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Carmarthenshire County Council

Community Review 2024\_2025

Terms of Reference

A review of communities under section 25 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013.

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**Background**

Carmarthenshire County Council has been approached to undertake a Community Review of the Whitland Abbey area that lies between the communities of Whitland and Llanboidy but falls within the Community of Llanboidy. The Council has a duty to keep community arrangements under review and hence the reason for this review.

In undertaking the review, the Council will be guided by Section 25 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013.

The Council has developed and publicised Terms of Reference (“TOR”) for this community review.

The TOR will set out the proposed timetable and procedures for the review, provide guidance and set out the issues that will be considered during the review. The TOR will ensure that Carmarthenshire County Council follow a set procedure and take into account appropriate considerations for the review and allows interested parties to understand how to effectively engage in the review.

**What is a Community Review?**

A principal council may commence a review at their own initiative at any time. A Community review carried out under Section 25 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 is a process whereby Carmarthenshire County Council can consider the following:

●such community boundary changes as it considers appropriate

●in consequence of any community boundary changes, such community council changes and associated changes to the electoral arrangements of

(i) the community or communities under review

(ii) the principal area

as it considers appropriate

The Community Review must reflect the identities and interests of communities and should take into account the impact of community governance arrangements on cohesion and the size, population and boundaries of a local community.

When conducting a community review a principal council must also consider its other statutory obligations related to the review-for example obligations under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015, Welsh Language Standards and the Equality Act 2010, which will all influence and inform the conduct and decisions made during the course of a community review.

**Why is Carmarthenshire Council undertaking this review?**

A request was received by a County Councillor asking the Electoral Registration Officer to review the community boundaries for Whitland and Llanboidy Community Council areas. As this review has an impact on electoral boundaries, it is appropriate to carry out this review now before the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (LDBCW) commence their next round of electoral reviews. The LDBCW is required to conduct electoral reviews of principal councils every ten years. Ideally a Community Review should precede an electoral review by the Commission of the principal council, as the community and community wards within the principal council’s area will be used as the primary building blocks for principal council electoral wards.

As the principal authority, Carmarthenshire County Council is responsible for undertaking Community Reviews within its area. The Council will approve the final recommendations before a Community Order is made.

The main contacts for the review are:

Dylan Price, Electoral Services Officer

Shelley Williams, Electoral Services Officer

**Scope of Review**

The Review will consider any Community Review requests received following publication of the Terms of Reference.

**Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales**

Under the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act), the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (the Commission) has a general duty to monitor arrangements for local government across Wales. The Commission recommends that it should be included in any consultation or information that is distributed by the principal council as part of the community review.

**What do Community Councils Do?**

Town and Community Councils represent the most local form of government and can own land and assets, employ staff and provide services at a local level. Town/Community Councils can provide a local voice for the community responding to consultation and raising concerns with the relevant organisations.

A Town/Community Council is made up of Community councillors elected by local government electors in the community with elections taking place every five years. Vacancies within the five-year term are filled by co-option or by-election if local government electors request it.

**Consultation**

**How the Council proposes to conduct consultations during the review**

These terms of reference provide the aims of the review, the legislation that guides the process and the areas that the council will consider as part of the review process.

The council will consult widely on the review including but not limited to:

●Local government electors

●Community Councils

●County Councillors

●Members of the Senedd

●Members of Parliament

Prior to making recommendations or publishing final proposals, the Council will take full account of the views and suggestions put forward by local people and organisations and will comply with the statutory consultation requirements by:

●Consulting local government electors and other persons or bodies which appear to the Council to have an interest in the review,

●Considering any representations received in connection with the review,

●Notifying consultees of the outcome of the review,

●Publishing all decisions taken and the reasons for such decisions.

Information about each stage of the review will be published on the Council’s website. Press releases and other publicity will be issued where appropriate.

The Council will notify each consultee and any other persons or bodies who have made written representations of the outcome of the review.

**Timeline of the review**

The Community Review commences when the Council publishes its terms of reference and concludes when it publishes the recommendations made in the review.

The table below sets out the timetable for the review.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **Action** | **Dates** |
| Report to Pre-Cabinet  Full Council | Council approves the principle of the Community Review and its Terms of Reference. | 2 December 2024  11 December 2024 |
| **Public Consultation 1** | Six-week consultation period starting with publication of the Review Terms of Reference | 16 December 2024 |
| Public Consultation ends | All representations are examined and considered | 27 January 2025 |
| Consider submissions/representations and prepare report for full council | Draft recommendations to be considered by Council and approved for further consultation. | Pre-Cabinet 31 March 2025  Full Council 9 April 2025 |
| **Publication Consultation 2** | 1. Six-week consultation with Stakeholders on draft recommendations 2. Final recommendations prepared. | 14 April 2025 |
| Public Consultation ends | All representations are examined and considered | 26 May 2025 |
| Consider submissions/representations and prepare Final report for full council | Final recommendations to be considered by Council | Pre-Cabinet 30 June 2025  Full Council 9 July 2025 |
| Order takes effect | Next Scheduled local government elections | May 2027 |

**Background information**

The land in question is the area of land where Whitland Abbey sits upon. Whitland Abbey was an important Cistercian Abbey founded in 1151. Now only visible in ruined form. The town which grew up nearby is now named Whitland.

This land sits within the Llanboidy Community Council area which is a surprise to many who assume that the land sits within Whitland Community Council area. The Whitland Abbey By-Way is a popular walking and running loop accessed by many electors of Whitland

To continue with the Whitland connection, Whitland and District Male Voice Choir and the secondary school- Ysgol Dyffryn Taff have a logo taken from the Abbey tiles.

**Making Representations**

If you wish to make representations on the community review, please e-mail: [CAElectoralServices@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:CAElectoralServices@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

Alternatively, submissions may be sent by post to:

Community Review

Electoral Services

Block 4

Parc Myrddin

Richmond Terrace

Carmarthen

SA31 1HQ

Should you require any further information regarding the review, please contact, Electoral Services at the email/postal address above or by phone: 01267 228889