & Langford

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>With the ever increasing number of developments in the village leading to an increase in population along with the fact that Parish Councillors are voluntary members then Langford Parish Council wishes to remain at 13 Councillor seats. This will allow the Parish Council to, in future, have opportunity to fulfil its maximum Councillor seats in order to undertake tasks and also to assist the Clerk in the ever increasing work load. To confirm our wish is to remain with 13 seats</p> <p>Consultation Responses (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Langford should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Langford Parish Council be reduced to ten 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Langford 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • “Langford is being overwhelmed with new housing without any changes to infrastructure. There are about to be another 95 houses built on Larman's land north of Tithe Farm Close. Your proposal to reduce the number of parish councillors will reduce the number of volunteer councillors willing to fight Langford's corner whilst the issues faced by the village continue to increase, without any sign of abatement. The number of councillors could be increased rather than decreased...”

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Langford should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Langford Parish Council remain unchanged (thirteen); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Langford.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Leighton-Linslade
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Barnabas	3	4260	4335	1420	1445	+353%	Linslade
Brooklands	2	2751	2751	1376	1376	+331%	Leighton Buzzard South
Grovebury	4	6231	7226	1558	1807	+466%	Leighton Buzzard South
Leston	1	1401	1401	1401	1401	+339%	Leighton Buzzard South
Planets	2	3493	3862	1747	1931	+505%	Leighton Buzzard North
Plantation	3	4573	5347	1524	1782	+459%	Leighton Buzzard North
Southcott	4	5270	5270	1318	1318	+313%	Linslade
St George's	2	3355	3355	1678	1678	+426%	Leighton Buzzard North

Comments
<p>Town Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town Council does not seek any changes to the existing parish ward boundaries at this time. However, the Council recognises that a review of parish ward boundaries may become necessary at a future date, following completion of scheduled development, in order to address any inequity between wards and ensure consistency of representation. The Town Council does not seek any change to the number of elected representatives at the parish at this time. There can be no argument that the 21 seats on the town council are difficult to fill when all wards were heavily contested in 2015, especially Southcott with 15 candidates for the 4 seats and where the turnout of electors was particularly high. <p>Consultation Responses (27)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 92% agreed for the name of Leighton-Linslade to remain.

- For the questions regarding the changing of wards, there is overall disagreement with the proposal to incorporate the parish ward of Leston into Brooklands, with 67% against this, and 64% against the abolishment of the parish ward of Leston. There is very strong disagreement to reduce the number of parish councillors (82%), with only 15% in agreement with the proposal. This is echoed in the free text response.
- There is general agreement that no changes should be made to the parish boundary (64%)
- Twenty-three free text comments were received. The main themes are agreement with a slight reduction in the number of councillors, but also concern that Leighton-Linslade is growing and the reduced numbers of councillors may not be sufficient. A number of comments identified Southcott in particular as needing the 4 seats it currently has.
- *“Leighton-Linslade Town Council undertakes crucial work for the community, including some duties formerly carried out by the Central Beds Council. it is highly valued by local residents. Population continues to grow, and the pace is likely to increase with extensive house building scheduled over the next few years. There can be no case for reducing the number of Town Councillors in these circumstances.”*
- *“Reducing Southcott lessens Linslade's significance when until 1965 it was a discrete town with its own identity which still prevails today. The number of overall councillors should not be reduced in both Southcott and the growing town.”*

Individual Submissions

- The Council could merge both Leston and Brooklands together and reduce another one out two out of Barnabas and Southcott wards and bring the councillors down to eighteen with one in the new ward of Leston and Brooklands.
- New developments in other parishes that directly border Leighton Linslade should be incorporated into the parish.
- The number of twin councillors should not be reduced. Southcott justifies 4 councillors.
- As these councillors are unpaid I see no reason to cut the numbers down, and for the same reason as they are unpaid that makes them volunteers so why give them a larger area to cover, and us the public less chance of meeting or getting our councillor to see any problems we have. Maybe the way to go would be to cut down the number of paid CBC councillors we have or dare I say remove some of the very highly paid officers at Chicksands.
- Leighton is a fast-growing town and the largest in Beds. We need all the councillors we can get, especially needed in the Linslade area because we are a little separated from the body of Leighton, and we certainly need more than 3.
- Reducing Southcott lessens Linslade's significance when until 1965 it was a discrete town with its own identity which still prevails today. The number of overall councillors should not be reduced in both Southcott and the growing town.
- Leighton-Linslade Town Council undertakes crucial work for the community, including some duties formerly carried out by the Central Beds Council. it is highly valued by local residents. Population continues to grow, and the pace is likely to increase with extensive house building scheduled over the next few years. There can be no case for reducing the number of Town Councillors in these circumstances.
- I consider the arguments, strongly against the proposed changes to the reduction in the number of councillors representing a growing population, and against the changing of the local boundaries of Brooklands and Leston, to merit all the support it can achieve. My wife and I moved, late last year, from Linslade to Brooklands area and we definitely remain opposed to these suggestions.
- As the population is going to increase from 40000 to 50000 in the near future, we need strong local councillors input---we do not need the changes local councillors are often ignored by "bloated councillors at Chicksands " they have no respect for local democracy. Suggest they are re arranged or culled as they are overpaid /bloated. I do not expect Chicksands to listen ---. they boast that we will be informed at every stage ---they said so about the local housing plans and expect the public to be over joyed when having thousands of houses built next door. The current governance arrangements should remain unchanged for the near future (but see comments on parish boundary). The proposal to reduce the number of Southcott councillors and adsorb

Leston into Brooklands lacks logic (replacing any "irregularity" by an equal but opposite "inequality"). It is justified neither by earlier public comment, nor the nature and size of the town and the vitality of the democratic process shown in recent local elections. It appears from the results of the Part 1 Consultations that there were a mere 20 responses regarding the number of councillors on Leighton-Linslade Town Council with only 12 of these requesting a change. It is not clear how many of those requesting change thought an increase rather than a decrease should result. Moreover, from the comments quoted, it is clear that some demonstrated a stark lack of understanding about what they were commenting on - one stated that there were far too many councillors claiming far too much in allowances; yet no councillor receives an allowance! Another felt there were too many from one party which is clearly a political comment of no relevance to the total number of councillors for the town. The Town Council requested no change. It is, therefore, difficult to understand the "steer" in the paper presented to the General Purposes Committee in March that the submissions from the majority of the public requested that the number of councillors be reduced, which is consistent with the government advice that the conduct of parish council business does not usually require a large body of councillors. This is both at odds with what appears in the reports of the consultation elsewhere (summarised above) as well as seemingly ignoring the fact that Leighton-Linslade is significantly the largest town in Central Bedfordshire with dynamic development in train and, therefore, more than adequate justification for the current number of councillors. It is also noted that the proposals made reflect the suggestions of three Central Bedfordshire councillors from Leighton-Linslade in their joint representations during the first round of consultation, though the figure for electors given, for example, in the Southcott Ward (1281 per seat) does not accord with those in the paper for the March General Purposes Committee (1318 per seat). I can see no justification for the proposals to change the number of seats in Leighton-Linslade, especially the reduction proposed in Southcott, at this time, when it appears generally accepted that, because of the developments currently taking place in the town, there may well need to be far ranging changes to boundaries and seats for 2023. It would seem unnecessary and disruptive to make changes currently proposed for the town against this overall background. In short, the changes proposed to seat numbers in Leighton-Linslade are highly dubious in terms of:

1. The evidence on which the proposal was made to the General Purposes Committee which would appear to have misrepresented the true position and be challengeable.
2. Reducing the number seats in Southcott and absorbing that in Leston into Brooklands would simply mean those wards would then have the highest number of electors per seat rather than (just) the lowest. This would be as hard, if not harder to defend than the current position. The current discrepancies between the electors per seat in the wards is not on any measure excessive, although this will indeed change in future years when much wider ranging changes will be necessary including to boundaries.
3. There can be no argument that the 21 seats on the Town Council are difficult to fill when all wards were heavily contested in 2015, especially Southcott with 15 candidates for the 4 seats and where the turnout of electors was particularly high.
4. The dynamic and developing nature of the town merits the current number of councillors bearing in mind that all are volunteers and there is a commensurately increasing workload.
5. Linslade was a distinct settlement in Buckinghamshire until 1965 and still retains an identity within Leighton-Linslade heightened by the geography and single bridge over the canal and river connecting with Leighton Buzzard town centre. Diminishing the number of Linslade seats from 7 to 6 would be highly negative from this community viewpoint.

PARISH BOUNDARIES: Most of the currently proposed Urban Expansion of Leighton-Linslade, which will see an increase in the town's effective population of several thousands will not formally be within the boundaries of Leighton-Linslade as things currently stand but rather in the Parish of Eggington, even though care has been taken to ensure that the village of Eggington itself is separated from the new building. Unless quickly corrected, this will give rise to major and indefensible anomalies.

1. Large numbers of people in the new developments will utilise the facilities and services provided by the Town Council through the element of the Council Tax paid by Leighton-Linslade residents which comes to the town, but will make no contribution to them.
2. Neighbours in the same street in parts of the new developments may end up paying significantly different amounts of Council Tax purely dependent on the location of the parish boundary.
3. However, the entire urban expansion is meant to be an integral part of Leighton-Linslade but, while physically part, large built up areas would be administratively separate with clear anomalies that would then result. For example, there is a proposed new cemetery to help relieve the growing pressure on the available facilities in the town but burials of Leighton-Linslade residents in it, as things stand, would be "out of parish" (ie in Eggington) which is normally more expensive. Any logical analysis dictates that the area of the new developments (but

nothing more) should be reallocated to all being within the parish of Leighton-Linslade as a matter of common sense, reality and fairness as soon as possible and before the phases of the new developments in the Eastern Expansion which are now seeking planning permission complete any construction.

- There is full justification for 4 seats and in an area of growing size, I think the largest in Central Beds, there can be no valid reason to make a reduction.
- The size of Southcott Justifies four seats and I oppose any reduction. the town of Linslade/Leighton Buzzard is the biggest town in the county and should maintain its number of town councillors
- I Think it is unacceptable to lower the number of seats in Southcott or the town considering it is the biggest town in Bedfordshire, all the councillors we have should remain as we are at present.
- Bedfordshire counties biggest town should keep all its seats and Southcott should NOT lose any seats either.
- I strongly believe that Leighton-Linslade as a town with a population that is growing faster than it can accommodate, with inadequate healthcare and policing for its residents, needs full support and representation from the local authority. Therefore, maintaining the number of councillors to ensure the town's requirements are fully met is a necessity. I do not wish to see any reduction in the number of councillors for this parish.
- Southcott should keep four seats on the council, there is no justification for reducing the number. The speed with which Leighton - Linslade is growing in size and the fact that it is the largest town in Central Bedfordshire means there should be no reduction in numbers of Town Councillors. They are all unpaid volunteers and with the growth of the town, an increasing workload. What strange forces are at work here?
- Linslade justifies four seats and therefore should not be reduced. The town is growing and because Leighton Linslade is the largest town in Central Bedfordshire and is continuing to grow there should not be a reduction in the number of town councillors.
- The Parish arrangements for Leighton-Linslade were approved for the 2011 elections, by the local Government Boundary Commission for England. The approved arrangement was designed to serve until the next scheduled review, in readiness for the 2023 election. In the light of the expected development to the east of the parish, any change now is premature and taken with CBC suggestion 4 of a review when some development has taken place will cause two changes in a short time, one of which is unnecessary.
- The boundaries seem to relate to town council boundaries rather than parish boundaries which are historically church related. I would be concerned about the abolition of wards which may just be a spelling mistake (but I am not sure that Leighton-Linslade and Leston ever existed). Reducing parish councillors could leave the area short staffed. Using the Philip's Bedfordshire Atlas (2001) as reference it would seem that some parishes are using properties outside their boundaries and leaving some properties uncovered. I think this is a good thing for cross fertilisation of experiences and leaving space or excluded areas to develop the unknown. Some wards are rivers, hills, business parks and schools. Some places appear fictional. I think councillors need back up and support.
- The town of Leighton-Linslade is growing rapidly and as a major town in Bedfordshire it should retain its 21 Councillors. Southcott and Barnabas constitute Linslade and they should retain 7 Councillors. Linslade is a thriving community and Southcott should continue to have 4 councillors in the future to maintain the cohesion.
- The current number of Councillors (21) is only just enough to satisfy the needs of a growing Town. To reduce the numbers of Councillors in the Linslade wards from 7 to 6 would be detrimental to the future governance of the whole community and the Town.
- I am writing as the secretary of Leighton-Linslade Branch Labour Party. We disagree with the proposal to combine Leston and Brooklands wards, specifically to oppose the proposed reduction in the number of councillors representing these areas from 3 to 2. At a time when the population of the parish of Leighton-Linslade is increasing, we believe that the reduction in the number of councillors will create workload problems for the council. We are surprised that the review did not also consider splitting Grovebury ward into two wards. It is a very large ward and one suggestion would be to separate Sandhills and the Billington Park housing, especially with the large new housing development in Theedways. At our recent Branch meeting, we urged CBC to reconsider its plans.

- As the town continues to expand it seems short sighted to decrease the number of councillors overall to 19. The 21 current seats are justified considering the workload and the fact that Leighton-Linslade is the largest town in Central Beds. As a Linslade resident I feel that it would be a highly negative move if we lost one of our representatives for the area. Also, if Brooklands and Leston are incorporated, rather than losing a seat, surely, they would require three councillors?

Final Recommendations

1. That the parish name of Leighton-Linslade should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Leighton-Linslade Town Council remain unchanged;
3. That a further governance review of the parish be held when a substantial number of the proposed development that traverses the parish of Eggington has taken place; and
4. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Leighton-Linslade.

Reason for the decisions

The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Lidlington
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	9	1071	1124	119	125	-61%	Cranfield

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Lidlington Parish Council wish to stay as a 9-member Council for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the workload at Lidlington is abnormal for a small parish, this is not just a one off, but a regular issue that the Parish Council have, with numerous very significant important items that impact on the parish and therefore the Lidlington parishioners. This is challenging to manage with 9 representatives, if this were to be reduced it would be even more impossible. - Lidlington PC have never had a recruitment issue and have always been able to maintain a full complement of Councillors, which as detailed above is needed for the heavy workload. <p>The Parish Council feel reducing the numbers would have a detrimental impact on the effectiveness of the Council especially in light of the application to build 5,000 houses within the parish.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Lidlington should remain unchanged: 3 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Lidlington Parish Council be reduced to seven: 3 neither, 1 strongly disagree • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Lidlington: 3 strongly agree, 1 neither • "Area growing more not less representation for the people is needed"
Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Lidlington should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Lidlington Parish Council remain unchanged (nine); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Lidlington.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Marston Moretaine
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	12	4442	5265	370	439	+38%	Cranfield

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Marston Moreteyne Parish Council, having given matters due consideration, supports the draft recommendations put forward by Central Bedfordshire Council in regard to community governance for Marston Moreteyne.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (31)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses were split as to whether the parish name should be changed, with 48% in favour, and 48% against. Respondents generally agreed that the number of councillors should remain unchanged (58%). 75% of respondents agreed with no change to the boundary. • Marston Moretaine received 8 free text comments. They covered the topics of the change of names (with comments both for and against), as well as increased growth which may require a growth in size of parish council, • “Traditionally we are Moreteyne - please let's revert and keep something of our tradition.” • “Marston Moretaine should remain the parish name.” • “With the volume of new housing the parish council should increase in size accordingly”

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name be changed to Marston Moreteyne;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Marston Moreteyne Parish Council remain unchanged (twelve); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Marston Moreteyne.

Reason for the decisions
To implement the proposal of the Parish Council that the name of the parish be changed Marston Moreteyne.

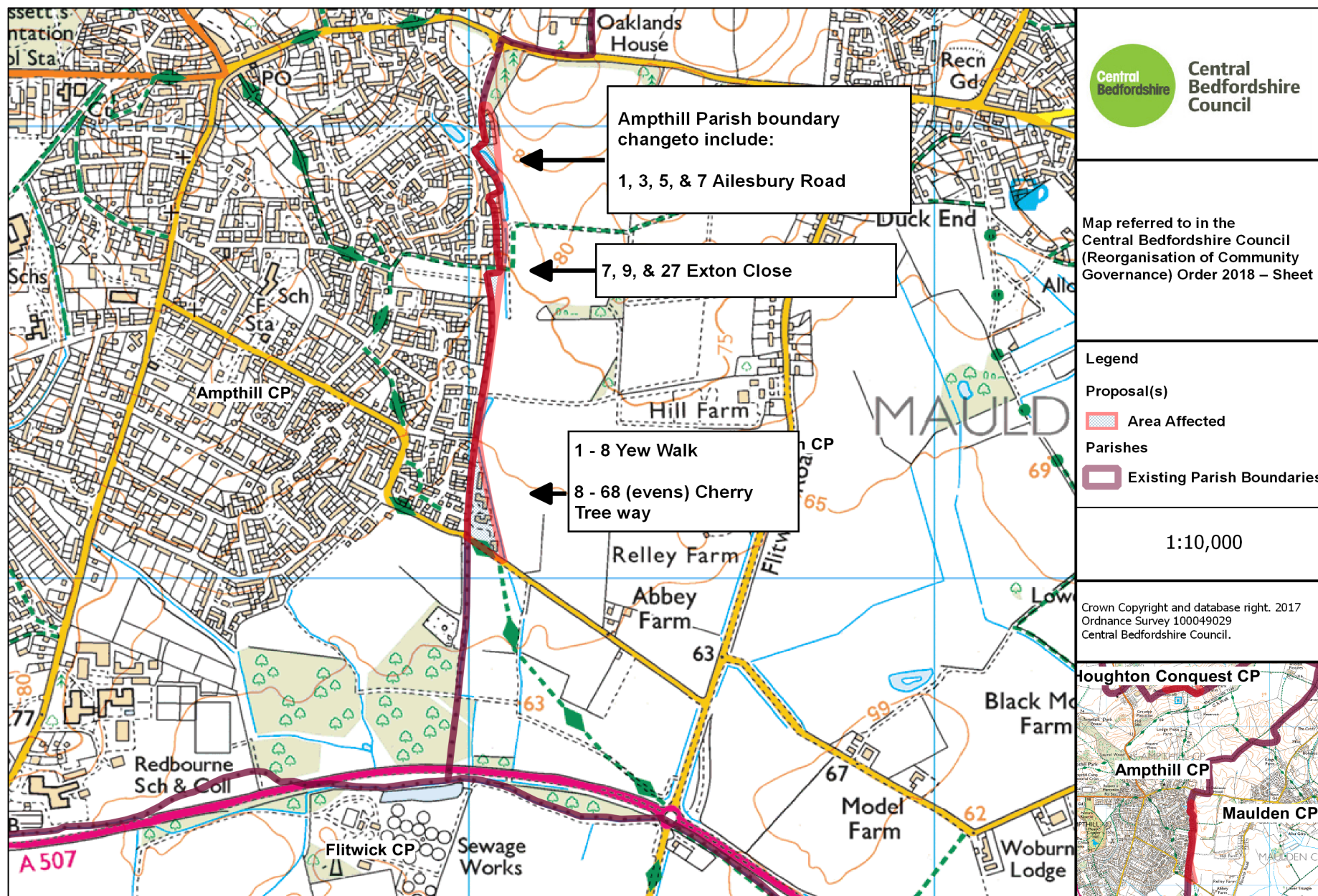
Parish	Maulden
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	12	2498	2505	208	209	-35%	Ampthill

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The Community Governance Review was discussed at Monday's council meeting and it was the unanimous opinion of the councillors that they do not wish to make the suggested reduction of the number of sitting councillors from the current 12 to the proposed 8. As for the boundary change, as the Parish Council gets no precept for the properties affected and they are not on Maulden's electoral roll we have no objection to the boundary changes proposed</p> <p>Consultation Responses (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the parish name of Maulden should remain unchanged: 2 strongly agree, 1 neither That the number of parish councillors on Maulden Parish Council be reduced to eight: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree That the boundary of the parish be changed to exclude the properties at Numbers 1 to 8 Yew Walk; 8 to 68 (evens) Cherry Tree Way; 7, 9 & 27 Exton Close and 1 to 7 (odds) Ailesbury Road: 1 strongly agree, 2 neither <i>"The council should seek both Ampthill and Maulden residents before going ahead with taking or adding parts of both parishes first."</i>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Maulden should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Maulden Parish Council be unchanged (twelve); and
3. That the boundary of the parish be changed to omit the properties at Numbers 1 to 8 Yew Walk; 8 to 68 (evens) Cherry Tree Way; 7, 9 & 27 Exton Close and 1 to 7 (odds) Ailesbury Road and to add the properties to the parish of Ampthill.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government. Developments in the 1980's and 90's extended across the parish boundaries of Ampthill and Maulden. The changes rectify these anomalies.



Parish	Meppershall
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	1415	1548	142	155	-51%	Shefford

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Meppershall Parish Council wish to retain 10 Councillors as a reduction would be detrimental to the function of the Parish Council and risks restricting our ability to deliver the range of activities and community involvement currently covered by the skills set of our councillors. There is an increased work load being placed on Parish Councils particularly with the Local Plan and village developments, Neighbourhood Plan, Watch schemes etc. and without the pool of councillors to draw from our response to these issues may fall below what our residents expect and could lead to a loss of identity and alienation within the community.</p> <p>Whilst we recognise the aim of raising the ratio of electors to seats we have resolved at our Annual Statutory Meeting to maintain the current number of 10 councillors (stay as we are) and oppose the proposal by Central Bedfordshire Council.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Meppershall should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Meppershall Parish Council be reduced to seven: 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Meppershall: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither • "I attend Parish Council meetings regularly as a member of the public and resident of Meppershall. I do NOT think that the number of Parish Councillors should be reduced to 7: they all are volunteers with jobs or other commitments, they all have taken on specific responsibilities within the work of the PC, and they work very hard at what they are doing. We need all 10 to carry out all the different PC tasks on separate working groups (eg on housing, planning, roads and transport, leisure etc) these working groups need and benefit from having more than one councillor in the group, and because Councillors have other commitments outside of the PC, it would be unfair to expect an individual Councillor to 'double-up' and take on the tasks of more than one working group. The village and the PC are facing a lot of difficult challenges at the present time, and we need the expertise and commitment of all 10 councillors. I know the PC itself agrees with this."

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Meppershall should remain unchanged;

2. That the number of parish councillors on Meppershall Parish Council be unchanged (ten); and

3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Meppershall.

Reason for the decisions

The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

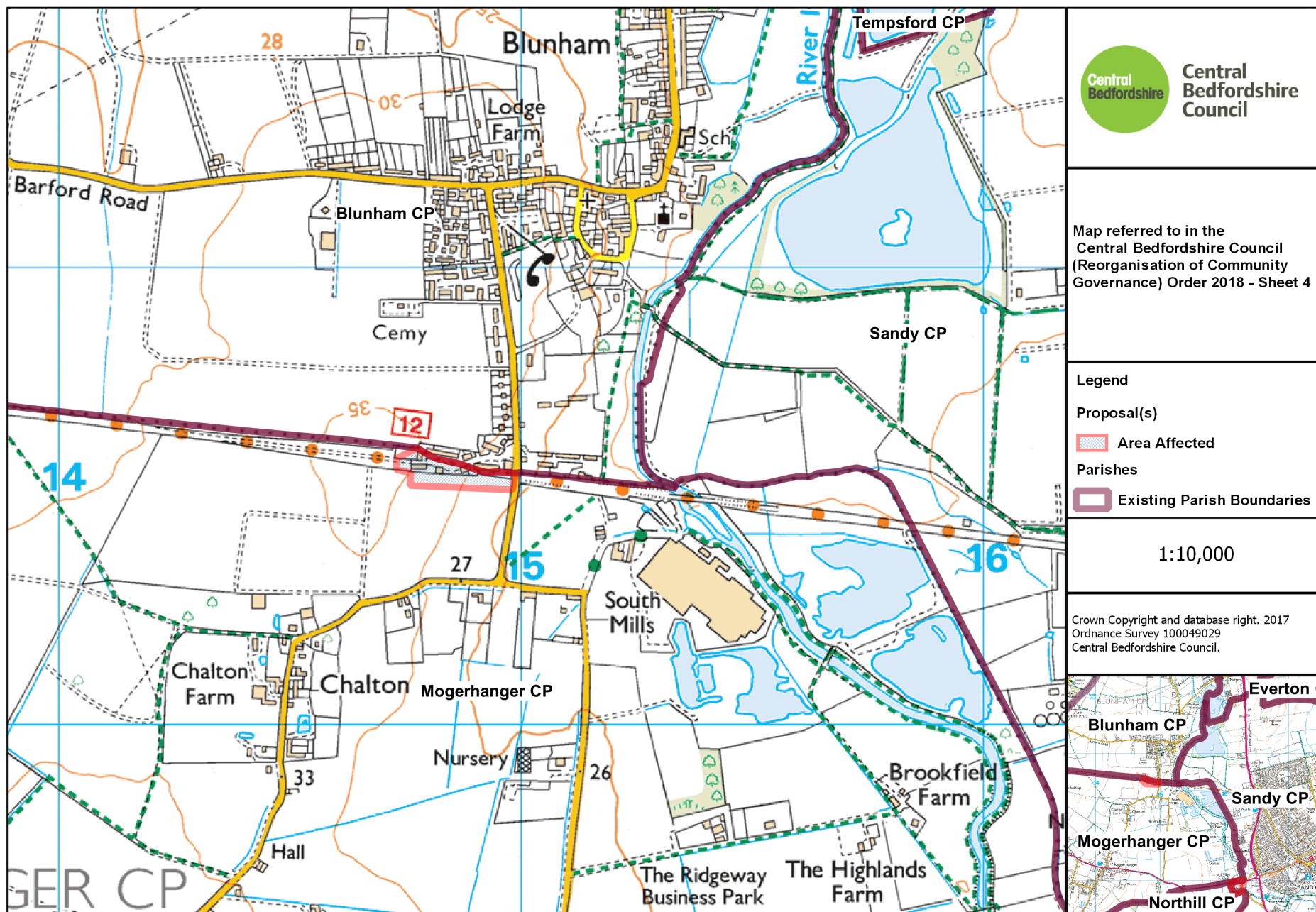
Parish	Moggerhanger
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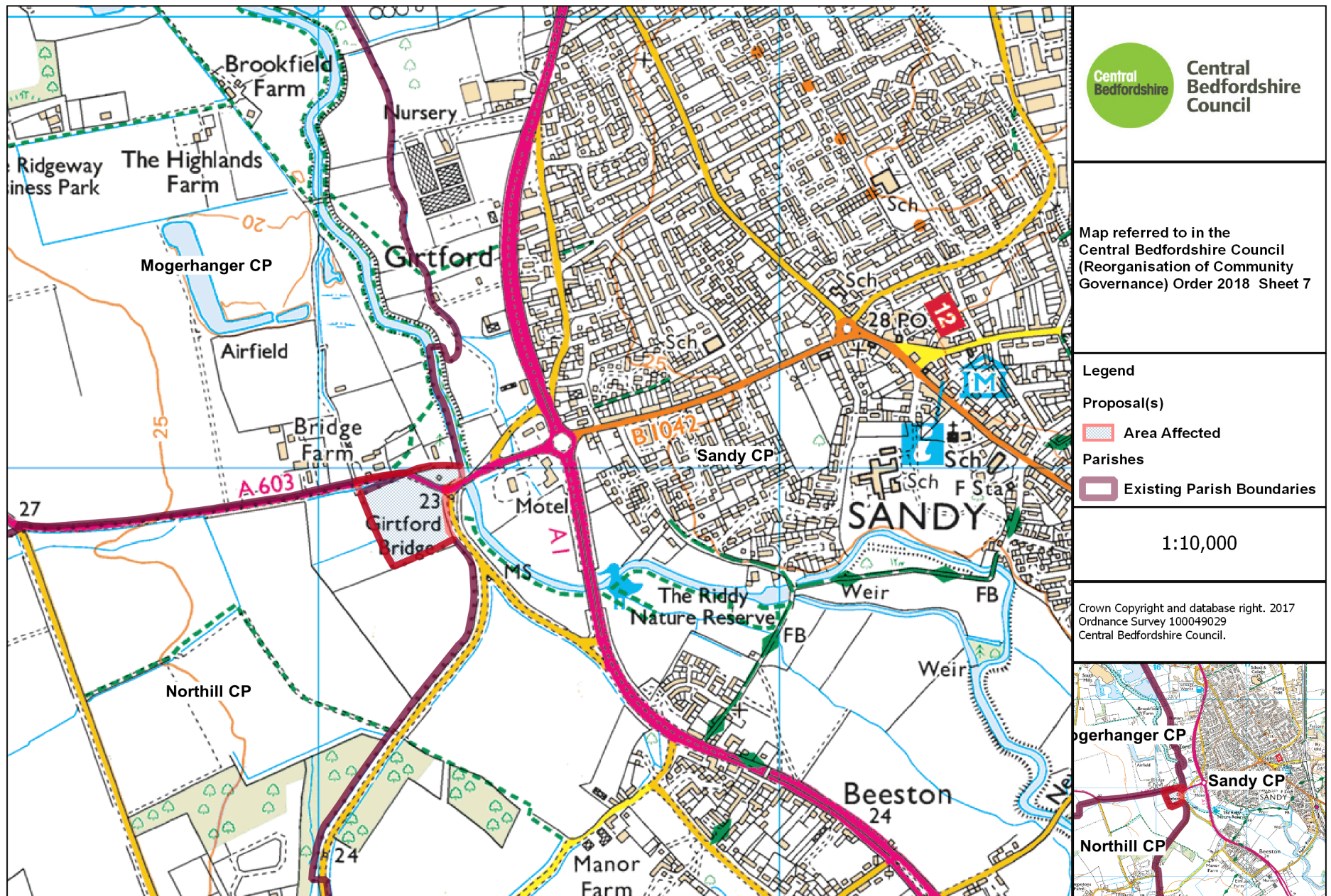
Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	9	516	547	57	61	-81%	Northill

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The Council supports the proposal to reduce to 7 councillors</p> <p>Consultation Responses (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Moggerhanger should remain unchanged: 3 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Moggerhanger Parish Council be reduced to seven: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither, 2 strongly disagree • That the boundaries of the parish be changed to exclude the properties at numbers 7 to 17 (odds) and number 18 Old Station Court but to include Bridge Farm and Ivel Cottage: 2 neither, 2 strongly disagree • <i>“Central Beds should speak to all residents across the Northill, Biggleswade and Sandy divisions about the many changes within their areas as it could start many issues with what plans the council has.”</i>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Moggerhanger should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Moggerhanger Parish Council be reduced to (seven); and
3. That the boundaries of the parish be changed to omit the properties at numbers 7 to 17 (odds) and number 18 Old Station Court and add the properties to the parish of Blunham.
4. That the boundary of the parish be changed to add the properties Bridge Farm and Ivel Cottage and to omit the properties from Sandy parish.

Reason for the decisions
To implement the proposal of Moggerhanger Parish Council that the number of parish councillors be reduced by two. The proposals, to which both Moggerhanger Parish Council and Sandy Town Council have no objection, would lead to more logical boundaries between the parishes, reflecting the extent of the built development in that area.





Parish	Northill
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	12	1882	1950	157	163	-49%	Northill

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Reduction of the number of councillors from 12 to 7: Northill Parish Council object to the reduction of the number of councillors. At the last two elections, 2011 and 2015 the 12 seats were contested by 15 and 17 nominations respectively. Northill Parish is the largest parish in the Ivel Valley Forum and covers a large area. The councillors at Northill Parish are very proactive responding to residents' complaints and questions. It is extremely helpful having councillors who live in the different villages in the parish as they are on hand to respond and help residents. Currently the Council is able to distribute a certain proportion of its work to smaller sub committees, enabling a more efficient management of its increasing workload. This would be impossible with a reduced number of councillors.</p> <p>Change of boundary at Bridge Farm and Ivel Cottage: Northill Parish Council object to the change in boundary. (Please see additional comment below regarding this change to the boundary).</p> <p>Change of boundary at Sainsbury's Supermarket, Tidy Tip, and 3 Bells Brook House and 1 to 18 Riverside Court: Northill Parish Council strongly object to this change in the boundary. Historically the river Ivel has been the boundary between Northill and Biggleswade so why change it for just this small area. To use the A1 as the boundary is not satisfactory as the route of the A1 can be changed whereas the route of the river Ivel will not change. The suggestion that the A1 could provide a sustainable boundary is untrue and unsatisfactory. The possible re-routing of the A1 continues to be the subject of topical debate in conjunction with potential new housing development.</p> <p>I would like to add a comment regarding the Council's objection to the boundary with Moggerhanger. Since the Parish Council meeting held on the 24th May a larger and more detailed map has been obtained showing the proposal for the Moggerhanger boundary. Had the Council had this information to hand at the meeting they would have realized that the sliver of land was in fact very small and would not have resolved to object to it.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (19)</p> <p>14 free text responses were received for Northill. They discussed themes of the boundary (with 4 specific comments detailing that the boundary should stay as the river Ivel, and another 2 stating to stick with historic boundaries). There is also disagreement in the reduction of number of councillor's due to the size of the area and number of settlements covered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Northill should remain unchanged: 9 strongly agree, 3 agree, 2 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Northill Parish Council be reduced to seven: 2 strongly agree, 1 neither, 2 disagree, 13 strongly disagree

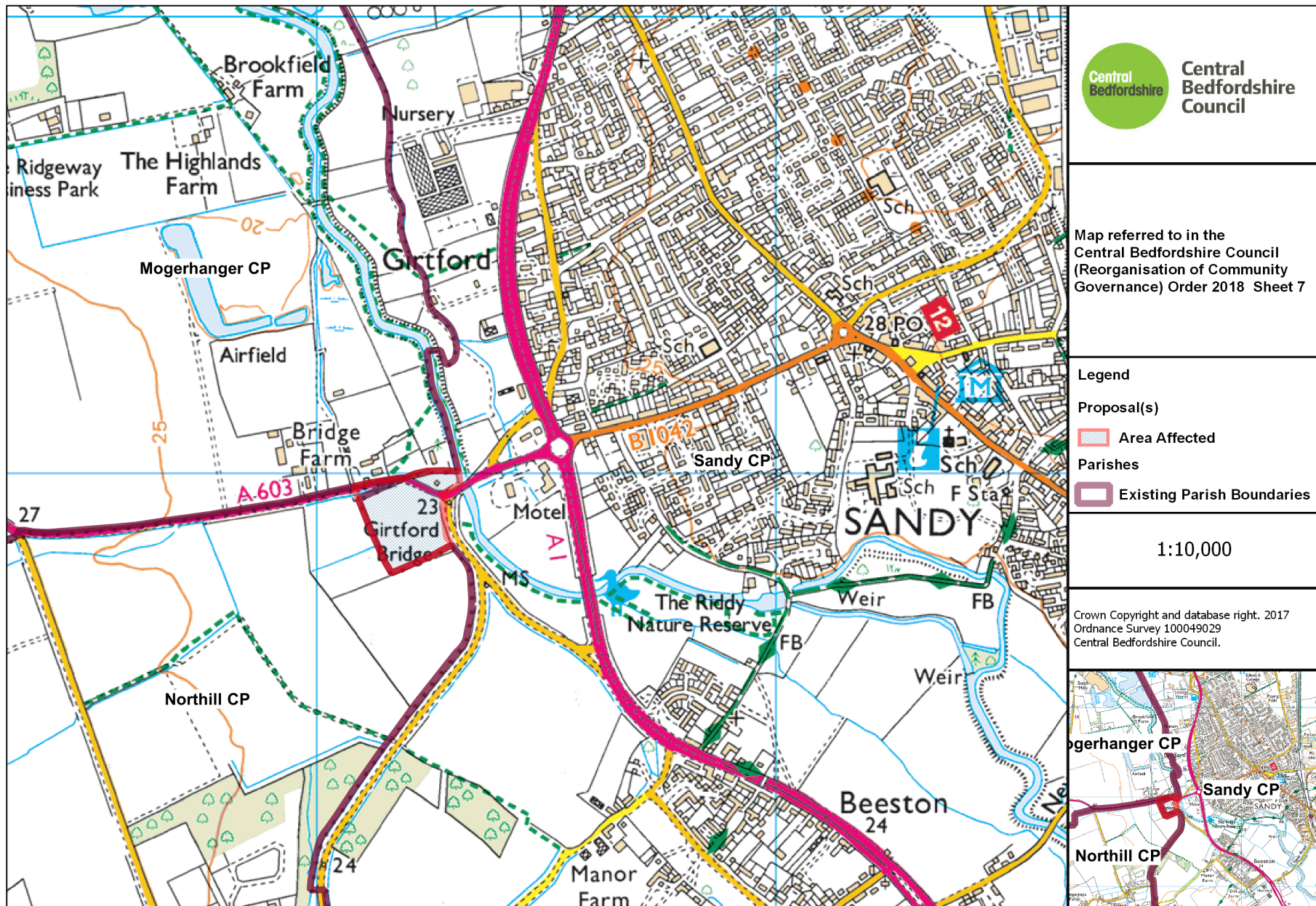
- That the parish boundaries between Northill and Biggleswade be redrawn to incorporate the Sainsbury's Supermarket, Tidy Tip and the properties 3 Bells Brook House and Numbers 1 to 18 Riverside Court: 3 agree, 1 neither, 14 strongly disagree
- That a minor change be made to the boundary of the parish to exclude the parcel of land in between the parish boundaries of Moggerhanger and Sandy adjacent to the properties at Bridge Farm and Ivel Cottage: 4 agree, 4 neither, 2 disagree, 3 strongly disagree
- *"Totally disagree to reduction to seven Councillors. The Parish boundary should remain as the River Ivel. It would be expensive and a waste of money to have all the affected maps redrawn."*
- *"Northill is a very large parish consisting of 3 villages, Northill, Upper Caldecote and Ickwell and 4 hamlets, Lower Caldecote, Thorncote, Hatch and Budna. 7 councillors could not satisfactorily look after the needs of this diverse parish. There are always more people willing to stand for election than the 12 required at present..."*

Final Recommendations

1. That the parish name of Northill should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Northill Parish Council remain unchanged (twelve):
3. That a minor change be made to the boundary of the parish to exclude the parcel of land in between the parish boundaries of Moggerhanger and Sandy adjacent to the properties at Bridge Farm and Ivel Cottage.

Reason for the decisions

The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government. The draft recommendation to change the parish boundary to incorporate the Sainsbury Supermarket, Tidy Tip and the properties 3 Bells Brook House and Numbers 1 to 18 Riverside Court, into the parish of Biggleswade, was rejected as the Committee accepts the argument that such a move would contradict the principles of natural boundaries; in this case the river Ivel.



Parish	Ridgmont
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	9	359	362	40	40	-88%	Cranfield

Comments
<p>Parish Council Ridgmont Parish Council are happy with the recommendation of reducing the number of Parish Councillors from 9 to 7</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1) One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Ridgmont should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Ridgmont Parish Council be reduced to seven; and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Ridgmont.

Reason for the decisions
To implement the proposal of Ridgmont Parish Council that the number of parish councillors be reduced by two.

Parish	Sandy
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Beeston	1	679	679	679	679	+113%	Sandy
Fallowfield	3	1534	1534	511	511	+60%	Sandy
Ivel	5	2962	2962	592	592	+86%	Sandy
Pinnacle	6	4124	4124	687	687	+115%	Sandy

Comments
<p>Town Council</p> <p>The Town Council agrees with the recommendations</p> <p>Consultation Responses (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the parish name of Sandy should remain unchanged: 2 strongly agree, 1 neither That the number of parish councillors on Sandy Town Council remain unchanged (fifteen): 1 agree, 1 neither That the boundary of the parish be changed to exclude the properties at Bridge Farm and Ivel Cottage: 1 agree, 2 neither <i>With Sandy not being a political lead council the boundary changes to Bridge Farm and Ivel Cottage would not make much difference the town council should ask the residents approval first.</i>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Sandy should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Sandy Town Council remain unchanged (fifteen); and
3. That the boundary of the parish be changed to omit the properties at Bridge Farm and Ivel Cottage and to add the properties to the parish of Moggerhanger.

Reason for the decisions
The proposal, to which Sandy Town Council has no objection, would lead to a more logical boundary between the two parishes, reflecting the extent of the built development in that area.

Parish	Shillington
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	1619	1646	162	165	-48%	Silsoe & Shillington

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Shillington Parish Council do not agree with the proposal to reduce the number of Parish Council from 10 to 7 for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for the current number of councillors to enable delivery of Parish Council projects, such as our planned new Community building • The current number and spread of councillors allows all areas of our “ends” village to be represented <p>Consultation Responses (1)</p> <p>One response received to the questionnaire, with ‘neither’ selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Shillington should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Shillington Parish Council remain unchanged (ten); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Shillington.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Silsoe
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	2296	2344	230	234	-27%	Silsoe & Shillington

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The PC would not be in favour of any change to the number of Councillors. Currently the PC is incredibly busy finalising the Neighbourhood Plan, we are involved with negotiations for the Bloor handover. We play a big role in the running of the Community sports centre. We are involved with the Traffic calming project for the High St as well as the everyday running of the PC, maintenance of play areas etc. We are finding it difficult to not over load the current Councillors so taking a reduction in numbers would escalate this issue further. The Village has increased dramatically and reducing the number of Councillors will have a huge effect in the Parish Council and they would therefore be against this suggestion.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1)</p> <p>One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Silsoe should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Silsoe Parish Council remain unchanged (ten); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Silsoe.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Southill
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Broom	6	490	495	82	83	-74%	Northill
Southill	3	268	270	89	90	-72%	Northill
Stanford	3	212	214	71	71	-78%	Northill

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>I am responding as Chair of Southill Parish Council and giving the Council's position on this matter. The Parish Council strongly disagrees with the proposals to reduce the number of Councillors for the following reasons. This Parish Council is unusual in having a large geographical area divided into 3 wards. There are 3 villages, a hamlet and a number of more isolated outlying properties. The current number of councillors works well with this large parish. Having the current number of seats also works well, in that the workload is able to be shared. Given that all the councillors are volunteers it would be a disincentive to increase the workload and discourage current and possibly future volunteers. At present, due to the number of councillors, there is a good attendance at Parish Council meetings. This makes for a better debate than if the numbers were reduced. There are no cost implications to maintaining the current number of councillors. In fact, to reduce the numbers may provoke elections which have to be paid for. The minimum number of councillors to make a viable parish council is recommended at 7. To recommend that our large 3 ward council only has 8 is clearly not sensible and strongly disagreed with by the council. The number of seats without nominations has been two in recent elections and the number of vacant seats has hovered around this number for some years. Reducing the number of seats to eight is an over-reaction to this gap and would likely cause seats to be contested in future elections. The cost of seats being contested would be a significant extra financial burden to the Parish and its Council Tax payers for no real benefit. Keeping the number of seats at 12 reduces the risk of this occurring. As far as I am aware, having vacant seats incurs no extra cost or work to CBC or SPC. While it would be nice to have no vacant seats, there is some benefit. It means that if an elector has a strong interest and passion to get involved then the Council can co-opt them as a new member at any time without any fuss or expense. To sum up. This Council strongly objects to the proposal to reduce the number of seats to 8 and strongly objects to the thought processes that came up with that figure. This Council agrees that no change should be made to parish boundary of Southill.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Southill should remain unchanged: 5 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Southill Parish Council be reduced to eight:(Broom (4), Southill (2) and Stanford (2)) : 1 strongly agree, 1 neither, 4 strongly disagree • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Southill: 5 strongly agree, 1 neither. • There were 6 free text responses, of which 4 were similar

- “...This Parish Council is unusual in having a large geographical area divided into 3 wards. There are 3 villages, a hamlet and a number of more isolated outlying properties. The current number of councillors works well with this large parish. Having the current number of seats also works well, in that the workload is able to be shared. Given that all the councillors are volunteers it would be a disincentive to increase the workload and discourage current and possibly future volunteers. At present, due to the number of councillors, there is a good attendance at Parish Council meetings. This makes for a better debate than if the numbers were reduced. There are no cost implications to maintaining the current number of councillors. In fact, to reduce the numbers may provoke elections which have to be paid for. The minimum number of councillors to make a viable parish council is recommended at 7. To recommend that our large 3 ward council only has 8 is clearly not sensible and strongly disagreed with by me...”

Individual Submissions

- The number of seats without nominations has been two in recent elections and the number of vacant seats has hovered around this number for some years. Reducing the number of seats to eight is an over-reaction to this gap and would likely cause seats to be contested in future elections. The cost of seats being contested would be a significant extra financial burden to the Parish and its Council Tax payers for no real benefit. Keeping the number of seats at 12 reduces the risk of this occurring. As far as I am aware, having vacant seats incurs no extra cost or work to CBC or SPC. • While it would be nice to have no vacant seats, there is some benefit. It means that if an elector has a strong interest and passion to get involved then the Council can co-opt them as a new member at any time without any fuss or expense. Having the current number of seats allows for the workload to be shared across more Councillors. Given that all are unpaid volunteers with other work / family / community interests this situation is best maintained. Whilst the current ratio of seats to electors is low, the Parish is unusual in having a large geographical spread and including three villages, one hamlet (Ireland) and a number of more isolated properties. One of the most important attributes for a Councillor is strong “local knowledge” and connections within a dispersed community. This this would be diluted if less Councillors have to cover the same area.
- Our Parish Council is unusual in that we cover a large geographical area and include 3 villages, one hamlet (Ireland) and a number of isolated properties. In addition, we have the additional work caused by the constant gravel extraction surrounding the village of Broom. Our excellent local knowledge would be severely diluted if we had less councillors. In addition, we are all unpaid volunteers and to arbitrarily propose to increase our workload by reducing our membership is completely unfair and would discourage people from wanting to be councillors. Our neighbouring council Old Warden needs 7 councillors to function with a population of 233. It is not sensible, therefore, to suggest that we shrink in size. To remain as we are is a no cost sensible option.

Final Recommendations

1. That the parish name of Southill should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Southill Parish Council remain unchanged (twelve); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Southill.

Reason for the decisions

The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Stondon
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	2125	2302	213	230	-27.9%	Arlesey

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Stondon Parish Council is very concerned by the recommendation from Central Bedfordshire Council that the number of councillors be reduced from 10 to 7. We believe that this would have a dramatic and detrimental impact on of the current administration of the council and may not allow us to promote the democratic and community involvement we believe we can deliver.</p> <p>We occasionally find that with Councillor commitments this can limit the number at a meeting and reduction to 7 would have a bigger impact on this situation. It would also limit the range of activities the Councillors can be involved with and place a greater workload on a smaller number of Councillors. There would be a reduction in skill sets available within the Council, such as HR or Finance.</p> <p>All of the above is going to have a major impact on the demands on the time and resources of the Council Clerk. The number of Councillors will change over a period as this is a voluntary role and people's circumstances change. A large part of recent changes came about with the shift in demographics especially in relation to the age of the Councillors. With Councillors that stay on for a number of years the change can bring challenges when they leave and often recruiting the right Councillor may cause a number of changes in the Council but to date we have not had a situation where an election has been required.</p> <p>The Parish is going to grow and the growth figures supplied do not reflect the proposals that the Council have seen for housing development. The Council must take a long term view and plan for the required service needs of the future.</p> <p>We are concerned that these changes could result in a loss of identity at a local level, confusion amongst residents over responsibility levels and a greater strain on the Councils ability to deliver. The new Councillors are settling in to their roles and making great strides towards building closer links within the village community and adjacent parish communities.</p> <p>Whilst recognizing the aim for equalizing number of Councillors vs the number of residents and a concern voiced on the cost of local elections on the CBC budgets,</p>

this further restructuring will lead to a further loss of identity and alienation within the community. However, there is an increasing work load being placed on Parish Councils particularly with the Draft Local Plan, Planning Application review, developing a Neighbourhood Plan and running Watch Schemes for example that requires more Parish Councillors to deal with effectively rather than less.

In summary we resolved at the Annual General meeting to maintain the current numbers and stay as we are with 10 members and oppose the proposal by Central Bedfordshire Council.

We believe this would lead to confusion in our community and the potential loss of a sense of place. We want to retain and develop strong local links between the community and the Parish Council and maintain Council at 10 members.

Consultation Responses (2)

- That the parish name of Stondon should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither
- That the number of parish councillors on Stondon Parish Council be reduced to seven: 1 neither, 1 strongly disagree
- That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Stondon: 2 neither
- “The Council have 10 good Councillors and reducing it to 7 will limit their ability to work with the community.”

Final Recommendations

1. That the parish name of Stondon should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Stondon Parish Council remain unchanged (ten); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Stondon.

Reason for the decisions

The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Toddington
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	11	3648	3648	332	332	+4%	Toddington

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Toddington Parish Council would like to inform you that the parish name of Toddington should remain unchanged, that the number of parish councillors on the council stay at 11 and that no change should be made to the parish boundary.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the parish name of Toddington should remain unchanged: 3 strongly agree, 1 neither • That the number of parish councillors on Toddington Parish Council be reduced to nine: 3 strongly agree, 1 neither • That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Toddington: 3 strongly agree, 1 neither

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Toddington should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Toddington Parish Council remain unchanged (eleven); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Toddington.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Totternhoe
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	9	983	983	109	109	-66%	Toddington

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The Parish Council resolved to object strongly to the draft proposals and demand that its views are taken fully into account during the stage three process.</p> <p>My Council will not accept any proposal to reduce its numbers from nine to seven Councillors. The Parish Council's workload has increased exponentially over the past few years, much of which is a result of legislation, for example the Localism Act 2011, and the need, it must be said, to increasingly lobby your Council to undertake infrastructure maintenance works in the village. Totternhoe has 29 acres of allotments in three sites, three recreation grounds, a sports pavilion which it leases to the local sports club, two scheduled ancient monuments, several miles of public rights of way, bus shelters, a nature reserve maintained by the nature conservation trust, with whom we work closely, an industrial site, a car park adjacent to the sports pavilion and contracts for grass and hedge cutting in the allotments and recreation grounds.</p> <p>The Council handles this workload through the establishment of sub-committees responsible for planning, highways, recreation grounds and play equipment, rights of way and allotments. We employ a Clerk and have a contract with a litter picker/bus shelter cleaner. Repairs and maintenance are carried out by either specialist firms e.g. play equipment repairs and safety checks, or by local companies employed on a task by task basis.</p> <p>All of this takes time and the Parish Council prides itself on the overall condition of the village. We meet eleven times a year and without the efforts by individual councillors and the work of the sub-committees we would not have the village environment we are so proud of, and villagers and visitors often comment on. We have a website, which is maintained and updated by a Councillor and we produce a newsletter which is printed and delivered four times a year to every household in the village by Councillors. The website also includes the statutory information required by the Localism Act.</p> <p>The Council meets regularly with the Police, the Highways custodian, the group responsible for drawing up the Neighbourhood Plan, other Parish Councils, and attends seminars and meetings for Town and Parish Councils organised by your Council on a variety of important subjects.</p> <p>Without the number of Councillors that we currently have we would be unable to undertake this level of service to our residents. You comment that recent elections have been uncontested, which we cannot deny, but in our view, that is perhaps a testament to resident's satisfaction with the way we work on their behalf. Our Chairman has been a Councillor for 34 years in 2018 and can recall that previous contested elections in his time on the Council resulted from dissatisfaction with an aspect of village life by groups of residents, political ambition by individuals, or short term personal interests, for example a planning application. Uncontested elections are not in themselves a justification for a reduction in the number of councillors. The Council accept, albeit unhappily, your rejection of our proposal to increase the number of councillors, but cannot accept your proposal to reduce our establishment for the reasons outlined above.</p>

Turning now to the Parish Councils submission for the regularisation of the Parish Boundary no reason is given for its rejection in your review of responses. My Council request that you reconsider this decision.

The proposal had no financial implications for this Council, or the other Town or Parish Councils involved. It sought to bring some logic to the existing anomalous boundaries and to ensure that Totternhoe Parish Council is consulted on any planning applications for development on the land in question. All parcels of land are farmed by Totternhoe residents, and it makes sense to us that their land holdings are within the parish in their entirety.

More importantly the Council is determined to resist any development that would lead to the coalescence of the village with Dunstable. The separate identity of the village is of vital importance to the community, and there is no guarantee that an application for a new development on the land in question would be subject to formal consultation of my Council by the planners. By the simple expedient of bringing the farmers holdings into the Parish we can be assured that we are consulted and that the green belt is retained and protected.

I would be grateful if you would place our response before the General Purposes Committee. If necessary Councillors will request the right to speak at the meeting.

Consultation Responses (4)

- That the parish name of Totternhoe should remain unchanged: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither
- That the number of parish councillors on Totternhoe Parish Council be reduced to seven: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither
- That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Totternhoe: 1 strongly agree, 1 neither
- *“Keep Totternhoe and Dunstable apart and ask residents across Dunstable and Eaton Bray divisions first.”*

Final Recommendations

1. That the parish name of Totternhoe should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Totternhoe Parish Council remain unchanged (nine); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Totternhoe.

Reason for the decisions

The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Westoning
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	10	1700	1703	170	170	-47%	Westoning, Flitton & Greenfield

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>I can confirm that Westoning Parish Council has considered the review and they would like to remain as they are with 10 Councillors</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1)</p> <p>One response received to the questionnaire, with 'neither' selected for all questions</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Westoning should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Westoning Parish Council remain unchanged (ten); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Westoning.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

Parish	Woburn
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Ward	Number of Councillors	1 Sept 2017 Electorate	31 March 2023 Electorate	Ratio Electors to Seats	Forecast Ratio Electors to Seats	Variance from Average	District ward
Not Applicable	9	781	789	87	88	-72%	Aspley & Woburn

Comments
<p>Parish Council</p> <p>The Parish Council agree to no change to the parish name or boundary. However, they object to a reduction in parish councillors. The workload on councillors continues to increase. They are volunteers and a smaller number would put increased workload on those remaining.</p> <p>Consultation Responses (1)</p> <p>That the parish name of Woburn should remain unchanged:1 strongly agree</p> <p>That the number of parish councillors on Woburn Parish Council be reduced to seven:1 strongly disagree</p> <p>That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Woburn: 1 strongly agree</p>

Final Recommendations
1. That the parish name of Woburn should remain unchanged;
2. That the number of parish councillors on Woburn Parish Council remain unchanged (nine); and
3. That no change should be made to the parish boundary of Woburn.

Reason for the decisions
The draft recommendation to reduce the number of councillors is rejected as the Committee accepts the arguments of the parish council that the current number of parish councillors is considered to provide effective and convenient local government.

PARISHES WITH NO CHANGES FOLLOWING THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Battlesden
Brogborough
Campton & Chicksands
Chalgrave
Chalton
Dunton
Edworth
Eversholt
Everton
Eyeworth
Fairfield
Flitwick
Gravenhurst
Hockliffe
Hulcote & Salford
Husborne Crawley
Hyde
Millbrook

Milton Bryan
Old Warden
Pulloxhill
Shefford
Slip End
Stanbridge
Steppingley
Stotfold
Potsgrove
Potton
Pulloxhill
Shefford
Slip End
Stanbridge
Steppingley
Stotfold
Streatley
Studham

Sundon
Tingrith
Tempsford
Tilsworth
Whipsnade
Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley

Central Bedfordshire in contact