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**Date:** 27 April 2018

The Occupier

Dear Sir or Madam

## **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF HUNTINGTON**

### **Have your say on the electoral arrangements that apply to Huntington Parish Council**

Cheshire West and Chester Council is currently undertaking a Community Governance Review, looking at the way local decisions are made on local issues in your community.

#### **Why are we undertaking this review?**

Cheshire West and Chester Council has received a request from Huntington Parish Council to increase the number of parish councillors from 10 to 12. Cheshire West and Chester Council will also consider whether the parish should be warded.

A map showing the current boundary of Huntington parish can be viewed on the Council's website at: [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/communitygovernance](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/communitygovernance)

#### **Why am I receiving this letter?**

This letter is being sent to residents of Huntington parish and other stakeholders who may be affected by the proposals to amend the electoral arrangements. You are being consulted for your views at the first stage of the Community Governance Review.

#### **What is a Community Governance Review?**

Community governance is the way in which local communities are represented and governed at a local level. The aim of a Community Governance Review is to consider any improvements to community engagement and representation, ensure a

stronger local voice, better local democracy and more effective and convenient delivery of local services.

A Community Governance Review will not change any village name, its identity or Cheshire West and Chester Council's ward boundaries. The issues it considers include:

- how local areas are governed, managed or run;
- what changes, if any, should be made to the electoral arrangements that apply to an existing Parish Council.

Cheshire West and Chester Council has the authority to change the electoral arrangements and in making its decision, it must take account of public views and comments. The Council must ensure that community governance reflects the identities and interests of the communities in the area under review and is effective and convenient. Any changes would come into effect from 1 April 2019.

### **What is a Parish Council?**

Huntington parish is currently locally governed by Huntington Parish Council.

Parish Councils are the most local tier of local government in England with specific powers and budgets for which they are democratically accountable. They have a wide range of powers to provide services to meet local needs, including managing community centres, liaising with the Police, maintenance of public open spaces and children's play area equipment and environmental projects such as landscaping. They are notified by Cheshire West and Chester Council of planning applications and consulted on local traffic management and highways issues within the parish. Parish Councils meet the cost of providing services by raising a precept from their residents each year which is collected as part of the Council Tax bill.

### **What could any changes mean?**

This Community Governance Review will consider the electoral arrangements for Huntington Parish Council and it will focus on the Parish Council size and whether parish warding is preferred.

Parish Council Size	This means the number of Parish Councillors to be elected to Huntington Parish Council.
Parish Warding	This means that a parish can be divided into areas (wards) and then a set number of Parish Councillors are elected from each ward. (Note: Parish wards are completely separate from Cheshire West and Chester Council wards). Parish warding considers the number and boundaries of any such wards, the number of Parish Councillors to be elected for any such ward and the name of any such ward.

## Current arrangements

Council Size	<p>Huntington Parish Council currently has 10 Parish Councillors.</p> <p>There are no formal guidelines for the size of Parish Councils. Council sizes vary between Parish Councils but typically the ratio for Parish Councillors to electors is as follows:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Less than 500 electors: 5-8 Parish Councillors 501 - 2,500 electors: 6-12 Parish Councillors 2,501 - 10,000 electors 9-16 Parish Councillors</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="507 633 1390 857"><thead><tr><th>Parish Ward</th><th>Polling District</th><th>Electors as 1 Dec 2017</th><th>Councillors</th><th>Ratio of Electors to Councillors</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Huntington</td><td>JE9</td><td>2,626</td><td>10</td><td>262.6</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>By 2023 the electorate for Huntington is forecasted to rise to 3013.</p>	Parish Ward	Polling District	Electors as 1 Dec 2017	Councillors	Ratio of Electors to Councillors	Huntington	JE9	2,626	10	262.6
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Parish Warding	<p>Huntington Parish Council is currently not divided into wards. Therefore Parish Councillors are currently elected from anywhere within the parish.</p>										

### INCREASE IN COUNCIL SIZE

- There will be no additional cost to the electorate if the Parish Council size was to increase, as all Parish Councillors are voluntary.
- If the Parish Council size was to increase, its workload and responsibilities could be spread between more Parish Councillors and could allow for even greater representation from across the parish.

### PARISH WARDING

- Warding may be appropriate if there are areas within a parish with separate identities or communities.
- If a parish becomes warded, it enables Parish Councillors to be elected to represent each ward.

If you would like to know more about the work of Huntington Parish Council, please contact Mrs Louise Gibson, Parish Clerk, by Tel: 01829 771001 or email: [theclerk@huntington-chester.co.uk](mailto:theclerk@huntington-chester.co.uk)

## **Have your say**

This is your chance to have your say and let us know your views on how your local community is currently represented and whether you would like to see any changes.

Following this consultation, responses will be analysed and draft recommendations will be produced. A second consultation will then take place on the draft recommendations. The closing date for giving your views in this first consultation is **Friday 8 June 2018**.

There are various ways you can have your say:

- Complete the on-line questionnaire by visiting the Council's website at: [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/communitygovernance](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/communitygovernance)
- Email your views to: [democraticservices@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)
- Telephone 01244 972283 and request a paper copy of the questionnaire.

All information regarding the Community Governance Review process can be viewed on the Council's website at:

[www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/communitygovernance](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/communitygovernance)

The review is being conducted in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Council must have regard to Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

If you have any questions or queries relating to the Community Governance Review, or if you would like a paper copy of any of the documentation, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Andrea Thwaite  
Democracy Programme Manager