

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**11 October 2023**

**Report of the Chief Executive/Electoral Registration Officer**

**Part 1- Public**

**Delegated**

**1 REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF KINGS HILL PARISH COUNCIL SEAT NUMBERS**

**A request has been received from Kings Hill Parish Council requesting to reduce the numbers of Parish Councillors that sit on their Parish Council. They wish to reduce their numbers from 12 to 10 councillors. Please see attached Kings Hill Parish Council request at Annexes 1a & 1b.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 Members will be aware that the formal process to reduce the number of councillors on a parish council is by means of a Community Governance Review.

1.1.2 It is the responsibility of General Purposes Committee to decide whether a Community Governance Review is to be undertaken when a request is received.

1.1.3 Kings Hill Parish Council is made up of 12 seats at present. At the May 2023 elections, they managed to fill all 12 vacancies. 2 of these seats are currently vacant.

1.1.4 Kings Hill Parish has an electorate of 6787 and it is growing quickly due to the increase of properties being built on Kings Hill.

1.1.5 There are no rules around the number of Parish Councillors on a Parish except there has to be a minimum of 5. Typically, across the country, the following numbers are recognised

<b>Electorate</b>	<b>Seats</b>
Less than 500	5-8
501 – 2500	6-12
2501-10,000	9-16
10,001-20,000	13-27
Over 20,000	13-31

Please find attached at **Annex 2**, a current list of Parish councils within the Borough, showing their councillor numbers and electorate.

- 1.1.6 Often Parish councils reduce their numbers due to not being able to fill vacancies that arise. Kings Hill have not had issues in the past filling any vacancies that have arisen. Most of the recent casual vacancies at Kings Hill have been filled via election. This shows there are enough residents wanting to be a part of this Parish Council.

## **1.2 Legal Implications**

- 1.2.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 deals with Community Governance Reviews.
- 1.2.2 In addition to the 2007 Act, legislation relating to parishes can also be found in the Local Government Act 1972 (in particular, provision about parish meetings and councils, the constitution of a parish meeting, the constitution and powers of parish councils and about parish councillors) and the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (reviews of, and recommendations about, electoral areas by the LGBCE), as well as in other enactments.

## **1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.3.1 If a Community Governance Review was to go ahead, there would be cost implications for officer time and consultation process, which would be met from existing budgets.

## **1.4 Risk Assessment**

- 1.4.1 No risks associated with this report and process.

## **1.5 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 1.5.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## **1.6 Recommendations**

- 1.6.1 My recommendation is that General Purposes Committee refuse Kings Hill's request to undertake a Community Governance Review.
- 1.6.2 The reasons behind this are -
- The large electorate would be better served by a larger number of councillors. It would also make the job of Parish Councillor in this Parish easier, with more hands to spread the workload.

**Background papers:**

contact: Daune Ashdown

Annexes 1a & 1b - Kings Hill Parish Council request  
for reduction in numbers

Annex 2 - List of Tonbridge & Malling Parish Councils  
numbers and electorate

Julie Beilby  
Electoral Registration Officer