

Community Governance Review

14/07/2026

**Full Council
14 July 2026**

PART I

**Community Governance Review, Mill End, Maple Cross and West Hyde.
(ADCCC)**

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an update on the Community Governance Review (CGR) approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 17 November 2025 and seeks a decision on the future of the review.
- 1.2 Following completion of the consultation process, the level of public participation has been significantly lower than anticipated. The response rate does not provide a sufficiently robust evidence base on which to formulate recommendations regarding future governance arrangements within the review area.
- 1.3 Officers have therefore considered whether it is appropriate to continue the current review. This report recommends that the current Community Governance Review be discontinued and that Members consider whether a future district-wide review of community governance arrangements would provide a more comprehensive and equitable approach.

2 Recommendation

That:

- 2.1 The current Community Governance Review commenced following the decision of the Policy and Resources Committee on 17 November 2025 be discontinued.
- 2.2 That no further work be undertaken in relation to draft or final proposals arising from the current review.
- 2.3 That officers be requested to develop proposals and terms of reference for a future district-wide Community Governance Review covering all parish and unparished areas of the district for consideration by Members at a future meeting.

3 Details

- 3.1 On 17 November 2025, the Policy and Resources Committee agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review of the remaining unparished areas of the district and approved the associated terms of reference.
- 3.2 The review was subsequently launched and consultation undertaken in accordance with the agreed timetable and statutory guidance.
- 3.3 The purpose of the consultation was to seek the views of local government electors and other interested parties on whether changes to community governance arrangements should be made within the review area.

- 3.4 While the consultation was publicised through the Council's usual communication channels, participation levels were significantly lower than anticipated. The number of responses received represents only a small proportion of those eligible to participate.
- 3.5 Community Governance Reviews should be informed by evidence of community identity, local representation and effective and convenient local government. Officers consider that the limited level of engagement achieved through the consultation process does not provide a sufficiently comprehensive evidence base to support recommendations for significant governance changes.
- 3.6 Furthermore, throughout the consultation process a number of respondents highlighted wider questions regarding parish governance arrangements across the district rather than solely within the current review area.
- 3.7 Officers consider that there would be merit in undertaking a comprehensive district-wide review of community governance arrangements. Such an approach would allow the Council to consider governance arrangements across the district as a whole, ensure consistency in approach and provide all communities with an opportunity to participate in the review process.
- 3.8 A district-wide review would also enable the Council to consider issues relating to parish boundaries, parish governance, electoral arrangements and unparished areas within a single coherent framework.
- 3.9 Having regard to the low level of participation in the current review and the benefits of a wider strategic review, officers recommend that the present Community Governance Review be discontinued.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Discontinue the Current Review and Undertake a Future District-Wide Review (Recommended)
- 4.2 This option would bring the current review to a close without making recommendations for changes to governance arrangements.
- 4.3 A future district-wide review would provide an opportunity to revisit community governance arrangements across the whole district, supported by a refreshed engagement strategy designed to maximise participation and ensure that recommendations are informed by a broader range of views.
- 4.4 Officers consider this option provides the most appropriate and proportionate way forward.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Council has discretion to undertake a Community Governance Review and is not under a statutory obligation to complete a review once commenced.

- 5.2 The Council may determine to discontinue a review where it considers that doing so is appropriate.
- 5.3 Should Members wish to undertake a future district-wide review, a new set of terms of reference would need to be approved and published in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

6 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

No implications to Three Rivers District Council.

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

None specific.

