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| Meeting of: | COUNCIL |
| Date of Meeting: | 24 JUNE 2026 |
| Report Title: | REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ARRANGEMENTS |
| Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member | CHIEF EXECUTIVE / RETURNING OFFICER |
| Responsible Officer: | NAOMI ROBERTS ELECTORAL SERVICES MANAGER |
| Policy Framework and Procedure Rules: | THERE IS NO EFFECT UPON THE POLICY FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE RULES |
| Executive Summary: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To note requests received from Town and Community Councils in relation to individual review requests. • To note the timescales for s.25 reviews and that consideration will be given as to whether there are any other options available. • To note the request for a s.31 review and to agree proceeding this review, and to approve the Terms of Reference. |

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Council on requests received from Town and Community Councils following Council's decision in October 2025 not to approve the Final Report of the Review of the Community Arrangements of Bridgend County Borough Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council has a duty under section 22 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 ("the Act") to report every ten years on a community review having regard to the Local and Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (LDBCW) timetable for conducting the reviews of principal areas' electoral arrangements required by section 29 (1) of the Act.

2.2 A review was initiated in 2023 and the final recommendations were presented to Council in October 2025. Council did not approve the recommendations and the proposals were not submitted to the LDBCW for approval.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 As Council did not agree the proposals the LDBCW will undertake their own review. We have been informed that this will not be completed before the 2027 local elections and will be implemented for the local elections scheduled in 2032.

3.2 Following the decision of Council in October 2025 we received individual requests from Town and Community Councils, asking Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) to undertake individual reviews in their areas. These requests were received from Bridgend Town Council, Ynysawdre Community Council, St Brides Minor Community Council and Laleston Community Council.

3.3 Reviews must be carried out in accordance with the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013. Section 25 covers the changes to boundaries and any consequential changes to electoral arrangements; and Section 31 only covers changes to electoral arrangements.

3.4 The Returning Officer has written to the Clerks of Bridgend, Ynysawdre and St. Brides Minor to advise them that their proposals have been considered and discussed with the LDBCW. These proposals would need to be considered under s. 25 review as they involve merging wards or altering / splitting wards. This requires consultation of draft proposals, consideration of consultation responses, consultation on final proposals and a decision by Council. Following that process the decision needs to be submitted to the LDBCW and if they are in agreement they submit to Welsh Government (WG) for confirmation. In order to finalise by May 2027 the LDBCW would need the submission by July 2026. Due to other unavoidable commitments (Senedd elections / canvas) the Electoral team are unable to meet this deadline. However, the team will continue to discuss with LDBCW over the Summer and will consider if there are any other options available. Any options will be discussed with the relevant community Council and reported back to full Council in the Autumn.

3.5 The request from Laleston Community Council had initially been submitted prior to the full community review and was held in abeyance pending the outcome of that review. It is proposed that the review looks at the number of community councillors within the wards of the community and whether the numbers should be adjusted to create better representation. This request will be considered under s. 31 which requires a simpler process and does not have to be referred to LDBCW. The Electoral Team will be in a position to undertake and finalise this review in readiness for the May 2027 elections.

3.6 Should Council agree to progress the proposal from Laleston the Returning Officer will contact the Clerk of the Council to outline the process. A Terms of Reference has been drafted and is appended at **Appendix 1**. Council will receive a further report when the review has been completed.

3.7 The Returning Officer has also received some informal queries from other Town and Community Councils. The Clerks of those Councils have been advised that

there is insufficient time to proceed with any further reviews. Following the decision of full Council the Returning Officer will write to all Town and Community Councils to confirm the position.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 There are no Climate Change or Nature Implications from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications from this report.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There cost of the review process will be covered within existing budgets.

9. Recommendations

Council is recommended:-

- 9.1 To note the requests received from Town and Community Councils.
- 9.2 To note there whilst there is insufficient time to carry out the reviews as requested by Bridgend Town Council, Ynysawdre Community Council and St. Brides Minor Community Council at this time, further options will be explored over the Summer and reported back to Council in the Autumn.
- 9.3 To note the request from Laleston Community Council and to approve commencing the review process in accordance with the Terms of Reference at **Appendix 1**.

Background documents

None