

**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 some 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?

Chorleywood Parish Council formally requested that the District Council consider this matter. Nevertheless, 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 as requested by Chorleywood Parish Council.

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 December 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 December 2025 to January 2026. A final decision will be made by the Council by February 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 9 September on the Council's website until 8 December 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	8 September
Consultation begins	9 September 2025
Consultation ends	8 December 2025
Policy & Resources Committee agree draft proposals	15 December 2025 (Proposed Extraordinary)
Consultation on draft proposals begin (if required)	16 December 2025
Consultation on draft proposals ends	30 January 2026
Final proposals considered by Policy & Resources Committee	Extraordinary meeting required in February
Final proposals agreed by Council	24 February 2026
Reorganisation order made (inc any consequential matters)	TBC
New boundaries come into effect	1 April 2026
First elections based on new boundaries	6 May 2027