

COUNCIL
10 JULY 2025

PUBLIC DOCUMENT

**TITLE OF REPORT: COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Codicote Parish Council submitted a response to the Community Governance Review consultation, attached as Appendix A, specifically in relation to the reduction in the number of Parish Councillors from 10 to 9. However, it was received after the consultation had closed and not considered as part of the final recommendations. Therefore, the following proposed amendment to recommendations has been submitted.

Recommendation 2.2 to be amended to read:

2.2. That Council agree the Final Recommendations for the Community Governance Review (as detailed under para 8.10 of the report – R1 – 41) subject to the amendment to R10 regarding Codicote:

R10: To retain 10 Parish Councillors:

Codicote Village: 8
Codicote East: 2

Proposer: Cllr Ralph Muncer

Seconder: Cllr Steven Patmore

Appendix A

North Herts Community Governance Review

Codicote Parish Council (CPC) considered the Community Governance Review recommendations for Codicote at the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 29th April 2025. Councillors agreed that they are strongly in favour of keeping the status quo i.e. to retain 10 seats and not reduce the number to 9 seats.

The main considerations in coming to this decision are:

1. **Representation of the Community:** With 10 seats, the parish council can offer broader representation of the community. A higher number of councillors means that more viewpoints and perspectives can be brought into discussions.
2. **Historical Precedent:** CPC has historically operated with 10 seats. With 4 developments in Codicote and more parishioners to represent CPC can see no justified reason for reducing the number of parish council seats due to representation ratios. Reducing the number of councillors will disrupt established procedures generated over many years of successful operation.
3. **Workload:** More councillors can help spread the workload. CPC has monthly full council meetings, 3 committees and 6 working parties. CPC constantly strives to work on behalf of the community to enhance the quality of life for residents, to maintain a strong community spirit and to uphold the parish identity. We have an ambitious action plan to deliver on matters that are important for our residents. CPC manages allotments, four play areas, a village green, a Sporting and Recreation Ground plus a refurbished Sport and Well-Being Pavilion. As community events are vital to a cohesive community, CPC initiated and organises an annual fireworks display and a Christmas display. With a vibrant community, new initiatives are regularly brought to the parish council for involvement and action. Having 10 members will ensure that there's enough capacity for all responsibilities to be handled effectively.
4. **Quorum Requirements:** CPC has a quorum of 4 for council and committee meetings to be valid. With 10 seats, the council feels it is more likely to meet quorum requirements without needing to rely on every member being present.
5. **Population Growth:** Maintaining 10 seats will ensure that the council can keep up with the increasing needs and demands of the community with substantial current and future development taking place within the parish. A reduction in seats could limit effective decision-making capacity.
6. **Local Government Reorganisation:** Due to the White Paper on Local Government Reorganisation in December 2024, Hertfordshire is undergoing debates on restructuring which will see changes in how services are delivered. CPC wishes to be well placed to take advantage of any opportunities that will be created from these changes.
7. **Election Process:** A larger number of seats may help ensure that there is a more competitive election process, which can be beneficial in attracting a wide range of candidates with diverse skills. Reducing the number of seats might limit the number of candidates who are able to run.
8. **Council Dynamics:** Keeping a larger council is preferred to ensure that no one individual or small group dominates decisions. A council with 10 members will feel more balanced in terms of decision-making and allow for more varied discussion and debate, which could lead to better decisions for the community.