

## **Community Governance Review carried out by Wealden District Council – Outcome of Review**

### **Final Recommendation:**

The final recommendation of Wealden District Council (WDC) is that:

- (1) There should be no change to the existing community governance arrangements for Danehill, Fletching, Frant, Isfield, Little Horsted, Maresfield and Rotherfield Parish Councils at this time.
- (2) The number of councillors to be elected to Hailsham Town Council should be reduced from 24 to 18 with effect from the 2019 local government elections.

### **Background**

The Council received a request from Hailsham Town Council in August 2017 requesting a Community Governance Review (CGR) to reduce the number of seats on the Town Council.

This request provided an opportunity for any other CGR matters to be addressed at the same time. Therefore, all town and parish councils within Wealden were invited to notify the District Council by 30 September of any CGR matters that they would like addressed.

Responses were received from:

- Fletching Parish
- Frant Parish Council
- Hailsham Town Council
- Isfield Parish Council
- Little Horsted Parish Meeting

On 13 November 2017, the Council approved terms of reference for the conduct the CGR for the areas above.

The review commenced on 3 April 2018 with the formal publication of the Terms of Reference and the launch of the consultation.

### **Matters addressed in the Review**

#### Fletching Parish Council

Fletching Parish Council requested a review of their boundary with:

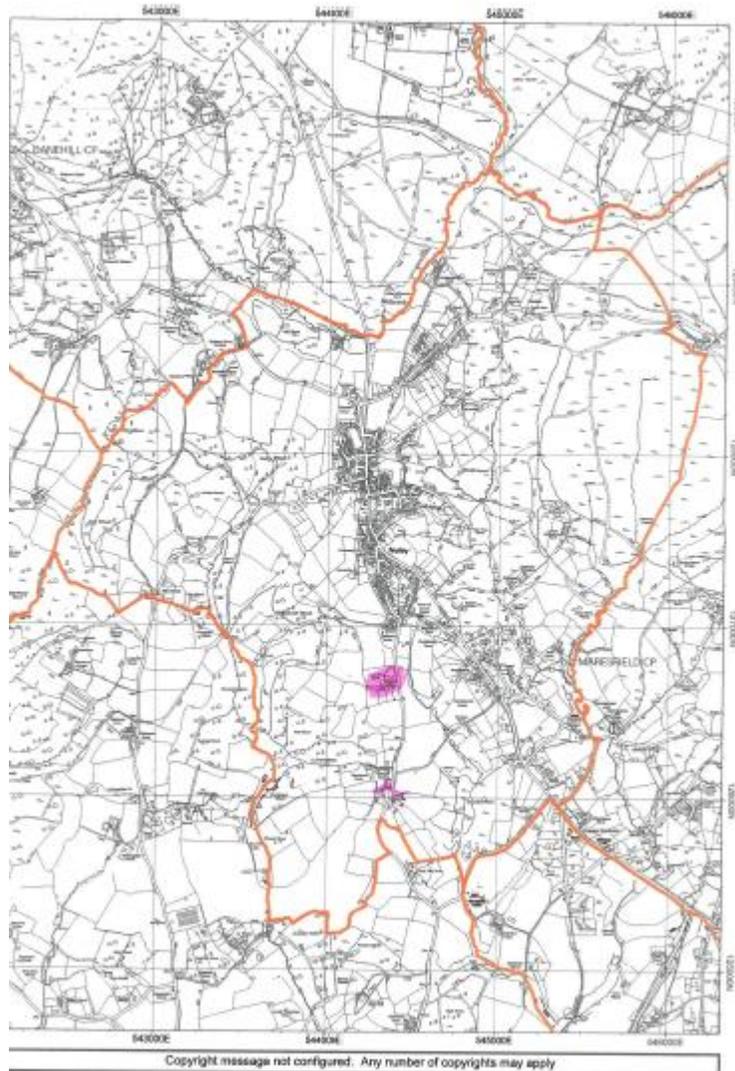
1. Danehill Parish – in the Sliders Lane/Furners Green area. This was a relatively minor proposal which would affect two domestic properties and would not require any consequential amendment to the new District Ward or County Division boundaries. The area concerned is hatched red on the plan below:



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- and
2. Maresfield Parish – the Nutley end of Down Street. This proposal concerns 11 properties in Down Street, Nutley with a postcode of TN22 3LG. Accordingly to an email from the Fletching Parish Clerk, these properties were within the Fletching Parish until a boundary change in the 1970s. This proposal would have required consequential changes to the new District Ward boundary, as the properties are in the proposed Maresfield Ward and would be part of the new Danehill & Fletching Ward. Fletching Parish Council did not proposed any particular boundary, but the properties concerned are those marked pink on the plan below:

## WMBK - Nutley

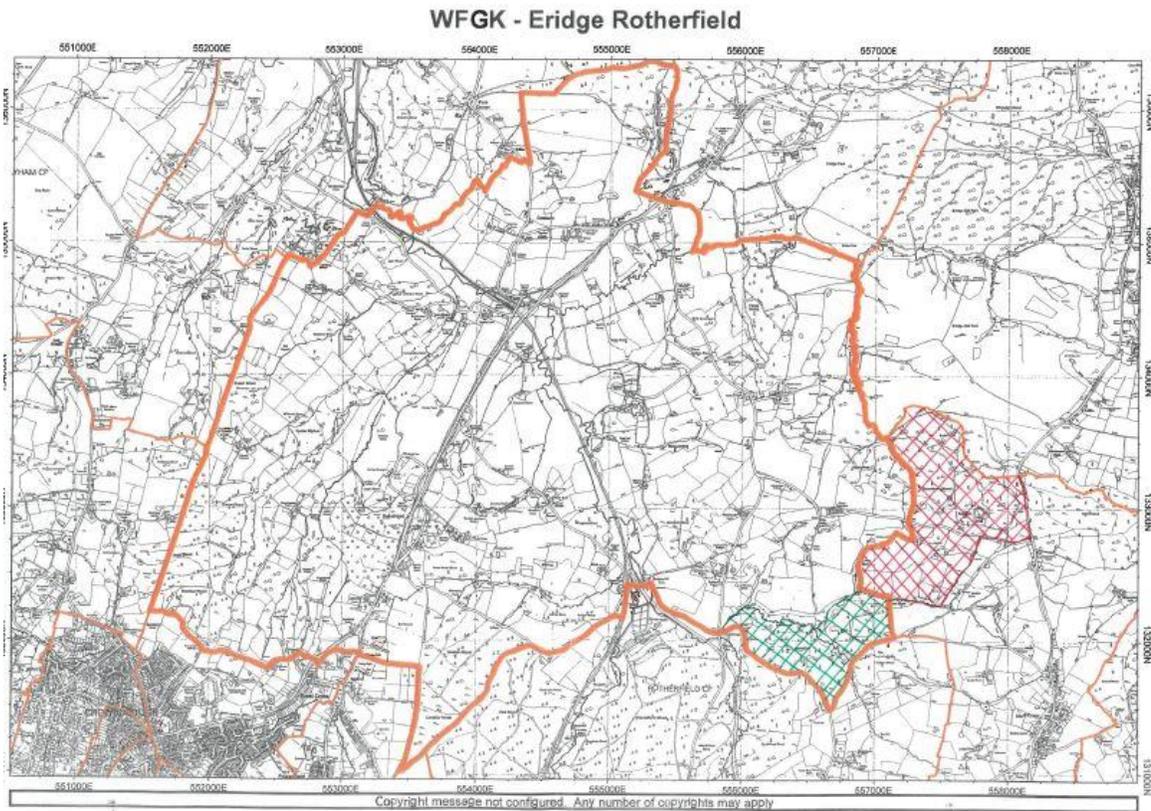


### Frant Parish Council

Frant Parish Council requested a review of their boundary with Rotherfield Parish – in particular – the Eridge area. Eridge is split between Frant and Rotherfield Parishes.

The Frant Parish Council proposal was largely based on the existing Eridge Rotherfield Polling District – WFGK, with the exception of 2 areas to the east.

According to the Frant Parish Council proposal, the green hatched area on the plan below would remain in the Rotherfield Parish and the red hatched area would transfer into Frant Parish from the Rotherfield Parish, Mark Cross and Eridge Ward – WFGK – Mark Cross Rotherfield polling district. The bold orange line shows the boundary of the existing WFGK – Eridge Rotherfield polling district. The Council used the existing WFGK polling district as its basis for consultation excluding red hatch, including green hatch).



At a review carried out in 2004/05, Frant Parish Council proposed to make the railway line (used and disused) the parish boundary. Following the outcome of the consultation stage, the District Council resolved to drop the proposal.

#### Hailsham Town Council

Hailsham Town Council requested a CGR to reduce the overall number of seats on the Town Council.

The Town Council accepted that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England had completed a review of the County

Divisions and District wards with consequential amendments to the Town Council Wards. They did not wish to challenge or alter those new Town Wards, but considered that a reduction in the number of councillors would be beneficial.

The Wealden (Electoral) Changes Order 2016 abolishes the current five town wards and creates seven wards maintaining 24 seats as at present. The Town Council proposed a reduction of six councillors to 18 as summarised below:

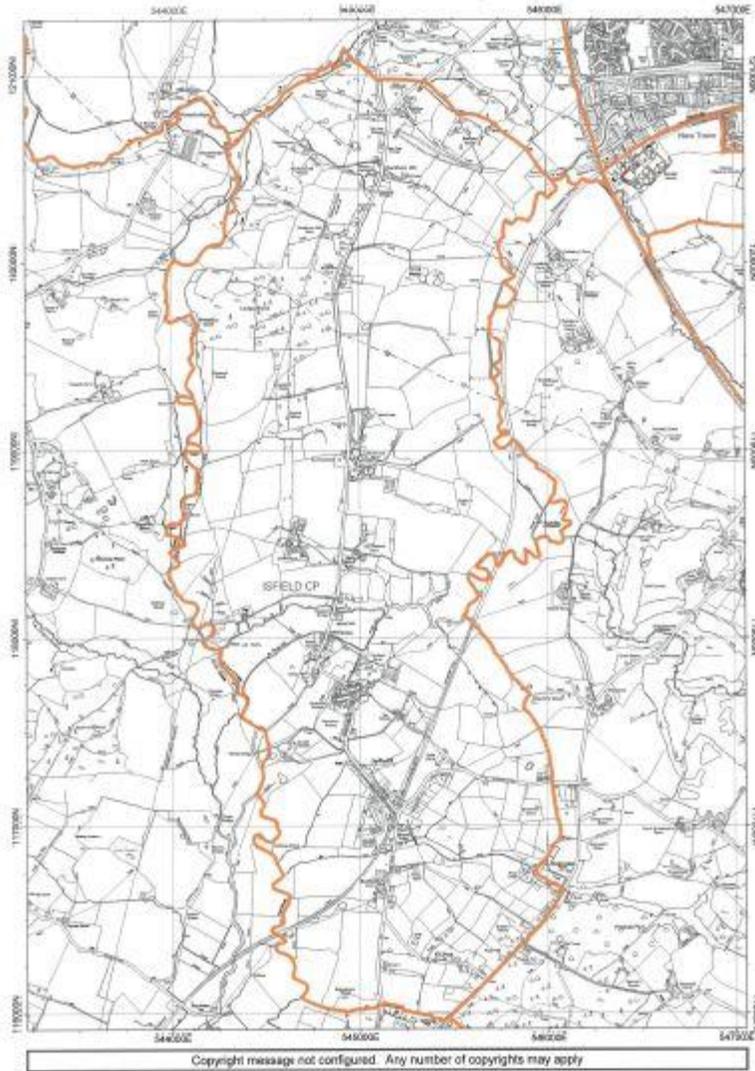
New Town Council Ward	Number of councillors as per Changes Order	Number of councillors as per Town Council proposal
Hailsham Central	4	3
Hailsham East	4	3
Hailsham North	4	3
Hailsham North West	4	3
Hailsham South	3	2
Hailsham West	4	3
Magham Down	1	1

#### Isfield Parish Council

Isfield Parish Council proposed joining up with Little Horsted, but only if Little Horsted agreed.

Below is a plan showing the boundaries of Isfield Parish Council

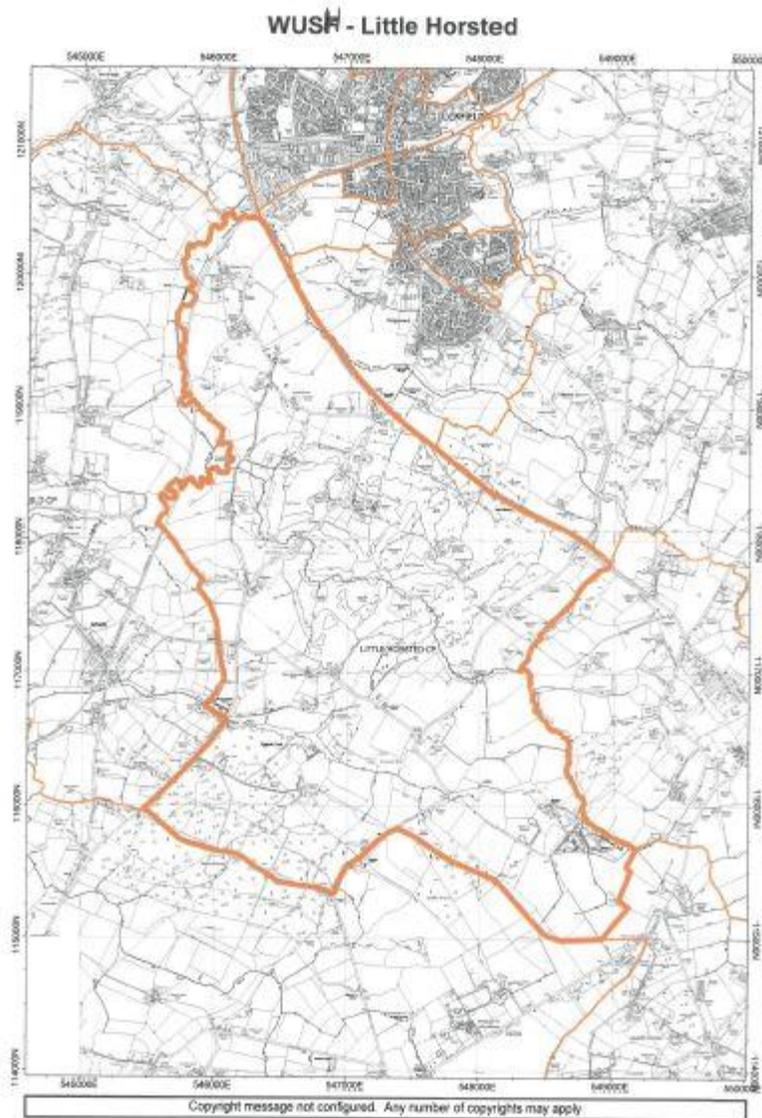
### WMBF - Isfield



### Little Horsted Parish Meeting

Little Horsted Parish Meeting requested that consideration be given to establishing Little Horsted as a parish council.

Below is a plan showing the area covered by the Little Horsted Parish Meeting.



## The Review

The Council has carried out this review in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ("the Act") and guidance issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 November 2017, the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Review were agreed.

The TOR specifically stated that the Committee shall make recommendations as to:

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Matters to be considered</b>
Fletching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boundary with Danehill Parish - Furners Green area</li> <li>• Boundary with Maresfield Parish – Down Street, Nutley, TN22 3RE</li> </ul>
Frant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boundary with Rotherfield Parish – to include the whole of Eridge within the Frant Parish</li> </ul>
Hailsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reduction in the number of Town Councillors from 24 to 18.</li> </ul>
Isfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grouping with Little Horsted Parish Meeting area</li> </ul>
Little Horsted Parish Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of Little Horsted as a Parish Council</li> </ul>

### **Consultation**

The consultation was launched on 3 April 2018 and closed on 15 May 2018. At the close of consultation all responses were considered by the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 May 2018 prior to any recommendations being made. The County Council, Parish and Town Councils, District and County Councillors were notified and invited to respond to the consultation as well as community organisations.

The Council used emails and letters as its consultation methods.

### **The Law – Duties and Guidance**

Under section 93 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Council must comply with the following duties when undertaking a community governance review:

- (1) The principal council must comply with the duties in this section when undertaking a community governance review.
- (2) But, subject to those duties, it is for the principal council to decide how to undertake the review.
- (3) The principal council must consult the following—
  - (a) the local government electors for the area under review;

- (b) any other person or body (including a local authority) which appears to the principal council to have an interest in the review.
- (4) The principal council must have regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review—
  - (a) reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area, and
  - (b) is effective and convenient.
- (5) In deciding what recommendations to make, the principal council must take into account any other arrangements (apart from those relating to parishes and their institutions)—
  - (a) that have already been made, or
  - (b) that could be made, for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in respect of the area under review.
- (6) The principal council must take into account any representations received in connection with the review.
- (7) As soon as practicable after making any recommendations, the principal council must—
  - (a) publish the recommendations; and
  - (b) take such steps as it considers sufficient to secure that persons who may be interested in the review are informed of those recommendations.
- (8) The principal council must conclude the review within the period of 12 months starting with the day on which the council begins the review.

Under Section 100 of the Act, the Council must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (guidance on Community Governance Reviews published in March 2010 by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)).

### **Consideration of the outcome of the consultation and identification of the final recommendation**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the outcome of the consultation on 21 May 2018 and felt unable to support any recommendation affecting the community governance arrangements for Danehill, Fletching, Frant, Isfield, Little Horsted, Maresfield and Rotherfield Parish Councils. In each case the Committee did not consider that the consultation outcome provided sufficient evidence to make a recommendation.

However, the Committee agreed that the proposal for the reduction in the number of councillors for Hailsham Town Council should be supported and they agreed to make a recommendation to that effect.

### **Final Recommendations**

- There should be no change to the existing community governance arrangements for Danehill, Fletching, Frant, Isfield, Little Horsted, Maresfield and Rotherfield Parish Councils at this time.
- The number of councillors to be elected to Hailsham Town Council should be reduced from 24 to 18 with effect from the 2019 local government elections.

Enquiries for further information please contact:

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19 July 2018