

## Introduction

Christchurch Borough Council is carrying out a community governance review of the Borough. Draft recommendations have been published and the Council is consulting on these.

We are keen to hear the views of local residents on the draft recommendations. This document provides an overview and the full draft recommendations can be viewed at [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/christchurch-community-governance-review](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/christchurch-community-governance-review) or a paper copy can be provided on request.

You can respond to the consultation online, by using our survey response form, via email or post (full details at the end of the document).

**The deadline for responses is midnight on 20 July 2018.**

## What is a community governance review?

A community governance review is a way for the Borough Council to review and put in place or make changes to the parish council arrangements within the area.

## Why is the Council undertaking the review?

It is recommended that reviews are carried out every 10-15 years. Christchurch Borough Council, at its meeting on Tuesday 16 November 2017 resolved to conduct a review of the Borough. A task and finish group was formed to consider responses to the invitation for initial submissions and to form draft recommendations for consultation.

## What changes can be made as part of a community governance review?

- Creating, merging or abolishing parishes;
- Naming of parishes and the style of new parishes;
- Electoral arrangements for parishes (e.g. ordinary year of elections; council size; number of councillors to be elected and parish warding);
- Grouping or de-grouping parishes.

## When would any changes come into force?

The first ordinary elections would be held on 2 May 2019 and every four years thereafter.

## What are parish councils?

A parish council is a democratically elected body, which provides services and has councillors to represent a defined area. Parish councils operate in addition to borough and county councils.

## Style of parish councils

A parish council can also have the status of 'Town', or can have a community, neighbourhood or village council style. The draft recommendations propose the use of several different styles. The style of council does not affect what the council can do; it is just that the area will be known as a 'community' rather than a 'parish' and is typically applied to more accurately reflect the area. A town council however would usually have a Mayor.

## Number of councillors and warding of parish council areas

By law, each parish must have at least five councillors, there is no maximum number. A parish area can be divided into wards where it is considered practicable to do so (for example to conduct elections or for areas of a parish to be separately represented).

## What can parish councils do?

Parish councils play an important role at a local community level serving as a key representative voice and often acting as the eyes and ears for other tiers of local government, public agencies and other organisations to raise local concerns.

Parish Councils are a statutory consultee on planning, highways and other regulatory matters, and may deliver or support other local services.

Depending on the size and capacity of a parish council, typical services include cemeteries, allotments, village and community halls, provision of grant aid to support local community groups, rights of way liaison, community transport schemes, public conveniences, street lighting, car parking, litter picking, recreation areas and playing fields, play areas/equipment, noticeboards, signs and local newsletters. It is anticipated that the proposed parishes would deliver a small number of these functions initially.

Parish councils employ a paid clerk and may employ other staff as required to run the council and deliver services.

## What is the role of a parish councillor?

Parish councillors do not receive an allowance, but may be reimbursed certain expenses for conducting parish business.

Parish councillors have a responsibility to ensure that the council is properly managed; represent the whole electorate individually and collectively; attend meetings; consider in advance of the meeting the agenda and any related documents; take part in meetings and consider facts and issues on matters which require a decision.

## How are parish councils funded?

Parish councils raise money by levying a precept, in addition to existing council tax, on local council tax payers for the parish area.

The existing parishes of Hurn and Burton charge £27.78 and £13.08 per band D property per annum respectively. It is anticipated that if any new parish councils are established in Christchurch, the Band D council tax charge would be similar to the two existing parishes. This will depend, however, on the services ultimately delivered.

## What must Christchurch Borough Council consider when reviewing arrangements?

The Council is required to have regard to the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Government.

Submissions received in response to consultation must be balanced with the duty to ensure community governance within the area reflects the identities and interests of the community and is effective and convenient.

The Council is required to take into account the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion and the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

The aim of the review is to bring about improved and stronger community engagement, more cohesive communities, better local democracy and more effective and convenient delivery of local services; ensuring electors are treated equitably and fairly.

Factors to consider for identity and interests of local communities can be geography of the area, the make-up of the community, sense of identity and whether people live in a rural, suburban or urban area.

Where warding is proposed, it is an important democratic principle that each person's vote should be of equal weight so far as possible when it comes to the election of councillors. Guidance recommends that the elector to councillor ratio variance for each parish ward should be within +/-10% of the average.

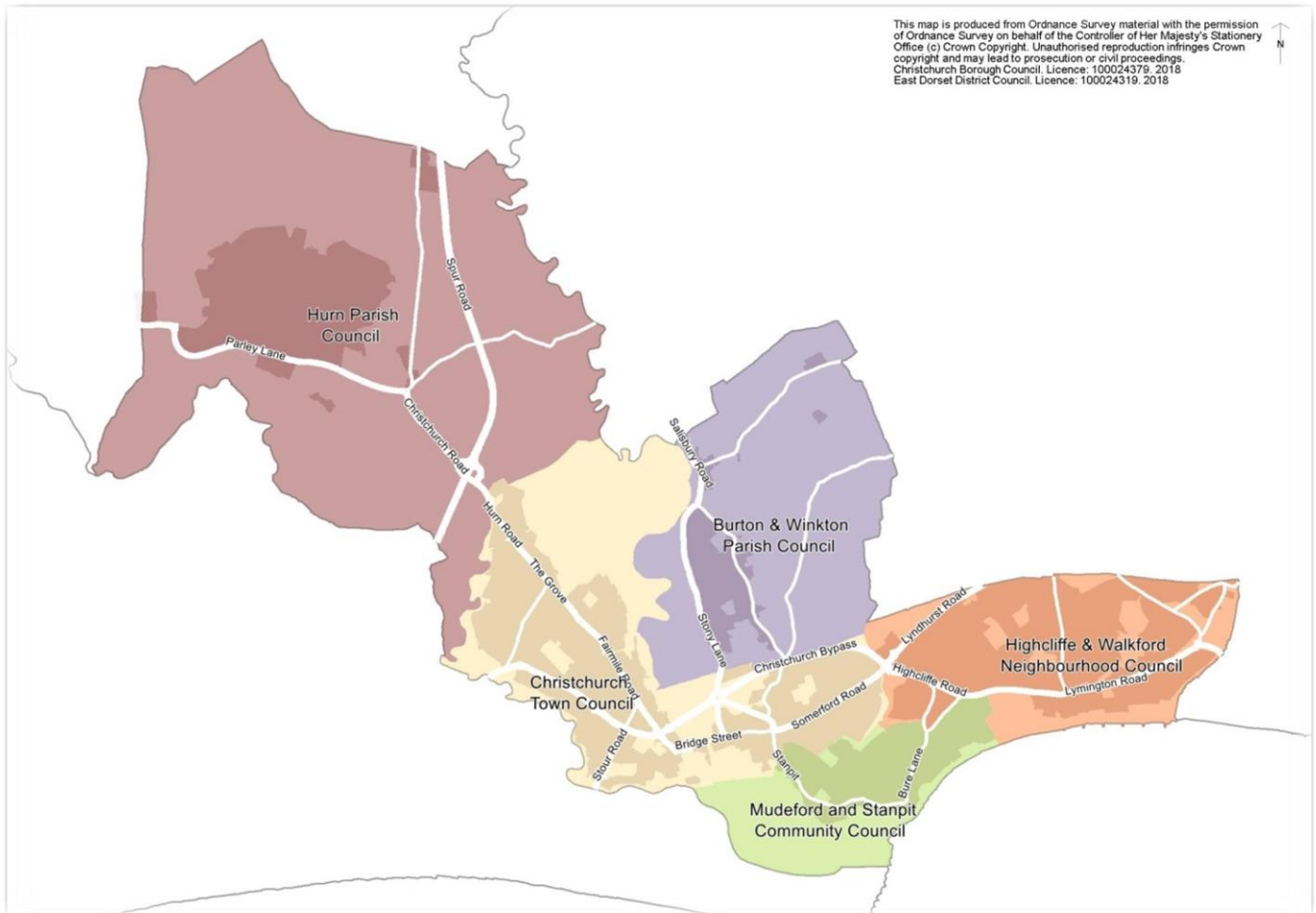
### **The next part of this document sets out the draft recommendations, for each of the areas, we are asking for your views on the following aspects:**

- Whether parish councils should be established/maintained
- The number and style of the proposed parish councils
- The area the proposed parish councils cover and suggested wards
- The names of the proposed parish councils
- The names of the proposed parish council wards
- Community identity of the proposed parish councils
- Effectiveness and convenience of the proposed parish councils

## Proposals by area

There are already two parish councils in the area – Burton Parish Council and Hurn Parish Council, the remainder of the Borough is unparished.

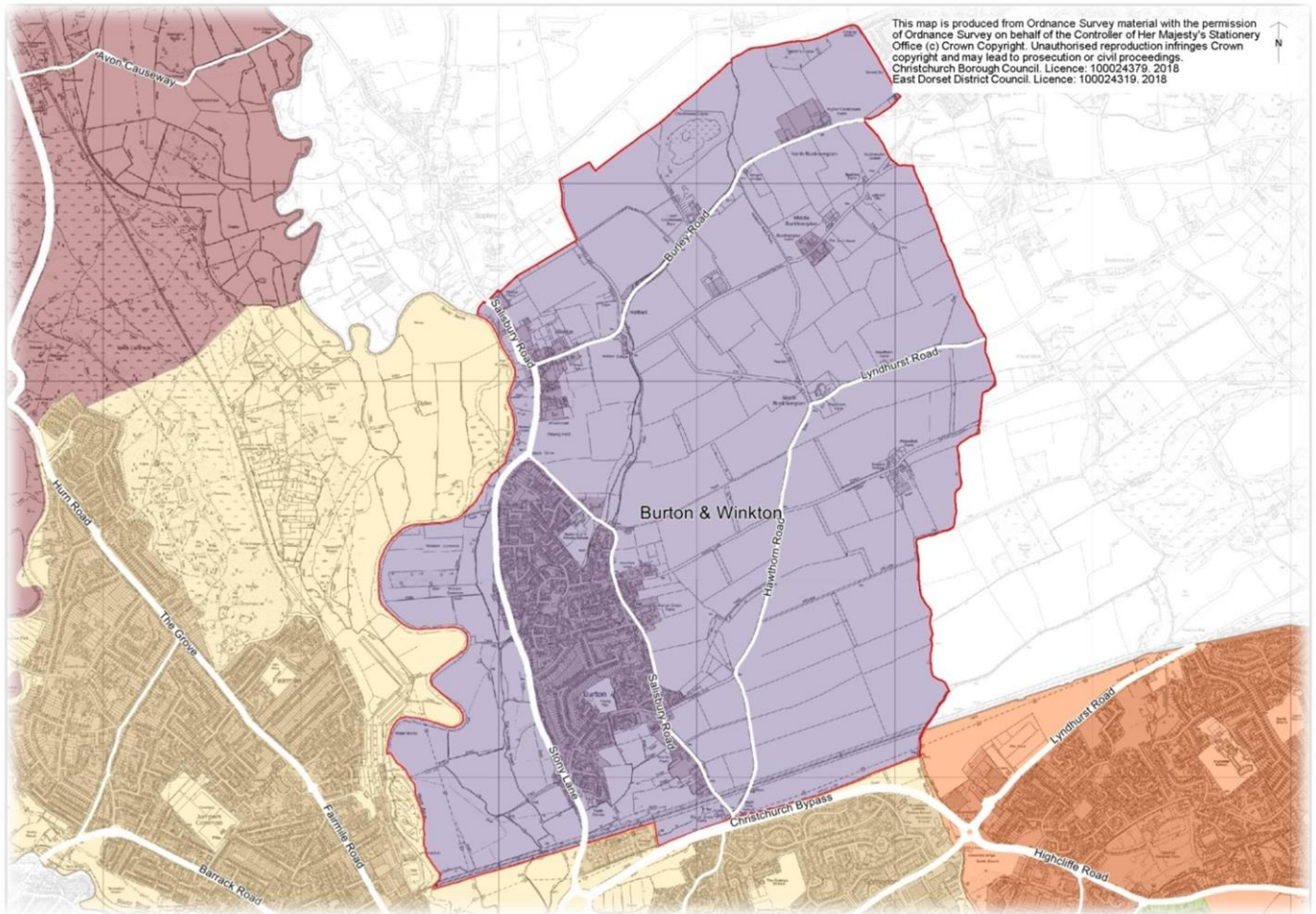
After considering all the initial submissions, the task and finish group concluded that on balance there was sufficient separate community identity, cohesion and interest in the Highcliffe, Walkford, Mudeford, Friars Cliff and Stanpit areas (in addition to the town) to justify a multi-parish arrangement rather than a single parish council. The proposed parish areas are shown in the map below:



The initial submissions can be viewed at [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/christchurch-community-governance-review](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/christchurch-community-governance-review)

Full details are set out in the draft recommendations document and a summary by area follows.

## Burton

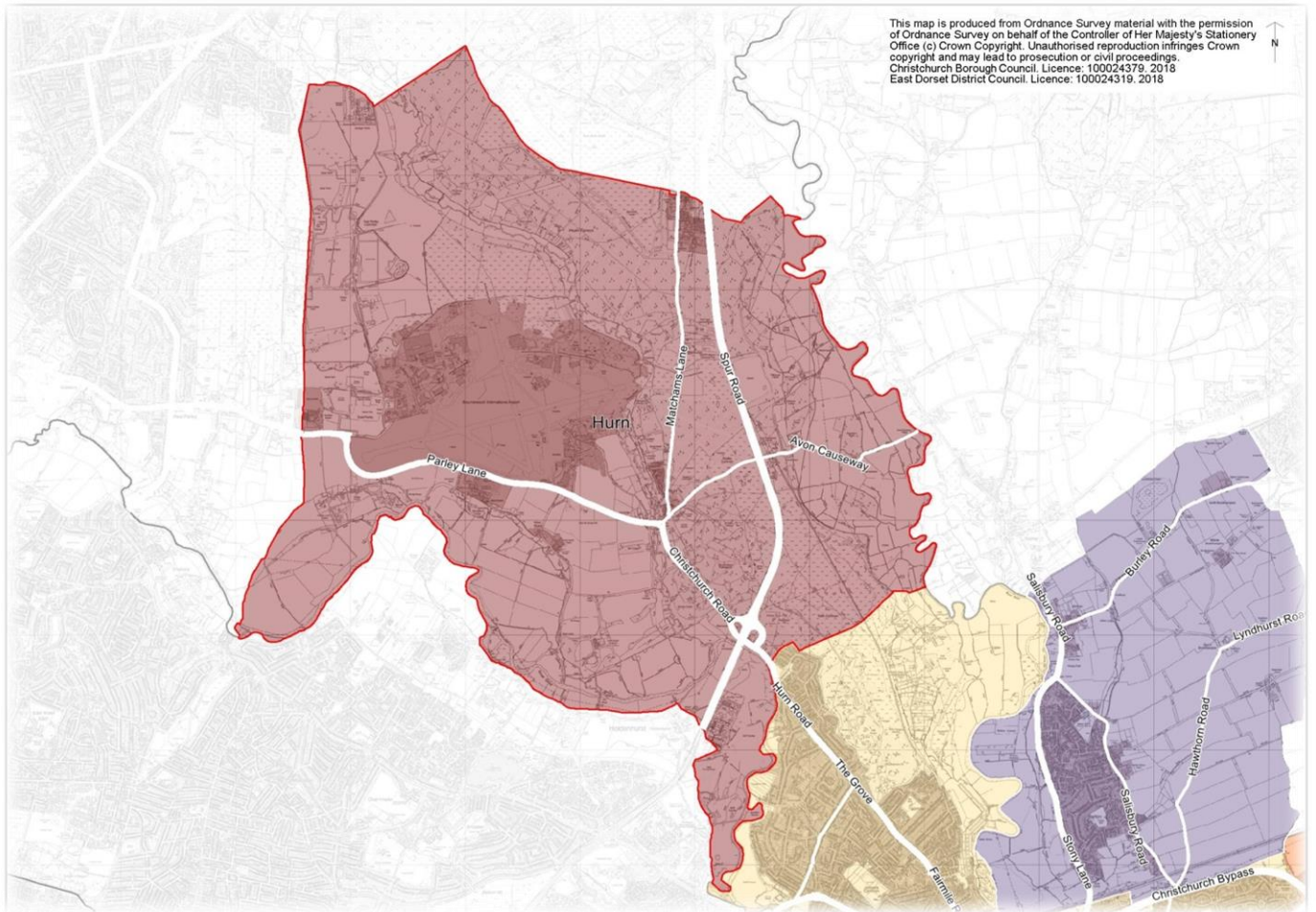


Burton already has a parish council, which is not warded and has 10 elected representatives each due to represent approximately 355 electors by 2022.

There have been no recent contested elections in Burton.

Following representations from Burton Parish Council and Winkton Residents Association, it is proposed that Burton Parish Council remains as it is, but be renamed 'Burton and Winkton Parish Council'.

# Hurn



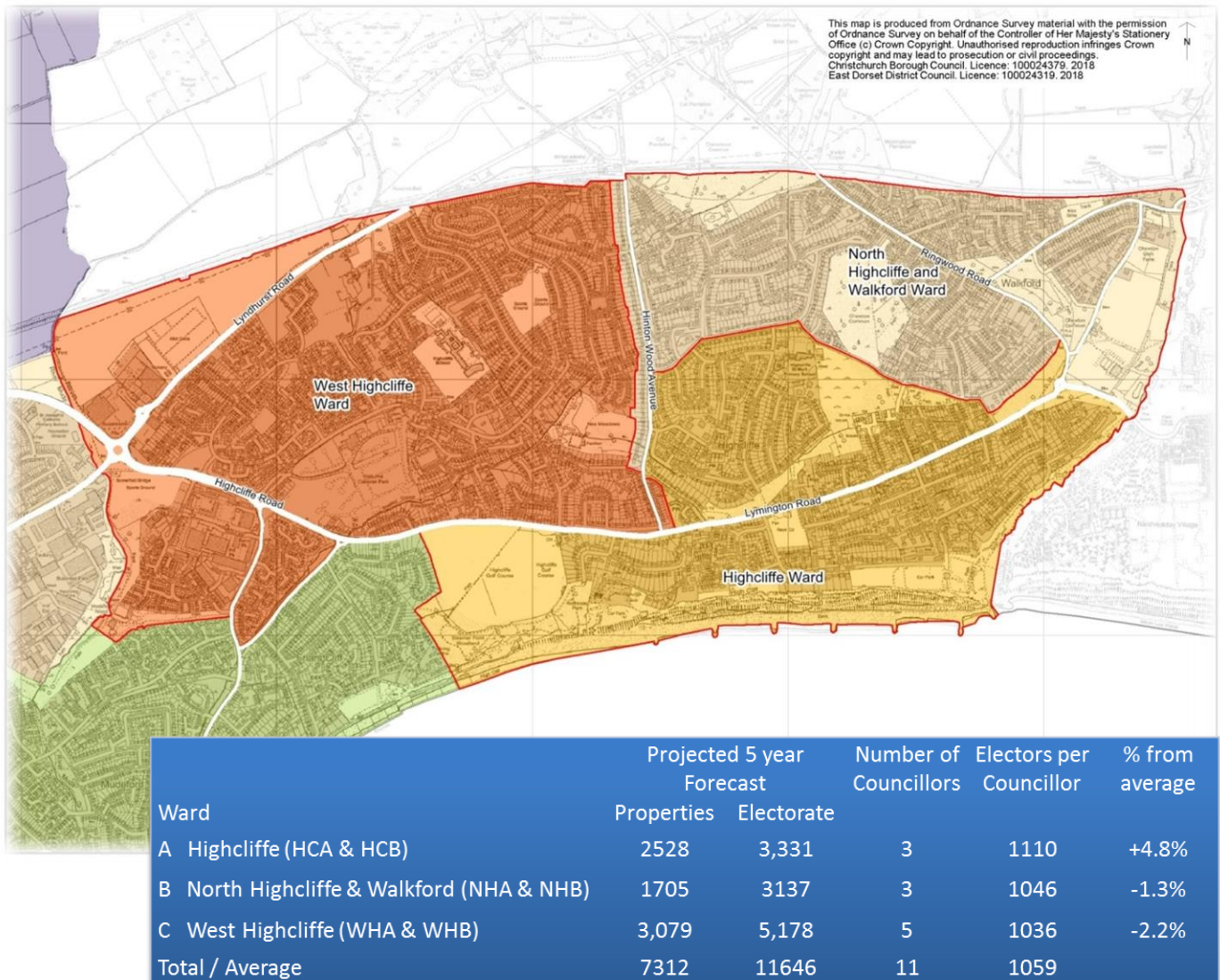
Hurn already has a parish council, which is not warded and has 6 elected representatives each due to represent 529 electors by 2022.

There have been no recent contested elections in Hurn.

Hurn Parish Council submitted a response to the invitation for initial submissions requesting no changes be made to the electoral arrangements for Hurn.

It is proposed that Hurn Parish Council remains as it is.

## Highcliffe and Walkford



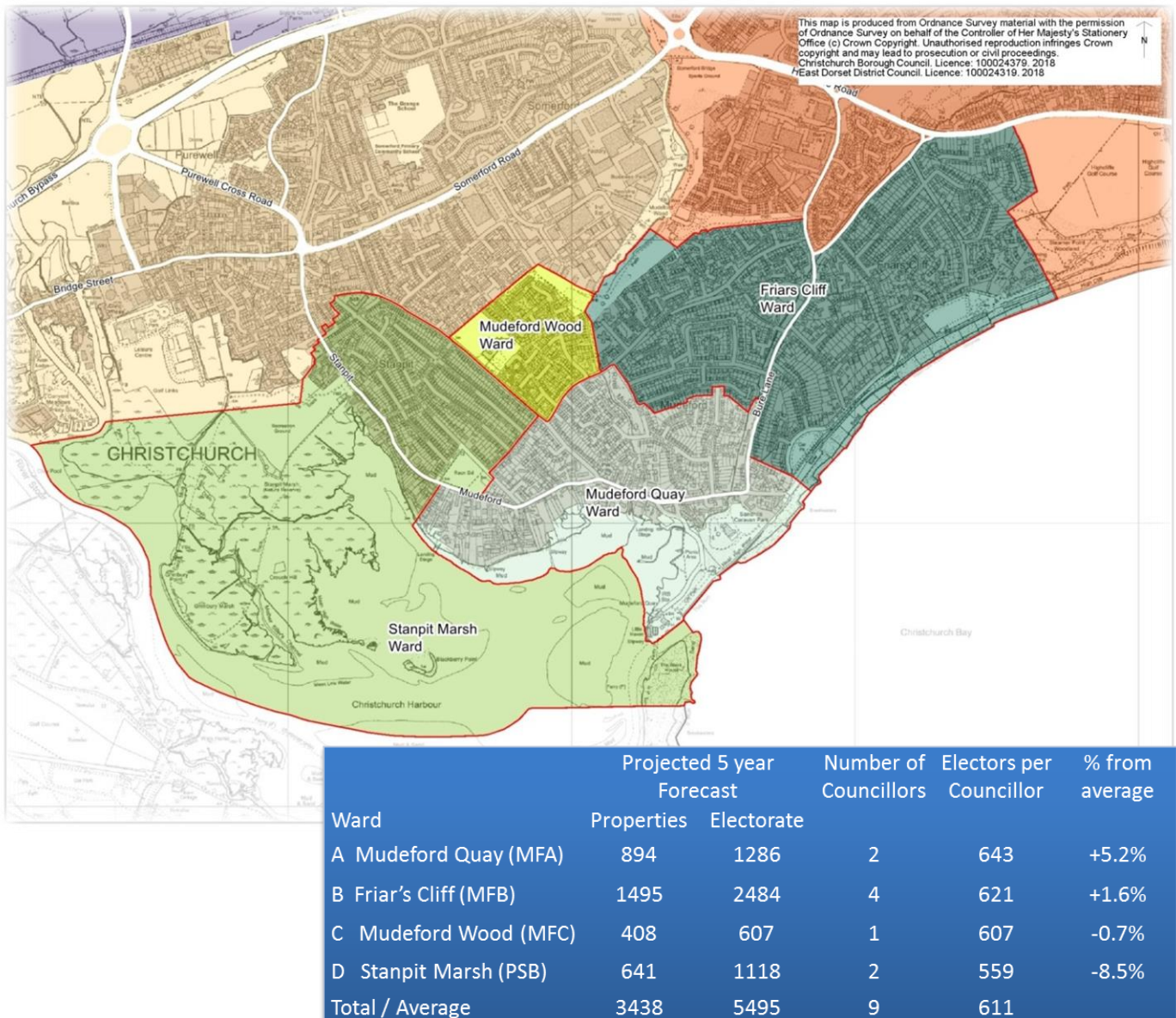
This area is not currently covered by a parish council.

A representation was received from Highcliffe Residents Association highlighting the strong community identities in Highcliffe and Walkford and suggesting that a neighbourhood style council would better represent the community interests and identity.

It is proposed that a parish council be established to cover the area shown in the map above and that the parish have three wards to deliver optimum electoral equality, be reflective of community identities and interests and be effective and convenient. Two of the wards would be represented by three councillors and the third by five councillors.

It is proposed that the parish should have the style of neighbourhood and the name of the council be 'Highcliffe and Walkford Neighbourhood Council'.

## Mudford, Friars Cliff and Stanpit



This area is not currently covered by a parish council.

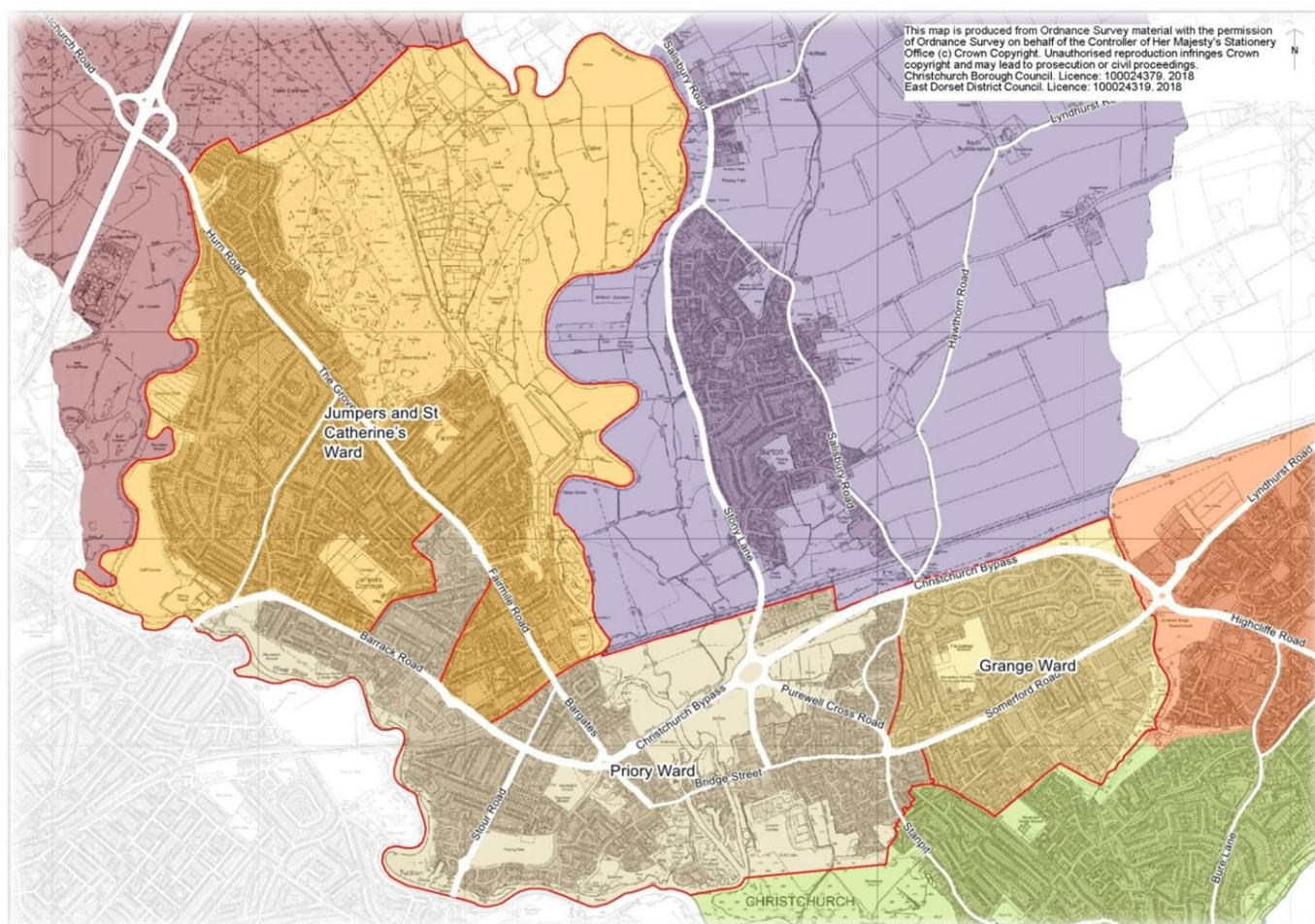
A number of responses to the invitation of initial submissions referred to the distinction between the Town Centre and areas to the east of the Borough, including Highcliffe, Friars Cliff and Mudford (referred to as the beaches).

It is proposed that a parish council be established to cover the area shown in the map above and that the parish have four wards to deliver optimum electoral equality, be reflective of community identities and interests and be effective and convenient. Two wards would be represented by two councillors, the third by four councillors, and the fourth by one councillor.

It is proposed that the parish should have the style of community and the name of the council be 'Mudford and Stanpit Community Council'.



## Christchurch Town



Ward	Projected 5 year Forecast		Number of Councillors	Electors per Councillor	% from average
	Properties	Electorate			
A Grange (GRA & GRB)	2560	4090	3	1363	+0.6%
B Jumpers and St. Catherine's (JUA, JUB, POB, POC, SCB & SCC)	4456	8176	6	1363	+0.6%
C Priory (TCA, TCB, POA & PSA)	5377	8061	6	1344	-0.8%
Total / Average	12,393	20,327	15	1355	

This area is not currently covered by a parish council.

After proposing the establishment of two separate parishes to the east of the Borough, it was considered desirable for the whole of the Borough to be parished.

It is proposed that a parish council be established to cover the remaining area as shown in the map above and that there be three wards to deliver optimum electoral equality, be reflective of community identities and interests and be effective and convenient. Two wards would be represented by six councillors and the third by three councillors.

It is proposed that the parish be designated a town council and be known as 'Christchurch Town Council'.

## Have your say and what happens next

### For each of the areas, we are asking for your views on the following aspects:

- Whether parish councils should be established/maintained
- The number and style of the proposed parish councils
- The area the proposed parish councils cover and suggested wards
- The names of the proposed parish councils
- The names of the proposed parish council wards
- Community identity of the proposed parish councils
- Effectiveness and convenience of the proposed parish councils

All residents and any other persons or organisations wishing to make representations on the draft recommendations may do so online using the survey link at [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/christchurch-community-governance-review](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/christchurch-community-governance-review) or by using our survey response form – each of these response methods provides a series of questions for you to respond to in relation to each proposed area.

Representations may also be made by sending an email to [cgr@christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk](mailto:cgr@christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk) or in writing to: Electoral Services, Christchurch Borough Council, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 1AZ

Please entitle your response '*Christchurch Community Governance Review 2018 – Response to Draft Recommendations*'.

Representations that are received will be taken into account by judging them against the criteria in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

The full draft recommendations document is available at [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/christchurch-community-governance-review](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/christchurch-community-governance-review) along with the terms of reference for the review and interactive maps.

The deadline for comments is midnight on 20 July 2018. The Council will then consider all the submissions received and publish final recommendations on 4 September 2018.

### Privacy Notice

The personal information you provide in any email or letter will be used by Christchurch Borough Council for the purpose of ensuring the responses received are unique from individuals, organisations or businesses. It will only be retained for as long as required for those purposes.

You have the right to:

Request that we stop processing your data if you withdraw your voluntary consent.

Request that your data is changed if you believe it is not correct or has become incorrect, either at the time it was provided or later.

Request that your data is deleted if you no longer wish to take part in our research.

Request a copy of the data held about you.

You can do this by contacting [arichmond@christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk](mailto:arichmond@christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk) 01202 795536. Further information about the use of personal information is available on our website at [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk) or by contacting the Council's Data Protection Officer