

CGR 23

Parishes Affected

Wantage

Matter to be considered

Reviewing the number of councillors and warding arrangements

Impact on district and county council boundaries

None

Summary of parish council responses

After making the original request, Wantage town council subsequently asked that we look solely at the creation of a single parish ward. It considered that if Crab Hill and Stockham Farm were moved into the parish (subject to a separate proposal) then the number of councillors would not require review.

Summary of other responses

None

Recommendation

To create a single parish ward for Wantage

Justification

Wantage is currently divided into two parish wards that align with the district ward boundaries. Charlton ward has ten parish councillors and Segsbury ward six, broadly reflecting the respective electorates. As part of its electoral review proposals for the district council, the Local Government Boundary Commission maintained the two parish wards, and the levels of representation, albeit with a slightly different boundary to the current one.

The Local Government and Public Involvement and Health Act 2007 requires that in relation to warding a parish the council considers whether:

- a) the number, or distribution of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient
- b) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented

Sixteen councillors in a single ward is certainly at the upper end of what might be considered practical and convenient but is the same number as neighbouring Grove that has elected on a single ward basis for many years. The town part of the parish (which covers the vast majority of electors) is fairly homogenous, although it would be possible to ward it relatively easily if desired. On balance the working group is content to recommend in line with the town council's request.