

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

NOTICE AND AGENDA

For a meeting to be held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth on Monday, 21 July 2025 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Policy and Resources Committee:-

Councillors:

Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Chair)
Oliver Cooper
Stephen Cox
Steve Drury
Vicky Edwards
Rue Grewal
Philip Hearn

Sarah Nelmes (Vice-Chair)
Chris Lloyd
Chris Mitchell
Louise Price
Reena Ranger
Jon Tankard

*Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
Friday, 11 July 2025*

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public on agenda items at the Policy and Resources Committee meetings. Details of the procedure are provided below:

For those wishing to speak:

Members of the public are entitled to register and identify which item(s) they wish to speak on from the published agenda for the meeting. Those who wish to register to speak are asked to register on the night of the meeting from 7pm. Please note that contributions will be limited to one person speaking for and one against each item for not more than three minutes.

In the event of registering your interest to speak on an agenda item but not taking up that right because the item is deferred, you will be given the right to speak on that item at the next meeting of the Committee.

Those wishing to observe the meeting are requested to arrive from 7pm.

In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 any matters considered under Part I business only of the meeting may be filmed, recorded, photographed, broadcast or reported via social media by any person.

Recording and reporting the Council's meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those doing the recording and reporting to ensure compliance. This will include the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Legislation and the laws of libel and defamation.

11. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

(Pages 3
- 12)

1. That Policy and Resources Committee determines whether to undertake a Community Governance Review of the unparished areas of the district.
2. Should the Committee agree to undertake a Community Governance Review, to agree to the terms of reference attached at appendix A

General Enquiries: Please contact the Committee Team at
committeeteam@threerivers.gov.uk

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE 21 July 2025

PART I

Community Governance Review (ADCCC)

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks the views of Members on whether to undertake a review of the unparished areas of Three Rivers District Council, and if so, to agree the suggested terms of reference.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Policy and Resources Committee determines whether to undertake a Community Governance Review of the unparished areas of the district.
- 2.2 Should the Committee agree to undertake a Community Governance Review, to agree to the terms of reference attached at appendix A.

3. Details

- 3.1 Through the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, district councils were given the power to amend parish council boundaries within their area. This is known as a “community governance review” (CGR). There are two situations where this may occur: because the Council decides to do so, or it receives a petition with sufficient public support.
- 3.2 If the Council does elect to undertake a CGR, the first step is to agree terms of reference, which sets out how the review may be undertaken. A phase of consultation follows, after which the Council decides what to do. It could decide to make no changes; make changes to a parish boundary; create a new parish or change warding arrangements in a parish.
- 3.3 If changes are proposed, consideration then needs to be given to any consequential matters; this depends on the nature of the changes but can include matters such as division of assets, the number of councillors in each Parish and when the changes shall come into effect.
- 3.4 If it elects to undertake the review, the Council is required to have regard to the guidance issued by Secretary of State and Local Government Boundary Commission for England. This requires the Council to undertake consultation with local government electors in the area, and any other parties we consider interested in it.
- 3.5 The guidance, although primarily focused on the creation of new parishes, sets out the type of factors that should be taken into account in determining these factors. References in legislation to a ‘parish’ also include a parish which has an alternative style (such as ‘town’, ‘village’ or ‘community’ council) and parish meetings.
- 3.6 The timeframes involved in reviews can vary significantly. If the review is very straightforward, it can be concluded within a year; more complex reviews, usually those involving the division of existing parishes or creation of new parishes, can take upwards of two years. The process works as follows:

- 3.6.1 The District Council publishes terms of reference setting out how the review will occur and commences a period of consultation.
- 3.6.2 Once the consultation concludes, the District Council makes recommendations – this is often followed by a secondary consultation if the Council believes changes are required.
- 3.6.3 The District Council meets to make final recommendations and agree the reorganisation order (as the reorganisation order includes consequential amendments, in some cases this will come at a later date than the final recommendations).
- 3.7 Only the Full Council can agree the final recommendations.
- 3.8 The proposed terms of reference for the CGR are deliberately broad, allowing for a review of all aspects of community governance within the unparished council area. This includes, for example, the creation or naming of a parish, the establishment of a separate parish from an existing parish, alteration of parish boundaries, abolition or dissolution of a parish, change to parish electoral arrangements or parish grouping.
- 3.9 In the event that the Policy and Resources Committee agrees to commence a review, potential terms of reference are included at appendix A for approval. These have been developed in line with terms used by other councils, helping the public to understand what the review is and why it's being undertaken.
- 3.10 The timetable in the terms of reference envisage that if it was decided to make changes to the boundary the proposals would not come into effect until 1 April 2027, for the following reasons:
- 3.10.1 The parishes will have already set their precept and anticipated their council tax levels based on their council tax base for 2026/27
- 3.10.2 Following the final recommendations being made, time needs to be allocated to sort any matters for the reorganisation order
- 3.10.3 This date nicely aligns with the next Parish Council elections in May 2027 and enables the District Council to deal with any electoral matters – such as re-establishing polling districts – for those elections.
- 3.11 The overall recommended timescales for the CGR are as follows:

Policy & Resources Committee agree CGR and terms of reference	21 June 2025
Consultation begins	28 June 2025
Consultation ends	19 September 2025
Policy & Resources Committee agree draft proposals	10 November 2025
Consultation on draft proposals begin (if required)	17 November 2025
Consultation on draft proposals ends	9 January 2026
Final proposals considered by Policy & Resources Committee	26 January 2026
Final proposals agreed by Council	By June 2026
Reorganisation order made (inc any consequential matters)	TBC
New boundaries come into effect	1 April 2027
First elections based on new boundaries	6 May 2027

4. Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1. There are two options available to the Policy and Resources Committee at this stage: to undertake the review, or not to undertake the review.

5. Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this report do not impact on the achievement of specific performance indicators

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Section 82 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gives district councils the power to undertake Community Governance Reviews of its area. At this stage, the Council is not obliged to undertake a review, but may elect to do so; if it does, it must comply with both the law and the statutory guidance.
- 6.2 The proposed terms of reference have been developed in line with the guidance. Section 81 of the Act states it is for the Council to decide the terms of reference of any CGR which the Council is to undertake and it must then publish them.
- 6.3 A District Council that is undertaking a review, must notify the County Council that the review for its area is to be undertaken and the terms of reference (including any modifications to those terms), as per section 79(3) of the above Act.

7. Financial, Staffing, Equal Opportunities, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

- 7.1 None specific.

Report prepared by: Kimberley Grout, Associate Director – Corporate, Customer & Community (Interim Monitoring Officer)

Data Quality

Data sources: Maps within Appendix A have been produced by the Council's GIS officer from its mapping system

Data checked by: GIS officer
Data rating: Sufficient

Appendix A – Proposed terms of reference for unparished areas of Three Rivers District Council, including maps of relevant areas.

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**Terms of Reference
Community Governance Review
Unparished areas of Three Rivers District Council**

What is a community governance review and what can it do?

A community governance review (CGR) is an opportunity to explore the arrangements for parish councils in the area. It can only be undertaken by a Principal Authority, which in a two-tier area is the District Council.

A CGR can look at whether new parish councils should be created or disbanded, or whether the existing parish council arrangements should change. It can also agree any “consequential” matters, such as the number of parish councillors or whether assets should transfer between parishes.

In this case, the review will consider whether it is appropriate to parish unparished areas. This will include whether to create new parish council(s) and/or alteration of parish boundaries and whether to change the parish electoral arrangements (the number of councillors to be elected to the council; the year when the ordinary election of parish councillors are held, whether the parish should be divided into wards etc). The potential outcomes of the review will be in accordance sections 87-92 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 Act.

Why are we doing the community governance review?

It is good practice for District Councils to periodically look at parish boundaries. Over time, the natural boundaries that created parishes can change, and it may or may not be helpful to change the boundaries.

How will this impact me?

If Three Rivers District Council decides to introduce a new parish council or make changes to existing parish arrangements, it could mean that those living in the currently unparished areas become part of a new or existing parish council.

As far as possible, Three Rivers District Council will seek to work with the parishes concerned to ensure any potential consequences for local residents are minimised. For example, residents may have burial or allotment rights in one parish they may wish to ensure are preserved through the review.

Where are the unparished areas of Three Rivers District Council?

Attached to these terms of reference are three maps. The first shows all the parish and unparished areas of the district. Maps two and three show the specific boundaries of the two unparished areas.

What is the process for this?

At this stage, Three Rivers District Council is consulting on whether or not to amend any boundary lines and/or create a new parish council. The feedback given during the consultation will be considered by the Council's Policy and Resources Committee in November 2025.

If the Committee feels that changes should be taken forward, it will develop formal recommendations and may undertake a secondary consultation on these during November 2025 to January 2026. A final decision will be made by the Council by June 2026.

The review will comply with the legislative and procedural requirements set out in the 2007 Act, as well as statutory guidance. This review will follow the approach set out in these terms of reference, including the indicative timetable as detailed below.

What do we take into account in making a decision?

Three Rivers District Council is obliged to ensure that local community governance is reflective of the identities and interests of the community in the area, and effective and convenient. It has to take into account the impact of community governance on community cohesion and the size, population and boundaries of the community or local parishes.

The sort of factors we will consider are how the community comes together – are there natural or artificial borders that distinguish the parish boundaries, or economic, social or cultural factors, and do the residents on the parish boundary more naturally look to one parish or another.

Factors such as the level of precept (council tax) in one parish over another are not as much of a consideration.

How can I have my say?

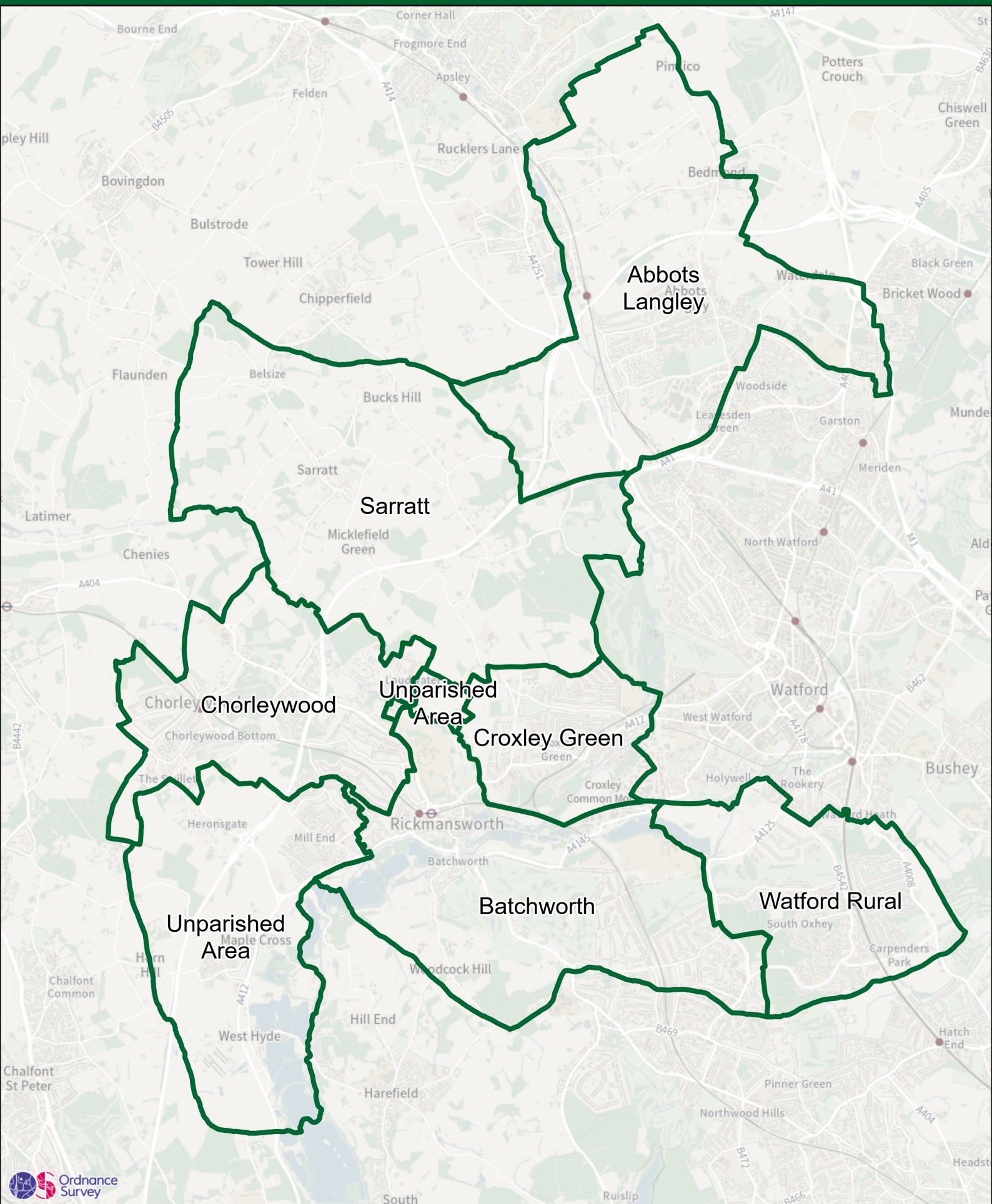
The consultation will open on 28 June on the Council's website until 19 September 2025 (*link to be included*) You can also e-mail enquiries@threerivers.gov.uk (please put CGR in the subject line of the e-mail) or writing to Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 1RL.

You are welcome to tell us your general thoughts about the review – for example, whether you have any concerns or feel there would be any benefits to making changes, as well as any thoughts you have on specific amendments to the boundary.

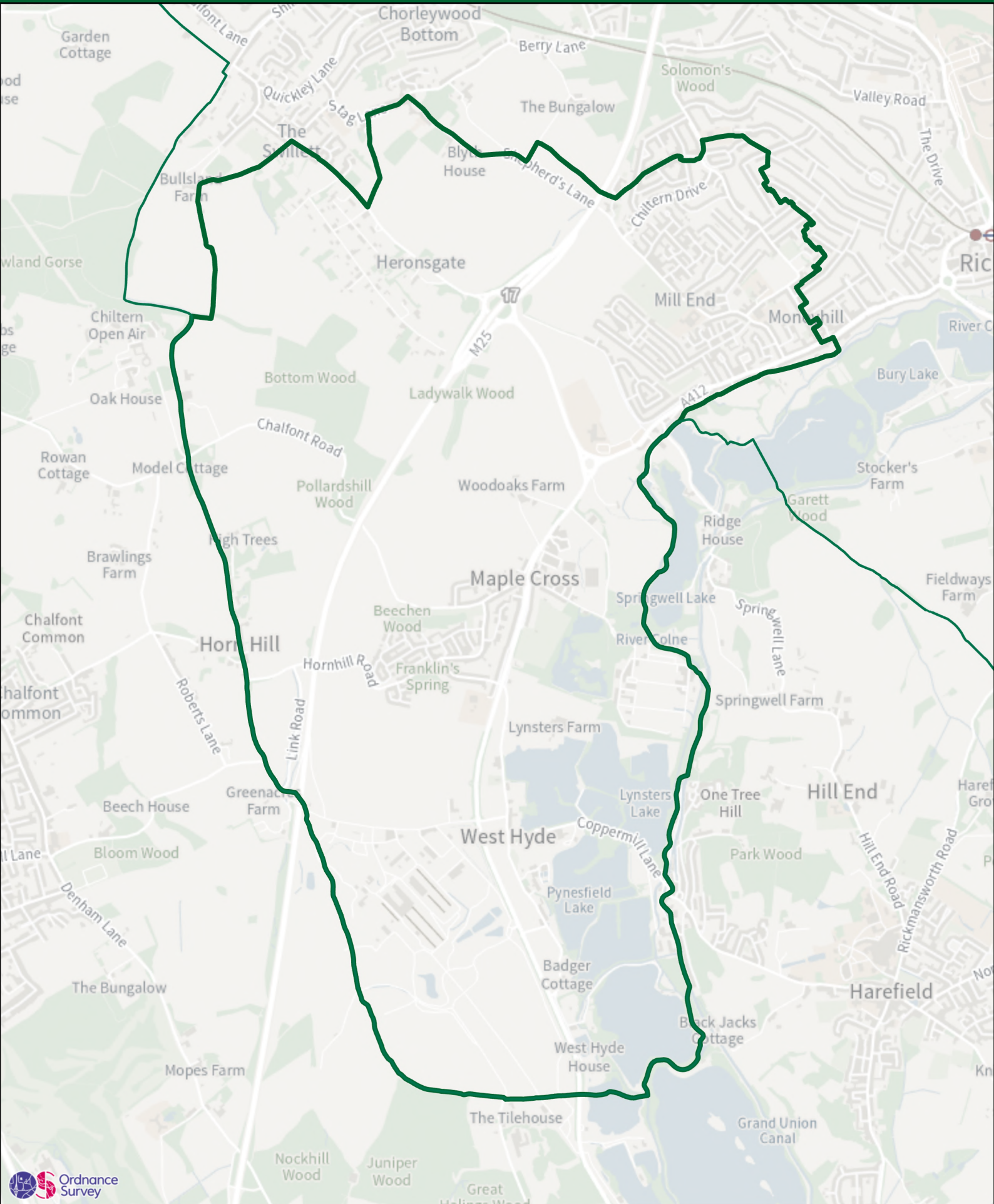
What is the proposed timeline for the review?

Policy & Resources Committee agree CGR and terms of reference	21 June 2025
Consultation begins	28 June 2025
Consultation ends	19 September 2025
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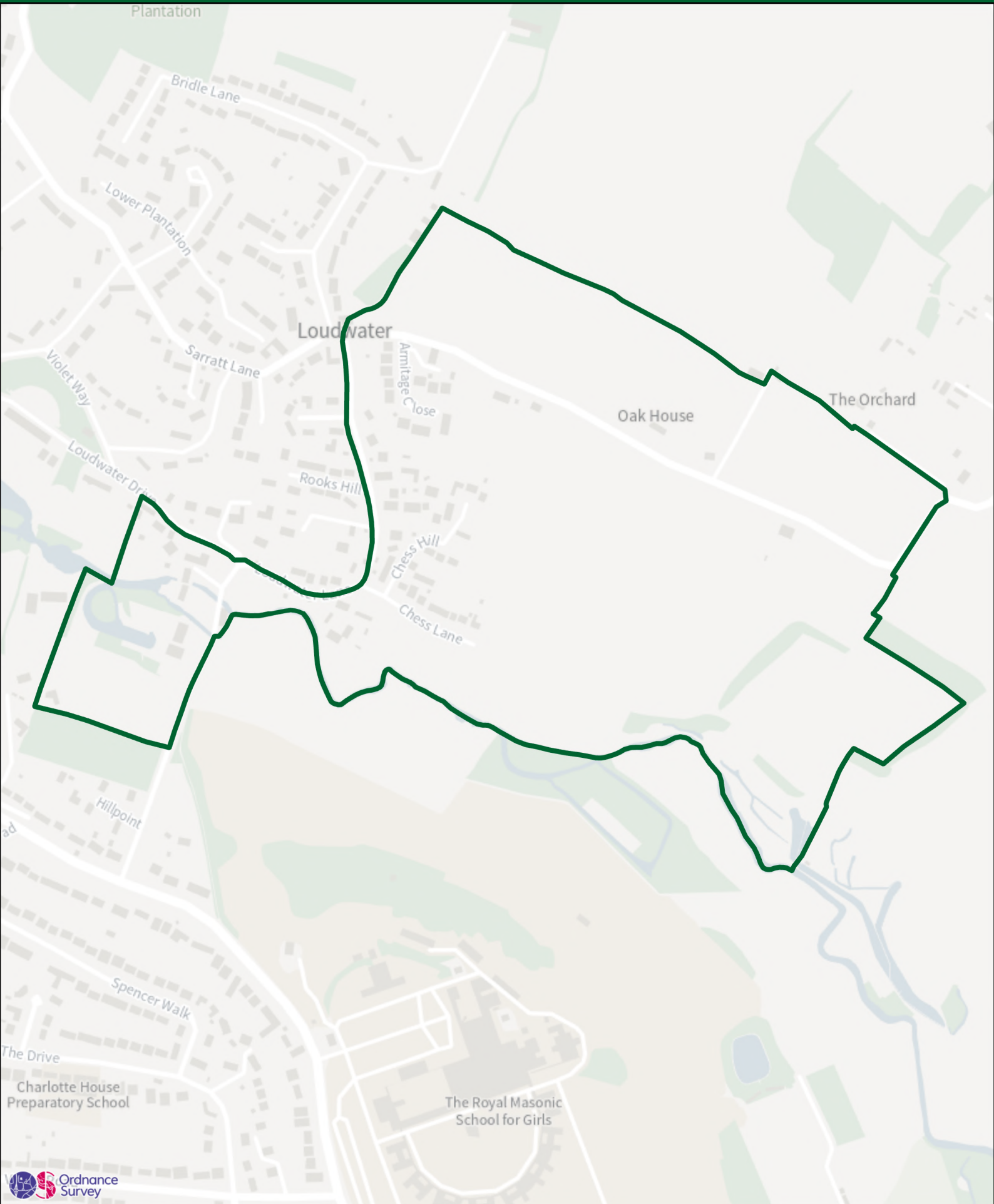
Three Rivers District Parish Areas



Three Rivers District Unparished Areas



Three Rivers District Unparished Areas



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