

Terms of Reference Community Governance Review 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 two Maps. A map of the unparished area in the district and a map of the parish boundaries.

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 October 2026.

If the Committee feels that changes should be taken forward, it will develop formal recommendations and may undertake a secondary consultation on these during October 2026 and January 2027. A final decision will be made by the Council by February 2027.

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 31 July 2026 on the Council's website until 18 September 2026 (*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?

Full Council agree the CGR and the Terms of Reference	14 July 2026
Consultation begins	31 July 2026
Consultation ends	18 September 2026
Policy and Resources Committee agree draft proposals	05 October 2026
Consultation on draft proposals begin (if required)	16 October 2026
Consultation on draft proposals ends	15 January 2027
Final proposals considered by Policy and Resources Committee	08 February 2027
Final proposals agreed by Full Council	23 February 2027
Reorganisation order made	TBC
New boundaries come into effect	01 April 2027
First elections based on new boundaries	06 May 2027

Community Governance Review

Unparished areas of Mill End, Maple Cross and West Hyde



