

In this issue: Major Review of the New Forest Electoral Boundaries; Reminder on Riparian Responsibilities and a Reminder about the Parish Council proposed 5 Year Local Parish Plan

The Parish Council Newsletter

Welcome to the November 2019 edition of the Parish Council Newsletter. This two page version of the Newsletter is available on the Council's website. Paper copies of this version are also available from Bartley Post Office, Woodington Feeds and the Courtesy Filling Station shop, Romsey Road.

Major Review of Our New Forest Electoral Boundaries Taking Place!!

New Forest District Council (NFDC), have announced a major review of the electoral boundaries in the New Forest District.



The **Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)** will be undertaking the review, as is always the case for this type of activity. NFDC have already undertaken a significant amount of discussion as a Council in respect of their ambitions for the review, but the key will be the consultation process which is upcoming to start in November.



What is the purpose of the Review?

Over a period of time, the demographics and nature of local districts change. In addition, population numbers in each ward can become distorted by major housing and other development (or, indeed forecast development in certain areas which was anticipated but didn't materialise), which creates an uneven electorate in relation to each of the local District Councillors. Therefore, the current Ward Boundaries may no longer reflect the size and distribution of the communities within them. Consequently, the District Councillors have very different sized electorates and Ward commitments.

Why is this important?

This review is specifically about NFDC – its number of Electoral Wards and Councillor numbers, the size of each Ward Electorate and as a by-product, ensuring the District Council is operating as efficiently as possible and providing value for money, so, the actual size of the Council comes into play as well. It is not about Parish Councils, but, in the case of **Copythorne**, it could affect us given how our Parish is divided in two – **see the additional note at the end of this item.**

When did this last happen?

The last time a review was undertaken, was approximately 20 years ago.

What has happened so far?

The first stage of this review was for NFDC to consider the number of District Councillors it thinks would be appropriate based on NFDC's forecast of the size of the electorate five years after the commencement of the review in 2019, with a current electorate of **143,000 in 2019** and a forecast rise to **148,000 in 2024**. NFDC have recommended a reduction in District Councillors from 60 to 48. We were told that it is likely that the LGBCE will accept this recommendation although in other reviews, there have been changes of +1 or – 1 if required to establish appropriate District Council Ward electorate sizes.

What happens now?

This next stage is the most important one. The consultation and eventual drafting of recommendations process is designed to elicit as much community involvement as possible and ensure that the 'right answers' are arrived at. There are distinct stages for the consultation and recommendation processes leading to an eventual Order being laid in Parliament for any changes.

Why might Copythorne Parish be affected?

As Parishioners will know, Copythorne Parish is divided into two Wards – North and South. The recasting of District Council Ward boundaries may generate ward changes within NFDC for Copythorne.

Cont. overleaf

Major Review of Our New Forest Electoral Boundaries Taking Place!! (cont.)

It was noted in a recent presentation on this review, that there are three Parish 'anomalies' in terms of split Wards in the New Forest District of which Copythorne is one.

You may have a view on this and the relationship with the District Council Wards (and subsequent number of District Councillors involved). So, while Parish Councils are not included in this review, Copythorne could be impacted by it!

What's the timetable?

The programme for consultation and reporting is as follows

1. Consultation on Warding Patterns (what should the NFDC electoral ward boundaries look like):

26th November 2019 to 3rd February 2020

2. Consultation on draft recommendations (a document published by the LGBCE for review):

31st March 2020 to 8th June 2020

3. Final recommendations (the documents which form the basis of the 'legal change):

**Published August 2020
Order Made Late 2020**

4. Used as the basis for the **Local Government Elections in 2023**

This is a very important consultation as it affects how our District Council will look into the future – certainly for the next 20 years at least! More information is available on the Parish Council website at www.copythorne.org.uk including an extract from the last review where it referred to Copythorne. All documents are available on the LGBCE website at: www.lgbce.org.uk

To access the consultation pack (from 26th November) and to make a submission, go to: consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Or you can email your comments to: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Or, if you prefer 'snail-mail', you can write to: **Review Officer (New Forest), 1st Floor, Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0TL**

The LGBCE wants your views! The consultation is very important and is designed to ensure that the very best resolution to the review is found. Have your say!!

Reminder Number 1 - Riparian Works!

Following our article in the last Newsletter, this is just a reminder about **Riparian Responsibilities**.

We've had a very hot summer followed by a very wet autumn and one of the results locally is a great deal of growth on our verges, culverts and watercourses.

All **Riparian Owners** (those who have watercourses on or bordering their properties), should be checking their drainage ditches, pipes, culverts and other watercourses to ensure there is no obstruction to the movement of surface water and thus, a reduced risk of localised flooding.

For further information regarding this and other areas of flood risk management, please see HCC's website at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/flooding>.

Reminder Number 2 – the Copythorne Parish Council 5 Year Local Parish Plan

The Parish Council is progressing the drafting of its proposed **5 Year Local Parish Plan**. We would still welcome contributions from members of our community on possible priorities for inclusion. If you'd like to make a contribution, more information can be found on the **Parish Council website**, including help on how to put forward your ideas.

Date of the Next Parish Council Meeting: The next two Parish Council meetings will take place on **Tuesday 12th November and Tuesday 10th December, both at 7.00 p.m. Parish Hall Annexe.**

The **Clerk to the Council, David Rigby**, can be contacted by post at: **9, The Cleaves, West Totton, Southampton, SO40 8WL** or by telephone: **02381120150** or by email at: parishclerk@copythorne.org.uk; website: www.copythorne.org.uk. Details of individual Parish Councillors, and information on District and County Councillors, can also be found on the Parish Council Website and on community notice boards.