



Penrith Town Council

Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR

Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

DATE: 25 March 2025

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an **EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING** of **PENRITH TOWN COUNCIL** will be held on **Monday 31 March 2025, at 6.30pm** and you are hereby **SUMMONED** to attend to transact the business as specified in the agenda and reports hereunder.

The meeting will be held at **The Board Room**, Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith.

To assist in the speedy and efficient dispatch of business, Members should read the agenda and reports in advance of the meeting. Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the relevant officer **PRIOR** to 9.00am on the day of the meeting.

Members are asked to indicate if they wish to speak on an item **PRIOR** to the meeting (by 1.00pm on the day of the meeting at the latest) by emailing office@penrithtowncouncil.co.uk

FULL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Cllr. Bowen	Pategill Ward	Cllr. Kenyon	North Ward
Cllr. Burgin	South Ward	Cllr. Lawson	Carleton Ward
Cllr. Davies	West Ward	Cllr. Rudhall	East Ward
Cllr. Donald	North Ward	Cllr. Shepherd	East Ward
Cllr. Holden	Carleton Ward	Cllr. Smith	South Ward
Cllr. Jackson	North Ward	Cllr. Snell	West Ward
Cllr. B. Jayson	West Ward		
Cllr. D. Jayson	North Ward		

Mrs V. Tunnadine, Town Clerk

Public Participation

Members of the public are welcome to attend. Details about how to comment on an agenda item are available on the Town Council Website.

Filming

Please note that this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the internet or social media.

Please be advised that the Town Council does not record or live stream meetings.

Penrith Town Council fully supports the principle of openness and transparency and has no objection to filming and reporting at its Full Council, and Committee meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking websites, such as Twitter and Facebook, to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens. Filming will only commence at the beginning of a meeting when the Chair opens the meeting with apologies and will finish when the meeting is closed or when the public may be excluded from an exempt item. The Council, members of the public and the press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded.

General Power of Competence

The Town Council resolved from 15 May 2023, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence)(Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.

**AGENDA FOR THE EXTRA
ORDINARY MEETING OF
FULL COUNCIL
DATE 31 MARCH 2025**

PART I

1. Apologies for Absence

Receive apologies from Members.

2. Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

Receive declarations by Members of interests in respect of items on this agenda and apply for a dispensation to remain, speak and/or vote during consideration of that item.

ADVICE NOTE:

Members are reminded that, in accordance with the revised Code of Conduct, they are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable interests that have not already been declared in the Council's Register of Interests. (It is a criminal offence not to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest either in the Register or at the meeting.) Members may, however, also decide, in the interests of clarity and transparency, to declare at this point in the meeting, any such disclosable pecuniary interests that they have already declared in the Register, as well as any other registrable or other interests. If a Member requires advice on any item involving a possible declaration of interest which could affect his/her ability to speak and/or vote, he/she/their is advised to contact the Monitoring Officer at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

3. Public Participation

Receive any questions or representations that have been received from members of the public. A period of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments.

ADVICE NOTE:

Members of the public may make representations, answer questions, and give evidence at a meeting that they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda. The public must make a request in writing to the Town Clerk **PRIOR** to the meeting, when possible. A member of the public can speak for up to three minutes. A question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

4. Excluded Item: Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960

Determine whether item/s should be considered without the presence of the press and public, pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, as publicity relating to that (any of those) matter/s may be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for the other special reasons noted in relation to that matter on the agenda.

5. Community Governance Review Elections

[Community Governance Review - Westmorland and Furness Council - Citizen Space](#)

Consider the consultation overview and support the draft recommendations contained within which are that:

- i. Parish and Town Councils with a scheduled election date in May 2026 : The Draft Recommendation is to defer the next scheduled election by one year. The elections in May 2026 will not take place. The current councillors will remain in post for one extra year, with their 'retirement' date postponed until May 2027. In May 2027, elections will be held with elections taking place four-yearly thereafter.
- ii. Parish and Town Councils with a scheduled election date in May 2027 : The Draft Recommendation is to make no change to the election dates for these councils.
- iii. Parish and Town Councils with a scheduled election date in May 2028 : The Draft Recommendation is to bring the next scheduled election forward by one year. The elections in May 2028 will not take place. The current councillors will remain in post for one less year, with their 'retirement' date changed to until May 2027. In May 2027, elections will be held with elections taking place four-yearly thereafter.

6. Community Governance – Parish warding and Councillor representation.

Consider the report and recommendations contained within.

7. Next Meeting

Note the next meeting of the Full Council is scheduled for Monday 19 May 2025 at 6.00pm, Unit 2, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR.

PART II Private Section

There are no items in this part of the Agenda.

**FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL
MEMBERS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Access to Information

Copies of the agenda are available for members of the public to inspect prior to the meeting. Agenda and Part I reports are available on the Town Council website:

<https://www.penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk/>

Background Papers

Requests for the background papers to the Part I reports, excluding those papers that contain exempt information, can be made between the hours of 9.00 am and 3.00 pm, Monday to Wednesday via office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

FULL COUNCIL – EXTRA MEETING

Date: 31 March 2025

Public Report

**Matter: Electoral Review of Westmorland and Furness Council:
Draft Recommendations**

Item no: 6

Author: Town Clerk

Supporting Members: Councillor Lawson

Purpose

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has published proposals for new electoral arrangements for Westmorland and Furness and has launched a public consultation on the proposals from 4 March to 12 May 2025. The Commission is inviting comments on the proposals before they finalise the new electoral arrangements for Penrith. The electoral arrangements for Penrith Town Council may change because of the Commissions recommended proposals.

The draft recommendations can be viewed at:

[https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/westmorland-and-furness.](https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/westmorland-and-furness)

At Full Council on Monday 24 March 2025, Members requested an additional meeting to allow for more time to discuss the number of councillors for each ward. The following guide from the Local Government Boundary Commission explain the process for number of councillors patterns, electoral equality and warding:

<https://online.flippingbook.com/view/84147699/>

Screen shots of the relevant pages are appended.

Recommendations

That the Council submit a response to the consultation.

CURRENT DRAFT RESPONSE:

Penrith Town Council does not support the proposed recommendations and objects on the following grounds:

Number of Councillors:

Within the recommendation it states that:

"Penrith Town Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present."

Please be advised that at present the Town Council is comprised of 15 Councillors.

The number of Councillors should remain as 15 as the number of Councillors for this parish have previously undergone a CGR in 2019 reducing the number of Councillors from 19 to 15. The recommendation to lower the number of Councillors from 15 to 14 is therefore not accepted.

The recommendation reduces the potential talent pool of the Council. We are fortunate to have a wide range of in-depth expertise that would be wrong to diminish. Penrith is growing, so having fewer councillors is counterintuitive. As unpaid volunteers, increasing the workload will put off sitting councillors from standing in future elections and dissuade potential candidates from putting themselves forward. This will be especially true of those of working age, whom we have always struggled to keep on board. This, in turn, also reduces the potential variety and experience of councillors.

As Westmorland and Furness Council evolves the Town Council may be looked upon to accept discretionary assets and services. These proposals would make this difficult to manage.

Penrith Town Council has held contested elections, byelections and arranged successful co-options to Council and has not carried long term vacancies to seats.

The proposal reduces number of Members to an even number of 14. It is normal practice for odd numbers of Councillors to be allocated to parishes to assist in the definition of a majority during voting.

Fair Representation

Section 166 of the 2010 Guidance on community governance reviews states that:

"It is an important democratic principle that each person's vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimate competing factors, when it comes to the election of councillors. There is no provision in legislation that each parish councillor should represent, as nearly as may be, the same number of electors. However, the LGBCE believes it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government, either for voters or councillors, to have significant differences in levels of representation between different parish wards. Such variations could make it difficult, in workload terms, for councillors to adequately represent the interests of residents. There is also a risk that where one or more wards of a parish are over-represented by councillors, the residents of those wards (and their councillors) could be perceived as having more influence than others on the council."

The proposal for ward representations results in significant variation in representation across the parish. The largest ward having 5 councillors and the smallest only 1.

Change of Boundaries & Removal of Penrith East Ward

Penrith East is a defined area of Penrith with its own demographic. For hyper-locality it is essential to keep the wards as they are.

The change diminishes the link between residents and councillors. Residents rightly consider their respective patches of Penrith to be distinct and want councillors dedicated to their more localised communities, with the relevant knowledge of those areas.

Campaigning costs and workload becomes more onerous. Some councillors have access to party resources to fund leaflets and provide help to talk to several thousand residents but for independent candidates this adds more difficulty.

There will be negligible cost savings, as town councillors are not paid. There would be fewer polling stations but that then makes voting more difficult for residents.

1. Background

CGR Recommendations

1.1 The proposed recommendations for Penrith Town Council are:

Penrith Town Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing five wards:	
Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Carleton	3
North	5
Pategill	1
South	2
West	3

1.2 Which are summarised as follows:

- a) **Page 28 section 90:** Proposed boundary changes between Penrith North and Penrith South ward removing Penrith East Ward.
- b) **Page 31 section 98:**
 - i. The removal of Penrith East Ward.
 - ii. A reduction of Town Councillors to 14 from the current 15.
 - iii. An increase by 1 for Councillor representation in Carleton Ward.
 - iv. An increase by 1 for Councillor representation in North Ward.

1.3 The CGR process is set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ("the 2007 Act") as amended by the Legislative Reform (Community Governance Reviews) Order 2015 ("the 2015 Order").

1.4 The information within this briefing report is from the 2010 guidance on CGRs for principal councils and the National Association of Local Councils

1.5 Paragraphs 55 to 61 of the 2010 Guidance states:

"55. Parish councils have an important role to play in the development of their local communities. Local communities range in size, as well as in a variety of other ways. Communities and Local Government is working to help people and local agencies create cohesive, attractive, and economically vibrant local communities.

The aim for communities across the country is for them to be capable of fulfilling their own potential and overcoming their own difficulties, including community conflict, extremism, deprivation, and disadvantage. Communities need to be empowered to respond to challenging economic, social, and cultural trends, and to demographic change.

56. Parish councils can contribute to the creation of successful communities by influencing the quality of planning and design of public spaces and the built environment, as well as improving the management and maintenance of such amenities. Neighbourhood renewal is an important factor in improving the quality of life for those living in the most disadvantaged areas. Parish councils can be well placed to judge what is needed to build cohesion. Other factors, such as social exclusion and deprivation, may be specific issues in certain areas, and respect is fundamental to the functioning of all places and communities. The Government remains committed to civil renewal and empowering citizens to work with public bodies, including parish councils, to influence public decisions.

57. 'Place' matters in considering community governance and is a factor in deciding whether or not to set up a parish. Communities and Local Government's vision is of prosperous and cohesive communities which offer a safe, healthy, and sustainable environment. One aspect of that is strong and accountable local government and leadership. Parish councils can perform a central role in community leadership. Depending on the issue, sometimes they will want to take the lead locally, while at other times, they may act as an important stakeholder or in partnership with others. In either case, parish councils will want to work effectively with partners to undertake the role of 'place shaping' and be responsive to the challenges and opportunities of their area in a coordinated way.

58. It is clear that how people perceive where they live - their neighbourhoods - is significant in considering the identities and interests of local communities and depends on a range of circumstances, often best defined by local residents. Some of the factors which help define neighbourhoods are the geography of an area, the make-up of the local community, the sense of identity, and whether people live in a rural, suburban, or urban area.

59. *Parishes, in many cases, may be able to meet the concept of neighbourhoods in an area. Parishes should reflect distinctive and recognisable communities of interest with their own sense of identity. Like neighbourhoods, the feeling of local community and the wishes of local inhabitants are the primary considerations.*

60. *Today, there may well be a variety of different communities of interest within a parish, for example, representing age, gender, ethnicity, faith, or lifestyle groups. There are other communities with, say, specific interests in schools, hospitals, or leisure pursuits. Any number of communities of interest may flourish in a parish but they do not necessarily centre on a specific area or help to define it.*

61. *Building a sense of local identity may make an important contribution to cohesion where a local area is facing challenges arising from rapid demographic change. In considering the criteria, community governance reviews need to home in on communities as offering a sense of place and of local identity for all residents."*

1.6 Parish wards

Parish warding is documented in paragraphs 158 – 169 of the 2010 guidance. Paragraph 158 states:

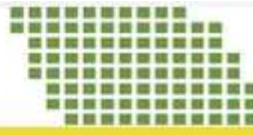
"Parish warding should be considered as part of a CGR. Parish warding is the division of a parish into wards for the purpose of electing councillors. This includes the number and boundaries of any wards, the number of councillors to be elected for any ward and the names of wards."

1.7 Allocation of ward councillors

Members are asked to note that the National Association of Local Councils suggest the minimum number of councillors be seven and the maximum be twenty-five. National research guidance suggests the following levels of representation for parish councils:

Electors	Councillors
Less than 500	5-8
501-2,500	6-12
2,501-10,000	9-16
10,001-20,000	13-27

6. Councillor numbers



The first part of the review will determine the total number of councillors to be elected to the council in the future. We won't consider ward boundaries until we have completed this phase. We'll make a judgement on council size by considering three broad areas.

We are happy to receive multiple submissions about councillor numbers from individual councillors and political groups, if councillors are not able to come to a unanimous view.

We will look at the **governance arrangements** of the council and how it takes decisions across the broad range of its responsibilities. We aim to ensure the council has the right number of councillors to take decisions and manage the business of the council effectively (both now and in the future), so we are looking for evidence about cabinet/committee responsibilities and their workloads, as well as delegation to officials and how all this might look in the future.

We will look at the council's **scrutiny functions** relating to its own decision-making and the council's responsibilities to outside bodies.

Every local authority has mechanisms to scrutinise the executive functions of the council and other local bodies. They also have significant discretion over the kind (and extent) of activities involved in that process. In considering council size, we will want to be satisfied that these responsibilities can be administered in a convenient and effective way.

We will also consider the **representational role of councillors** in the local community and how they engage with people, conduct casework and represent the council on local partner organisations. We understand that there is no single approach to representation and members will represent and provide leadership to their communities in different ways. However, we are interested in hearing about the extent to which members routinely engage with communities and how this affects workload and responsibilities.

We are looking for evidence about the number of councillors needed to hold the decision-makers to account and ensure the council can discharge its responsibilities to other public sector bodies and partnerships.

We are looking for evidence about how councillors interact with their communities, their caseloads and the kind of support they need to represent local people and groups.

More guidance on council size can be found by clicking here.



7. Warding patterns

Once we've decided on a 'minded to' number of councillors, we'll open a public consultation on the ward boundaries and names. 'Minded to' means that the number of councillors might go up or down by one or two if that means we can propose a warding pattern that better reflects the criteria you're about to read about. You'll be able to give us your views. There are lots of ways for you to do that, but first it's important to understand how we make decisions.

We have statutory criteria

The law that governs our work says that we can only make decisions about new warding arrangements based on three specific criteria.

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What do any of these criteria mean? We'll go into that in a bit more detail on the next couple of pages.



Electoral equality



Convenient and effective local government



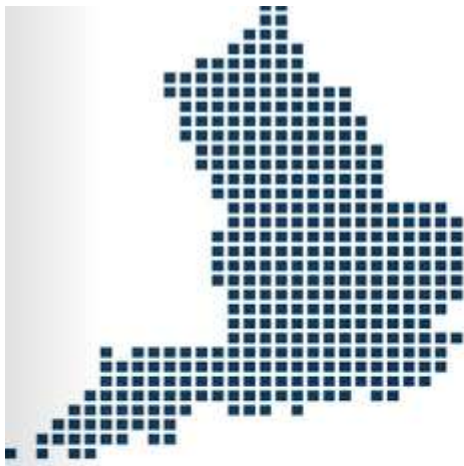
Community identity and interests



All three criteria are equal

It is our job to strike a balance between the criteria when putting together warding arrangements. We do this by assessing the evidence we receive over the course of the review.


8. Electoral equality



We have to make sure each councillor represents a similar number of electors. The law tells us we have to 'future-proof' the new arrangements by aiming for electoral equality five years after the end of the review. So we take into account things like population growth and new housing developments.

The easiest way of thinking about this is with an example. Red Tree Council is predicted to have 10,000 electors five years after our review. We have proposed that it should have 10 councillors and seven wards. There should be five wards with one councillor each, one ward with two councillors and one ward with three councillors. Our recommendations for new wards will aim for 1,000 electors in the single-councillor wards, 2,000 in the two-councillor ward and 3,000 in the three-councillor ward.

Note: Councils that have elections every four years can have any mixture of single-councillor, two-councillor and three-councillor wards. For councils that elect a third of their councillors in three years out of every four, we try to make sure all of their wards have three councillors.

Total number of forecast electors		Number of councillors	=	Number of electors that should be represented by each councillor
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To make it possible to calculate electoral equality five years after the end of the review, the council provides us with electorate forecasts down to the level of individual polling districts (polling districts are geographic areas smaller than wards used by councils for administrative purposes). We publish these forecasts on our website to assist local people with calculating electoral equality for their individual proposals. Further guidance about how we calculate electorate forecasts is available on our website ([here](#)).