

General Purposes Committee

10 June 2026

Part 1 - Public

Matters Taken Under Delegated Powers



Cabinet Member	N/A
Responsible Officer	Damian Roberts, Chief Executive
Report Author	Daune Ashdown, Head of Electoral Services

Stansted Parish Council Community Governance Review

1 Background

- 1.1 In December 2025, a request was received from Stansted Parish Council to increase the number of Parish Councillors from 7 to 9. In March 2026, a subsequent report to General Purposes Committee (Report GP26/4) sought permission to undertake a Community Governance Review to ascertain if the residents of Stansted agreed with the proposed increase.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 This report sets out proposals that could help to contribute towards the efficient and effective delivery of local council services to the residents of Stansted Parish.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That an increase in the number of councillors at Stansted Parish Council from 7 to 9 **BE APPROVED** with effect from the next scheduled Parish elections in May 2027.

4 Introduction

- 4.1 Following agreement by General Purposes Committee for a Community Governance Review to be undertaken, a one-month consultation with residents was undertaken from 16 March until 17 April 2026. Letters were sent to every household in the Parish (245 households) and emails were sent to all registered electors that we hold addresses for (275 electors). In addition, the Council sent out regular social media posts and provided posters to the Parish Council to display in the Parish.

4.2 In total, the Council received 29 responses. This represents a 6.4% response rate. Whilst this is low, it is a similar response rate to other Community Governance Review consultations that are solely related to Councillor numbers, and not to boundary changes or the establishment of a new Town or Parish Council.

4.3 The following is an overview of the consultation response:

- 82.7% (24 respondents) agreed that Stansted Parish Council should increase Councillor numbers from 7 to 9. 13.8% were not sure (4 respondents) and only 3.5% (1 respondent) felt that it shouldn't.
- The main reason for respondents agreeing with the increase is that it would help the Parish Council manage an increased workload (15 respondents), with 3 respondents indicating that they support the proposal as it would help to diversify the skillset of Councillors. The other respondents provided a wide range of reasons including improving efficiency and attracting younger councillors.
- 89.7% (26 respondents) had heard about the consultation directly from the Borough Council, with the remaining respondents having heard directly from Stansted Parish Council.
- All respondents were aged over 35 years, with 79.3% (23 respondents) aged 55 years or over.
- 86.2% (25 respondents) stated that they do not have a disability, with 10.3% (3 respondents) preferring not to say and 3.5% (1 respondent) stating they are disabled.

5 Proposed Next Steps

5.1 Following this consultation exercise, and subject to approval from Councillors, it is proposed that no further consultation on this matter is required. As such, the next steps in this process are to:

- Inform Stansted Parish Council of the consultation outcome and the decision of the General Purposes Committee.
- Notify key stakeholders, including the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), Kent County Council (KCC), Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) and adjoining authorities.
- Make/publish a Community Governance Review Order and notify relevant bodies as required by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

- Update the elections system at publication of the register in December 2026, with changes taking effect at the next scheduled Parish Elections in May 2027.

6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 6.1 The process has been managed by existing staff with minimal costs associated with the consultation exercise (around £600) which have been covered from the General Revenue Reserve.

7 Risk Assessment

- 7.1 No risks directly associated with this report and process.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 deals with Community Governance Reviews

- 8.2 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 Local Government Boundary Commission for England), as well as in other enactments.

9. Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 9.1 Limited or low impact on emissions and environment.
- 9.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

10. Equalities and Diversity

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