

Community Governance Review

Matthew Archer, Head of Corporate Governance

January 2024

Why now?

- Petition submitted on behalf of the CT5 People's Forum for a community governance review (CGR)
- Petition called for a town council in Whitstable
- To trigger a review 7.5% of the electorate within the boundary must sign the petition
- The proposals must include the defined boundary as an option

Support for the petition

- Signed by **2237**
 - Elec/Paper **656/1581**
 - Target (7.5%) **1763**
-
- Valid **1797**
 - Not valid **372** (outside area/not on register)
 - Duplicates **68**

Petition wording (part 1)



We, the undersigned, agree that Whitstable would benefit from its own Town Council.

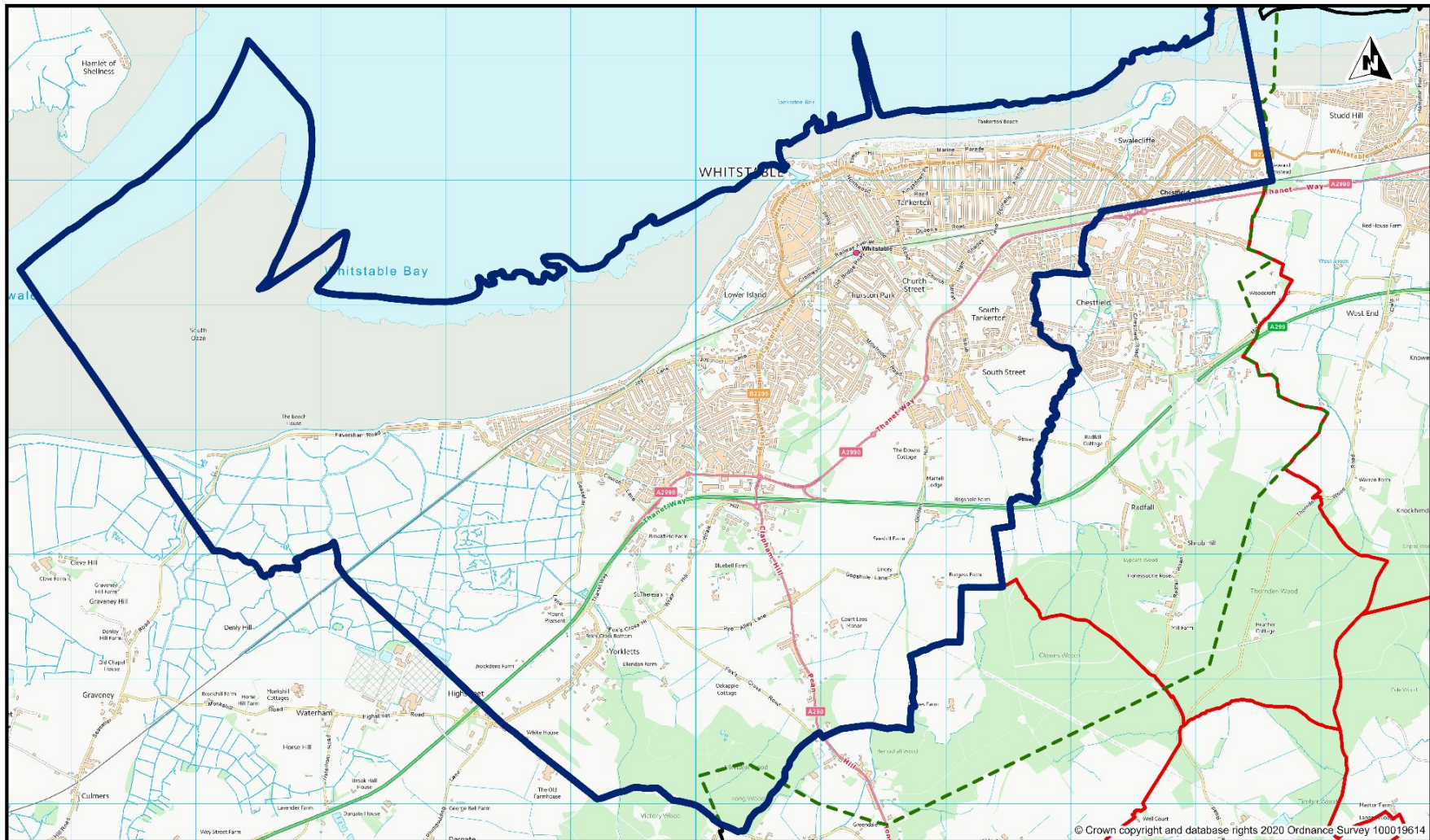
We recognise the important work by Canterbury City Council but would like more say in how our council tax is spent locally. We recognise that any Town Council must raise its own funds by asking residents for a contribution to costs. The proposed town council area to be within the unparished boundary of the CT5 postal district.

Whitstable is one of a few Towns in East Kent without a Council and there is the real risk that we will have little or no local representation if at some time Canterbury City Council is absorbed into a larger Unitary Authority.

Petition wording (part 2)

We also:

- *Feel that our town is overshadowed by Canterbury City Council.*
- *Feel that we are seen as a successful place but always seem to be an afterthought in decision making.*
- *Need a voice.*
- *Recognise that most other Kent coastal towns have town councils. We want the same, we need the same.*
- *Recognise that the town is full of amazing groups of people doing amazing things; we want to make the most of their energy and enthusiasm, help them work together and provide a place where they can meet, learn and collaborate.*



CGR requirements

Council's are responsible for undertaking CGR's*

A review can cover any part of the district -

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes
- Naming and style of new parishes
- Electoral arrangements
- Grouping parishes

*The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (Part 4)

CGR assessment



The council is required to ensure community governance within the area under review will be -

- reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area, and
- is effective and convenient.

In doing so the review is required to take into account of:

- the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion;
- the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

Existing parish arrangements



27 parish councils

Parish Councils funded by additional precept

Urban areas unparished

Services delivered directly by the city council in urban areas - no additional precept

How council tax is shared out



2023/24

Fire &

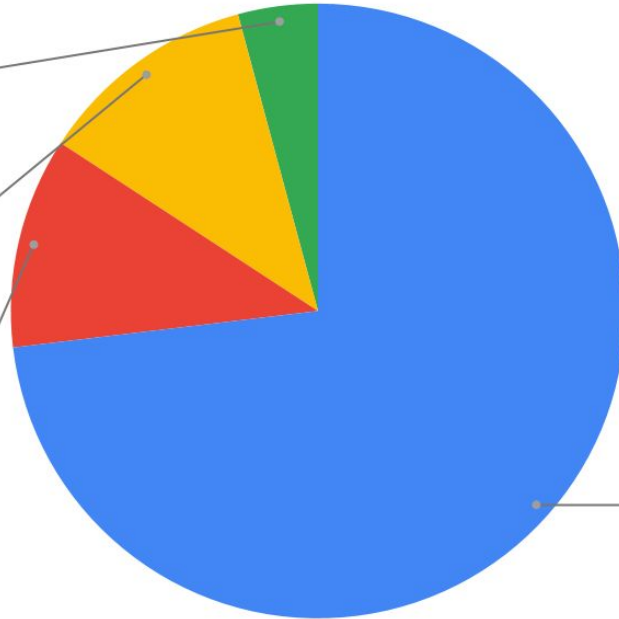
4.2%

Police

11.6%

CCC

11.1%



Parish precept is an additional charge on your council tax

Annual increases:
KCC - capped 5%
CCC - capped 3%
Town/Parish - uncapped

KCC

73.1%

Town Council precept

Approx cost if Band D property set at **£60 per annum**

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£40	£47	£53	£60	£73	£87	£100	£120

Approx cost if Band D property set at **£80 per annum**

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£53	£62	£71	£80	£98	£116	£133	£160

Profile of defined area

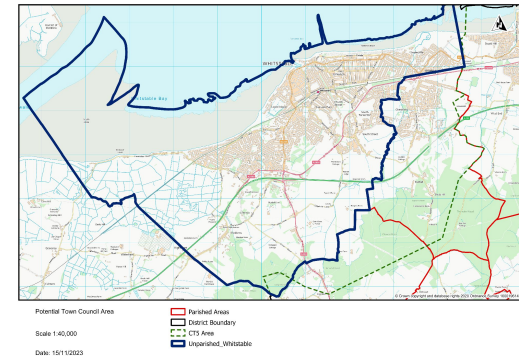
Number of chargeable dwellings

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
1,530	2,647	5,156	3,229	1,435	620	204	4	14,825

Very approximate potential income

Band D £60 = c £750k pa

Band D £80 = c £1m pa



Profile of defined area



Caveats

Exempt properties - c250 households
(owner in care, probate, repossession, students, charity, etc)

25% single person discounts - c5000 households
(single person household or others 'disregarded')

Council Tax support (discount based on income/savings)

Premium payment for unoccupied/unfurnished empty properties

Second homes - currently included as ordinary households

What we do...



Waste collection/street cleaning



Leisure facilities



Council housing



Planning and licensing



Parking Services



Whitstable Harbour

...and what we don't do

- Education
- Social Services
- Health and social care
- Transport
- Roads and pavements
- Libraries
- Children and youth services



Town and Parish Councils



First tier of local government - not a return to the old Urban District Council

Small number of statutory services: Allotments

Wide ranging discretionary powers: to complement/enhance existing provision

Examples:

- Bus shelters/community transport
- Community centres and play areas
- Crime reduction/community safety measures
- Festivals and celebrations
- Open spaces and public realm
- Street lighting
- Street cleaning

Town council's influencing role...



Town councils can work with the city and county councils and others to:

- provide a focus for representing local issues and the area's identity
- champion residents and local businesses and represent Whitstable's interests
- act as a statutory consultee, give its collective view on planning applications
- make external funding bids
- promote cultural events

Not a replacement for the city council or the county council.

It works alongside others to use its money to improve the area.

Useful background information



A delivery framework to support parish and town councils (LGA, published 2021)

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/local-service-delivery-and-place-shaping-framework-support-parish-and-town-councils>

CT5 People's Forum - www.ct5peoplesforum.org

Kent Association of Local Councils - <https://www.kentalc.gov.uk/>

CGR phase 1 consultation



- Maildrop to every household in the CT5 area - starts 22 Jan
- Written to stakeholder groups
- Social media
- Newsroom
- Public notice in the local paper
- Public events - 18 Jan Swalecliffe, 22 Jan Seasalter, 1 Feb Umbrella Centre
- Leaflets and posters
- Word of mouth

Task and Finish Advisory Group



Role

To consider the consultation responses and make recommendations

Membership

Labour: Councillors Chris Cornell, Harry McKenzie and Naomi Smith

Liberal Democrat: Councillors Michael Dixey and Peter Old

Conservative: Councillors Rachel Carnac and Ian Stockley

Green: Councillor Clare Turnbull

Timetable



Council approves CGR	4 January 2024
Stage 1 - consult on petition proposal	5 January - 1 March 2024 (8 weeks)
Consider stage 1 submissions	4 March - 25 April 2024 (8 weeks)
General Purposes Committee	16 April 2024 (tbc)
Full Council to approve stage 2	25 April 2024
Stage 2 - consult on draft council proposals	29 April - 19 July 2024 (12 weeks)
Consider stage 2 submissions	22 July - 13 September 2024 (8 weeks)
Report to General Purposes Committee	2 October 2024 (tbc)
Full Council makes final decision	17 October 2024

Questions

Post:

Freepost RTHC–JJHK–ZUHI
CGR Whitstable consultation
Canterbury City Council
Council Offices
Military Road
CANTERBURY
CT1 1YW

Online:

canterbury.gov.uk/consultations

