

# New Town or Parish Councils for Lowestoft

Final Proposal, October 2016



# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## Contents

- 3 Introduction
- 4 What is a town/parish council?
- 5 What can a town/parish council achieve for its area?
- 6 Background
- 8 Development of the Final Proposal
- 9 Lowestoft Town Council
- 12 Oulton Broad Parish Council
- 13 When would the new councils come into being?
- 13 How and when would the new councillors be chosen?
- 14 When would the new councils start operating?
- 15 Where would the new councils operate from?
- 16 What assets and services would be transferred?
- 17 How would the new councils be funded?
- 19 Financial illustrations
- 21 Lowestoft Charter Trustees
- 21 Can the new councils be changed in future?
- 21 How to have your say on the final proposal
  
- 22 Appendix 1 – map of proposed change to boundary for Corton Parish Council
- 23 Appendix 2 – map of Oulton Parish Council area (existing) and  
proposed new Oulton Broad Parish Council area
- 24 Appendix 3 – Financial illustrations

## Introduction

This document outlines the 'Final Proposal' for the Lowestoft Community Governance Review. The final proposal has been developed following two stages of consultation; an initial consultation phase to find out whether residents wished to have a new council for their area, and a secondary stage where residents commented on a 'Draft Proposal' containing two options for consideration. As a result of the responses received to the two consultations, the final proposal is to create:

### **A new town council for Lowestoft and A new parish council for Oulton Broad**

This proposal has been developed by Waveney District Council and is based on the representations received from residents living in Lowestoft and the immediate surrounding area (the Review area), along with the views of councillors and officers.

As previously expressed in earlier consultation documents, Waveney District Council's preference is for the whole of the district to be represented by town/parish councils. At present the Review area is the only part of Waveney that is not represented by a town/parish council(s).

Feedback from residents during the first stage of consultation showed that 69% of those that responded were in support of the creation of a new council or councils for the Review area to represent residents at a local level.

This final proposal is available for public comment for a period of 4 weeks until 31st October 2016. Following this, final recommendations will be made to Full Council on 16th November 2016. The views of residents have been instrumental in the development of the proposals at each stage of the Review and, whilst the final decision to create a new town council lies with Waveney District Council, residents are encouraged to give their comments in relation to the final proposal and have their say on the future of local democracy in Lowestoft.

**Initial phase of consultation - 1st April – 13th May 2016**

**Second phase of consultation - 11th July – 22nd August 2016**

**Final phase of consultation - 3rd October – 31st October 2016**

**Full Council approval of Final Recommendations - 16th November 2016**

**Elections to new council(s) - 1st April – 4th May 2017**

#### **How to submit your views**

Online using the e-form at: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr)

By email: [lowestoftcgr@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:lowestoftcgr@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

By post: Project Officer (Lowestoft CGR), Waveney District Council, Riverside,  
4 Canning Road, Lowestoft, NR33 0EQ

# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## What is a town/parish council?

**Town and parish councils are a local council just for your immediate village/town area. They range in size from small rural parishes representing a hundred or so people, to larger town councils representing thousands of people.**

They form the most local level of government for an area. They operate at a grass-roots level, providing representation and, in some cases, provision of services to their immediate local area. They perform a separate and distinctly different function to the district council and county council which operate at a much wider level, and they bring with them a very unique set of benefits for the local area.

At present the Lowestoft area is hampered by the absence of a local council(s) which could give the means of delivering, or providing funding towards local projects, activities and initiatives that would benefit the area. Other towns and villages in Waveney already have this ability and have the benefit of greater focus and greater opportunity for regeneration as a result. They may be able to secure funding solely for their area to deal with local issues or to boost tourism or focus on a local priority. This can be of benefit if residents in the area would like any particular issues to be addressed, would like

funding to be directed to any particular cause, or would like, for example, to develop a Neighbourhood Plan to outline the priorities for the future of their area. Town and parish councils play a vital role in supporting and enhancing their community's identity, services and quality of life. They can do this because they are based locally, operating within their local community. This means they are best placed to understand the issues within their areas and can provide a more focussed and tailored response as a result.

The councillors that make up a town/parish council are local people who are accountable solely to the town/village and provide a democratic local voice; often taking on case work, raising queries and lobbying for action on behalf of their residents. Most importantly, their focus is entirely on the local area, prioritising the needs of the area and pushing for change and improvements.

A town/parish council(s) for Lowestoft would act as the voice for the area in formal consultations and in responding to proposals that affect the town. Specifically, in respect of planning applications, the creation of a council(s) would mean that they would be formally consulted on proposals affecting

the town, giving them the same opportunities as other towns and villages in Waveney. In addition, locally based and funded town/parish councils can budget for priorities which may no longer be supported by their district or county councils but that their residents feel are important to their local area.

A new council(s) would ensure that decision-making for local assets and services is retained locally, particularly in the context of a future merger of Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council, which could result in the district council area becoming larger. A local town/parish council(s) whose focus is solely in the town area would provide a local voice for residents and deliver the things that residents want to see in their area.

As well as being able to deliver a range of key local services, town and parish councils are also able to support events and initiatives which promote community spirit and inclusiveness; award grants to community groups, sports clubs, charities or other voluntary sector organisations; invest in the town's public spaces; recognise volunteers; and regularly ask the question "what else can we do for the local area?"

# What can a town/parish council achieve for its area?

## ***New funding***

Town and parish councils can secure funding towards local projects, activities and initiatives to benefit their town/village. Examples of this could be developments in the town including play facilities for young people, and grant funding for local voluntary and sporting organisations based in the town. In some cases external funding is only available to town/parish councils and not to district or county councils, and as a result in areas without a town/parish council like Lowestoft, this funding cannot be applied for.

A town/parish council will also raise a 'Neighbourhood Fund' via contributions from the households in its area. This funding is used solely within the town/parish council area and can be directed at local issues affecting only that area. This allows decisions to be made by local people to decide the priorities for the local area and for money to be spent on the things that really matter to the residents that are contributing.

## ***Local services***

The important difference with a town/parish council is that where they provide services, the services are directly for the benefit of the local area, and the residents have greater control over the level of service they receive. By electing local councillors for the town/village, residents can choose the direction for their local area and choose what

they want to be delivered. Having services delivered locally by a town/parish council also offers protection to those services. It ensures that in future, a local council can provide these services for the local residents of the area and they are not at risk of cuts either from a central government, district or county council perspective. Likewise residents may choose to increase the service level in some areas if they particularly want to see a certain thing delivered for their town/village.

## ***Local representation***

The main benefit considered by many people that live in areas with a town/parish council is the level of local representation they receive. Residents living in the rest of Waveney already benefit from having a district councillor and then the additional local representation of town/parish councillors lobbying on their behalf to bring focus to the needs of their local area. Residents in the un-parished Review area are represented by district councillors but do not benefit from the additional support and representation of a town/parish councillor. The resources and responsibilities of the district council cover the whole of the Waveney area and have to be prioritised across that area, however where a town/village has their own local council, the area is represented by town/parish councillors working

just for the benefit of that parish. Town/parish councillors work with district councillors and county councillors to ensure that the needs of their local area are recognised. They can also put forward councillors to represent the council on a number of local organisations, boards, trusts and community groups. This can lead to greater community cohesion with local people representing the local area, working together to tackle local issues.

## ***Shaping the local area***

Town/parish councils play an important role in planning consultations and shaping the development of the local area. The town/parish council will be consulted on each planning application for its area and will be given the opportunity to object to any development that it does not consider appropriate for its area. A town/parish council can also designate a 'Neighbourhood area' and develop a 'Neighbourhood Plan' setting out the type of development it expects for its area. This plan is a statutory document that residents contribute to in order ensure that their vision for their local area is considered in light of any future development. The Neighbourhood Plan sits alongside the district council's Local Plan and is a vital tool for shaping the future of the area.

# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## Background

**This Review was launched on 24th March 2016 and is being conducted by Waveney District Council.**

The Review is happening because there is no town/parish council representing Lowestoft and there has long been a view that the area should have the opportunity to be represented at the most local level. This Review gives residents the chance to shape local democracy in their town. An archive of documents and other information about the Review can be found at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr). On the website pages you will find the full 'Terms of Reference' document which sets out the background of the Review and details how the Review is being run. Also available online is an FAQ document which lists a wide range of questions and answers about the Review.

### Initial consultation stage

On 1st April 2016, Waveney District Council sent a letter and an information leaflet to all 28,000 households in the Lowestoft area to inform residents that the Review was taking place and to invite them to get involved in each of the stages of consultation. Other stakeholders including Suffolk County Council, neighbouring district councils, local volunteer groups/ community groups, local businesses and residents associations were also contacted. In particular, local groups that represent residents were asked for information about the representation they currently provide and the areas they cover, to ensure that any new proposals complement and build on established areas of community.

The initial stage of consultation asked residents to give their views on the creation of a new town/parish council(s) for Lowestoft, and to describe where they feel their 'community' is – for example if they feel part of Lowestoft as a whole, or part of a smaller area such as

Gunton. The total number of responses received during the initial stage of consultation was 261. Of those, 180 (69%) were in favour of the creation of one or more new town/parish councils, 58 (22%) were against, and 23 (9%) gave no preference. The responses can be viewed in full on the website pages at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr).

### Development of the draft proposal

Following the positive response received during the initial stage of consultation, the next stage of the Review was to consider what the boundaries might be for a new council(s), how many councillors they might have, and what services they might run. Two options for boundaries were developed based on the feedback from residents in response to the question of 'community' in the initial stage of consultation.

**Option 1** - a proposal for the whole of the Lowestoft Review area to form a single town council

**Option 2** - a proposal for a separate parish council for Oulton Broad, a separate parish council for Pakefield, and a town council for the remainder of the Review area.

In addition to the two options presented for the Lowestoft area, two additional minor boundary amendments were proposed:

**Amendment 1** – proposal to change the boundary for Corton Parish Council

**Amendment 2** – proposal to change the boundary for Oulton Parish Council

The development of the options for the Draft Proposal was carried out by a group of 7 councillors which included representatives from each of the political parties that make up Waveney District Council, and councillors who represent areas of Lowestoft.

The 'Draft Proposal' document is available to view on the website pages at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr).



## Second consultation stage

The 'Draft Proposal' was published on 11th July and was available for comment over a six-week consultation period which closed on 22nd August 2016. The following engagement activities took place for the second consultation stage:

- Advert on Beach radio from 27th June to 10th July advertising the publication of the 'Draft Proposal' on 11th July and the forthcoming drop-in sessions
  - Launch of 'Draft Proposal' on East Suffolk website, feature on front page of website, posts on social media
  - Article in Lowestoft Journal
  - Email and/or letter to stakeholders of the Review (86 recipients) and to all 261 respondents from the first stage of consultation
  - Advertising through Active Communities Team and local community/voluntary groups/forums
  - Posters advertising drop-in sessions sent to local community buildings, village halls, libraries and colleges
  - Six drop-in sessions held with hard-copies of draft proposal and survey forms, and large copies of maps available for reference. (Riverside Council Offices 13th and 20th July, Lowestoft Library 14th and 21st July, and Lowestoft Town Hall 15th and 22nd July)
  - Advertising banners at Water Lane Leisure Centre, Lowestoft Library and the Marina Customer Services Centre
  - Further advert on Beach radio advertising the final two weeks of the consultation and encouraging responses.
- In total 80 responses were received from residents. The responses are available to view in full on the website pages at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr). The responses were analysed to establish whether residents were in favour of Option 1 or Option 2 from the draft proposal. The overall results from the respondents were collated to show the view from across the Review area, and the responses were also then analysed by area to show any differences in the feedback between the Lowestoft, Oulton Broad, and Pakefield areas. This allowed us to establish any particular views from residents in those areas regarding the creation of a separate parish council. Summary of results in next column.

<b>How many people responded in total</b>	<b>80</b>
How many people responded from the Lowestoft area	<b>42</b>
How many people responded from the Oulton Broad area	<b>21</b>
How many people responded from the Pakefield area	<b>11</b>
How many people responded from outside the Review area/responded anonymously	<b>6</b>
<b>Lowestoft</b>	
Of the 42 people that responded from Lowestoft, how many were In favour of Option 1	<b>25</b>
In favour of Option 2	<b>9</b>
No preference	<b>8</b>
<b>Oulton Broad</b>	
Of the 21 people that responded from Oulton Broad, how many were In favour of Option 1	<b>5</b>
In favour of Option 2	<b>14</b>
No preference	<b>2</b>
<b>Pakefield</b>	
Of the 11 people that responded from Pakefield, how many people were In favour of Option 1	<b>3</b>
In favour of Option 2	<b>7</b>
No preference	<b>1</b>
<b>Outside the Review area/anonymous</b>	
Of the 6 people that responded from outside the Review area/anonymously, how many were in favour of Option 1	<b>2</b>
In favour of Option 2	<b>1</b>
No preference	<b>3</b>
<b>OVERALL RESULTS</b>	
Of the 80 people that responded overall, how many were In favour of Option 1	<b>35</b>
In favour of Option 2	<b>31</b>
No preference	<b>14</b>
In favour particularly of an 'Oulton Broad Parish Council'	<b>12</b>
In favour particularly of a 'Pakefield Parish Council'	<b>4</b>

# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## Development of the final proposal

### **Following the close of the second stage of consultation, councillors met again to develop this 'Final Proposal' based on the feedback received during the Review to date.**

Particular consideration was given at this stage to the following themes that emerged from the second stage consultation:

- Overall, no clear consensus of preference between Option 1 and Option 2
- A clearer preference in the Lowestoft area for a town council for the whole of Lowestoft (Option 1)
- A clearer preference from the currently un-parished area of Oulton Broad for the creation of a new separate parish council for Oulton Broad (Option 2)
- A particularly low response rate from Pakefield
- A suggested change from residents in the north of Lowestoft to split the proposed parish ward of 'Gunton St. Margaret's' in to two separate wards for 'Gunton' and 'St. Margaret's'
- Support for the naming of the parish ward in the south west to be called 'Elmtree Parish Ward'
- Support from residents, and Corton Parish Council, to proceed

with proposed changes to the existing parish boundary for Corton, subject to a minor amendment to the boundary to include the Rugby Club land (see map at appendix 1)

- A lack of support for the proposed changes to the existing parish boundary for Oulton Parish Council.

Councillors considered that there was a clear view from those who responded in Lowestoft in favour of a town council for Lowestoft. There was also a clear preference from those who responded in Oulton Broad in favour of a separate parish council for Oulton Broad. In light of the low level of response from residents in Pakefield, and the marginal overall preference for Option 1, councillors considered that a better option would be to include Pakefield in a new Lowestoft Town Council area.

Councillors also considered the suggestion by residents in the north of Lowestoft to split the proposed 'Gunton St. Margaret's Parish Ward' in to two separate parish wards, and agreed that this would best represent the feeling of residents in the area and therefore provide

better community identity and representation.

Splitting this parish ward in to two parish wards, and including Pakefield as a parish ward within Lowestoft Town Council therefore results in a new 'Lowestoft Town Council' with 7 parish wards.

Councillors also considered the proposed changes to the boundary for the existing parish of Corton and, in light of the positive response from residents in favour of the change, and the support of Corton Parish Council, it is proposed to implement the changes. The new boundary is amended slightly from the one shown in the draft proposal to now include the Rugby Club land within the Corton Parish Council area. The proposed changes to the boundary for the existing parish of Oulton will not be taken forward in light of the lack of support from residents. It is vitally important that any changes to parish boundaries reflect resident's feeling of community identity and therefore no change will be implemented where it does not have support from the residents it would affect.

### **The final proposal is therefore:**

**To create a new town council for Lowestoft (inclusive of Pakefield)**

*(see map on page 9)*

**To create a new parish council for Oulton Broad**

*(see map on page 12)*

**To amend the boundary for the parish of Corton**

*(see map on page 22)*

# Lowestoft Town Council



**Lowestoft Town Council with 7 parish wards**

North  
Scale 1:20,000

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# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## Area covered by the new council

The new council for Lowestoft would cover the whole of the Review area, minus the newly designated area for Oulton Broad. This extends from Gunton in the north to Pakefield in the south and covers approximately 23,200 households and 36,400 electors.

## Naming of the council

When a new council is created in an area that does not currently have a town/parish council, the first stage is to create a 'parish area'. For Lowestoft, the parish area would cover the whole of the Review area excluding Oulton Broad.

In a parish area with over 1,000 electors, a 'Parish Council' would then be created to represent the electors of the area. When a new parish council is created, it takes the title of 'Parish Council' by default, or it can choose an alternative style of 'Community Council', 'Neighbourhood Council', or 'Village Council'. Once the council exists, if it has the title of 'Parish Council', it can then choose to adopt the title of 'Town Council' instead (this option is not available to Community, Neighbourhood or Village councils). The adoption of the title of 'Town Council' does not change the function or powers of the council in any way other than to enable it to have a Town Mayor.

For this reason, a new council for Lowestoft would be created as 'Lowestoft Parish Council', and could then choose to adopt the title of 'Town Council' once it is formed. Most larger/more urban parish councils adopt the title of town council, although there is no population or size threshold in order to qualify for the title. For the purposes of this final proposal we refer to the new parish council for Lowestoft as 'Lowestoft Town Council' as it is likely that the council would take on this title.

## Parish wards

The next stage for a large town council area is to divide it into parish wards. Parish wards enable a large town area to be covered by a single town

council to steer the vision for the area, but ensure that there is still specific representation for each of the community areas within the town. Each parish ward covers a designated area, and the area is given its own allocation of councillors. Only the electors in a particular parish ward can vote for the councillors to represent that ward. This enables each ward/community area to choose their own representatives, whilst still being part of a larger town council.

The main administrative reason for creating parish wards within a large town council area is to ensure that the cost of by-elections for the council are kept as low as possible. If there is a by-election, as it is only the electors in the parish ward area that vote to elect a new councillor, the cost of the by-election is reduced considerably.

Although the councillor(s) for each parish ward will represent their own residents and lobby on their behalf, all councillors then come together on a single town council to make decisions for the whole area. This gives residents their own representation for their area, but the support of the wider town council to deliver change for the area as a whole. This also means that there is only one set of administration, and one Mayor representing the whole town.

Funding is spent across the whole town council area and not limited to each specific ward, thereby improving things for the town as a whole. Where a decision is to be taken about a specific issue in a specific ward, all councillors for the town council will make the decision together, led by the expertise of the councillors for that ward. Where an asset exists in a particular ward, it will be for the benefit of the whole town council area and it will not fall solely to the specific ward area to maintain it.

Parish wards really enable each area within the town council to retain a sense of identity whilst still benefiting from the representation of a larger town council, bringing the whole area together and promoting unity and cooperation.

## Naming of parish wards and number of councillors

The proposed names given for the parish wards in the Draft Proposal were generally supported in the second stage consultation survey. Most of the parish wards follow district ward boundaries and as such are named in the same way as the district wards. For the parish ward area which amalgamates part of the Whitton district ward and part of the Carlton district ward, residents were asked to choose between three suggested names of Rosedale, Elmtree, or Westwood, or suggest an alternative. The preferred name for this area was 'Elmtree Parish Ward'. The parish ward areas have therefore been designated as follows:

**Elmtree Parish Ward    Gunton Parish Ward**  
**Harbour Parish Ward    Kirkley Parish Ward**  
**Pakefield Parish Ward    Normanston Parish ward**  
**St. Margaret's Parish Ward**

There are no fixed ratios for the number of councillors that a council should have, and the numbers vary widely across Waveney and the country. At the draft proposal stage, councillors proposed that a town council for Lowestoft should have between 15 and 21 town councillors. They suggested that any less than this may be considered to give inadequate democratic representation, and that any more may be considered to be unnecessary and possibly prevent effective decision making for Lowestoft. During the second stage of consultation, residents generally agreed that the suggested range was correct.

In order to establish the number of councillors, the electorate for the new council area must be calculated and then an average ratio of electors per councillor worked out as a bench-mark figure. The electorate for each of the parish ward areas must then be established and the number of electors per councillor for each parish ward should match as closely as possible to the bench-mark figure. Applying this method, the best mathematical match results in a council consisting of 13 councillors. It was considered however that this number was too small to represent the area and may hinder the effective functioning of the council, and its decision making. The next best mathematical match results in a council of 20 councillors which was considered a good fit for the area, giving a good level of representation whilst not being too cumbersome.

## Models of governance

Creating a brand new town/parish council(s) for Lowestoft means that there is a unique opportunity to take the best parts and best practice of councils that are already operating, and to design something modern for the Lowestoft area. The new council of 20 members could for example choose to co-opt members of other groups onto the council to provide support. It is important to first create a viable town/parish council and give it the tools and support to begin operating for the benefit of its residents. The new council can then decide on its own structure and decide how to set itself up to best fulfil the needs of the area.

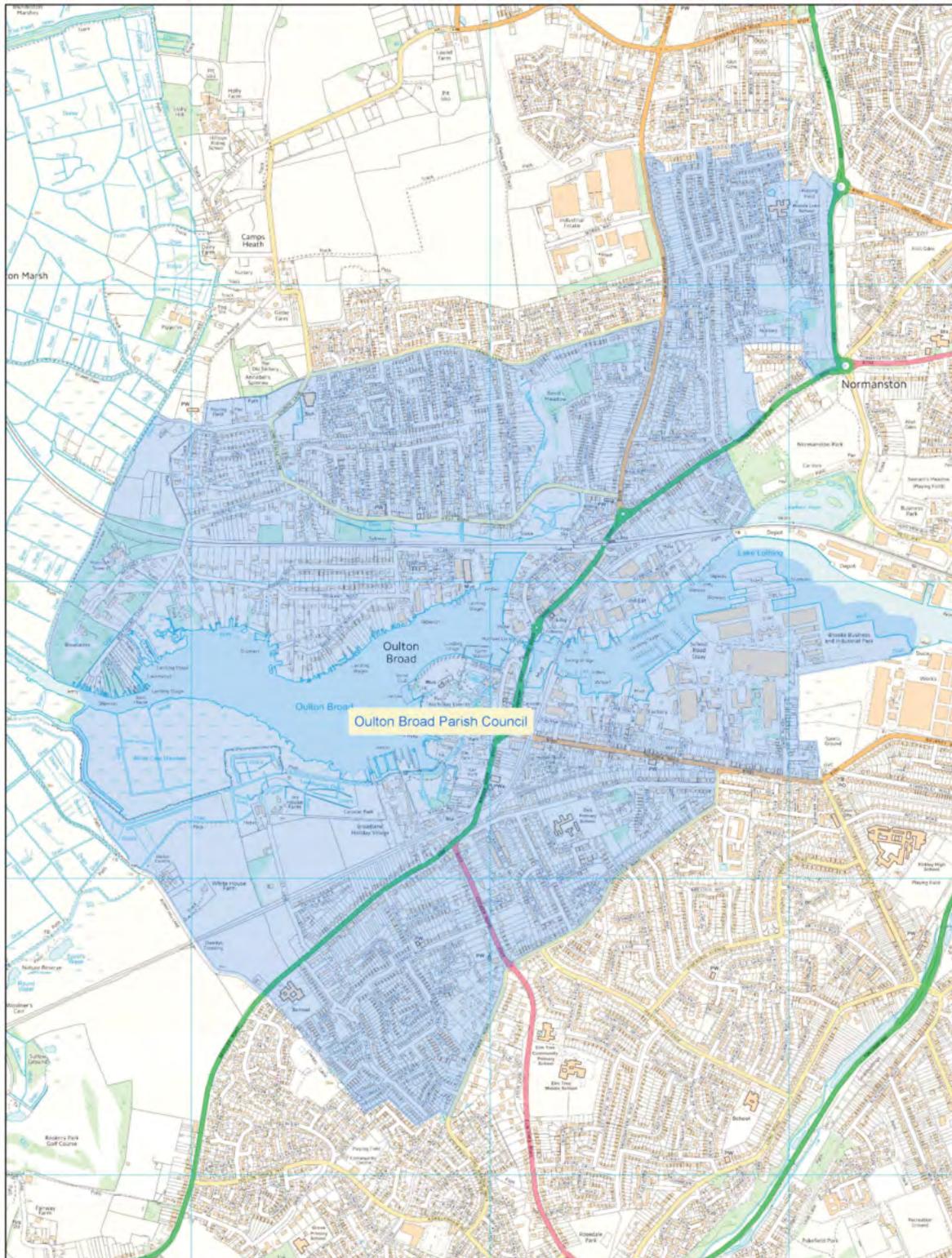
## Final proposal for parish ward arrangements for Lowestoft Town Council

*Using this model, 75% of councillors fall within 10% of the average ratio of electors per councillor*

Parish Ward	Number of councillors	Number of electors, Sept 16	Ratio of electors per councillor
Elmtree Parish Ward	3	6,164	2,055
Gunton Parish Ward	2	2,604	1,302
Harbour Parish Ward	3	5,753	1,918
Kirkley Parish Ward	3	5,430	1,810
Normanston Parish Ward	3	5,329	1,776
Pakefield Parish Ward	3	5,498	1,833
St. Margaret's Parish Ward	3	5,598	1,866
TOTAL	20	36,376	1,819

# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## Oulton Broad Parish Council



**Oulton Broad Parish Council**

**Legend**

Oulton Broad Parish Council



Scale 1:10,869

### **Area covered by the new council**

A new parish for Oulton Broad would represent the area designated during the first stage of consultation. This area consists of the existing 'Oulton Broad' district ward area, along with northern parts of the 'Whitton' and 'Carlton' district wards and southern parts of the 'Oulton' district ward. This area was felt by residents to best represent 'Oulton Broad'.

### **Naming of the council and number of councillors**

The new parish council would be called 'Oulton Broad Parish Council'. This new council would sit next to the existing 'Oulton Parish Council' area which would not be changed in any way.

(See map on page 23).

At the draft proposal stage, councillors proposed that a parish council for Oulton Broad should have between 12 and 16 parish councillors. During the second stage of consultation, residents generally agreed that the suggested range was correct, with the majority indicating a preference for the lower end of the range. The new council would therefore have 12 councillors, all representing the parish council area. The parish area would not be divided into parish wards at this stage, but could be warded in future if necessary. The new council would cover approximately 4,600 households and 8,000 electors. By comparison, Beccles Town Council covers approximately 4,900 households and 8,000 electors and therefore a new, separate parish council for Oulton Broad would be a significant stand-alone parish area. This was a prevailing reason for councillors in deciding to separate Oulton Broad out from the remaining Lowestoft Town Council area.

## When would the councils come in to being?

If the decision is taken at Full Council in November 2016 to go ahead with the creation of a new town council for Lowestoft and a new parish council for Oulton Broad, a Reorganisation Order to create the new councils will be made in January 2017. The new councils would then officially come into being on 1st April 2017.

The first elections to the councils would be held on 4th May 2017 and the councillors that were elected would be in post for 2 years until the scheduled local elections in May 2019. From this point the elections would fall into a 4-year cycle in line with the other town/parish council elections and district council elections in Waveney.

## How and when would the new councillors be chosen?

The process of electing town/parish councillors is the same as the process for electing district councillors. Around 6 weeks before the date of the election, prospective candidates are asked to submit a nomination paper to stand for election. For the first elections in May 2017, this will happen around the end of March 2017 and will be widely advertised and promoted to encourage new councillors to stand for the first ever elections of the new councils.

# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## How and when would the new councillors be chosen? (continued)

It is important for town and parish councils that local people stand as candidates to ensure that the council is made up of people who truly understand the issues and priorities for the area. The best town and parish councils are made up of a diverse range of local people, each bringing to the council their own life experiences and their own passion for the local area. There are no formal qualifications needed to be a town/parish councillor, but in order to be able to stand for election candidates must fulfil certain criteria. To be able to stand as a candidate at a parish/town council election in England, the current rules state you must:

- be at least 18 years old
- be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union, and
- meet at least one of the following four qualifications:

a. You are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the parish/community in which you wish to stand from the day of your nomination onwards.

b. You have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the parish/community area during

the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election.

c. Your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your nomination and the day of election has been in the parish/community area.

d. You have lived in the parish/community area or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election.

An eligible Commonwealth citizen is a Commonwealth citizen who either:

- does not need leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom, or
- has indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom.

There are also certain 'disqualifications' that can apply to persons wishing to stand. More information can be found in the Electoral Commission's guidance document at

[www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk) in the 'standing for election' section. Once the nominations have been received and validated, the candidates will receive confirmation that they are standing for election. Their names will appear on the ballot paper for the election and electors in the area will vote for their

preferred candidate(s) depending on the number of seats available. Voting takes place by post, by proxy, and at the polling station, just like any other elections.

Town/parish councils are not usually party-political. This means that usually, the people that stand for election on the council are local people who are not affiliated to a political party. This does not mean that party-political candidates cannot stand. It is the choice of residents who they wish to represent their area.

Usually town/parish councillors are unpaid and do not receive an allowance. In most councils, councillors only claim for expenses they have incurred in the course of their duties so that they are reimbursed for monies they have spent rather than receiving any additional pay.

New councillors receive full training and support in their roles, and the new councils would be supported by Waveney District Council staff. Each new council would be supported by a Town or Parish Clerk and, depending on the services it wished to deliver, may also have other staff to support the Clerk.

## When would the new councils start operating?

In order to ensure the new councils can begin operating as quickly as possible, it is proposed that an 'Interim Clerk' would be appointed from February 2017 to start the ad-

ministrative processes involved for the creation of both new councils. The Interim Clerk would be in post through the implementation of the new councils and would enable

them to start work on planning and delivering services as early as possible. They would then be able to appoint their own Clerks later in 2017. ***continued on next page***

After the first elections of the new councils, the newly elected councillors would receive lots of support from the district council and other external bodies, such as the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, to help them in their new role and give them training and advice. The new councillors would not be expected to know about the running of town/parish councils, or the roles of town/parish councillors, and they would receive a lot of help from the district council and Interim Clerk for things like the first meeting of the

councils, agendas, and other administrative tasks. At the first meeting, the first order of business for the new councillors would be administrative/statutory tasks; the making of a Constitution, setting of Standing Orders, establishing a Code of Conduct for members, and the election of a Chair and Deputy. The new councillors would ultimately need to learn about their role as a town/parish councillor and work together with other councillors and organisations to develop strategies and policies for how they

will deliver change. They might choose to consult with residents on the priorities for the area to ensure that the plans for the area represent residents' wishes. They might wish to work with other town/parish councils in the Waveney area or farther afield. They would of course build relationships with other local groups and organisations in Oulton Broad and Lowestoft, and begin to build a strong and cohesive network that can start to make a real difference to the area.

## Where would the new councils operate from?

Parish and town councils can operate out of a variety of premises and, in contrast to the district council, generally do not require very much administrative space. For smaller parish councils, the Clerk to the council will often work from their own home and council meetings are held in local community buildings, schools or village halls. In larger town/parish council areas, the council usually operates out of a town hall or other civic building and the Clerk may have their own office. A new council for Lowestoft would need the use of premises with a room big enough to hold meetings for 20 councillors, and desk space for the Town Clerk and any other staff that are employed. A new council for Oulton Broad would need the use of premises with a room big enough to hold meetings for 12 councillors and desk space for the Parish Clerk. The new councils may be able to lease the space they need alongside

Waveney District Council and Suffolk County Council at the offices at Riverside should they wish to. This would enable the councils to hold their meetings in the large conference room and give them access to office space, ICT, meeting space, and car parking. This may be a useful option during their initial months of operation whilst longer-term plans are put into place. They may, either immediately or in the longer-term, wish to operate from the Town Hall building in Lowestoft. Many local residents are keen to see the Town Hall building used as a base for a new Town Council, and to retain the heritage and historic value of the building as well as making a focus for the historic High Street area. The Town Hall building is currently owned and maintained by Waveney District Council but the council believes that the future of the building should be a decision for the

people of Lowestoft. It is intended therefore that the Town Hall would be transferred to a new Lowestoft Town Council (see further information in the assets section on page 16), however this does not mean that the town council would have to use the building as it's offices – it may wish to sell the building and use the money to fund other initiatives, or it may wish to keep the site and develop it for other purposes. It would also potentially be possible for Lowestoft Town Council to provide space within the Town Hall for Oulton Broad Parish Council to operate out of, if the new council for Oulton Broad were unable to secure premises in their own parish area. The decision of where to operate from would be for each of the new councils to make once their members are elected.

# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## What assets and services would be transferred?

At the draft proposal stage, initial work had been undertaken to identify existing assets and services in the Review area that would usually be provided by a town/parish council. The types of assets and associated services that were identified were listed in the Draft Proposal document, and residents were asked to comment during the survey questionnaire on which services they would like to see

delivered locally. In order for any new town and parish councils to directly influence local delivery of services it is intended that control of as much of Lowestoft's assets and services as possible should pass to the new councils, so that local residents can decide exactly what they want and need for the area. This view was supported by residents during the second stage of consultation with the majority

agreeing that the new council(s) should provide as many local services as possible. As well as providing services and having responsibility for local assets, the new councils can also provide other things that are important to local residents, or that improve the local area. This might be things like providing flower-baskets, organising a winter market or providing memorial benches.

### **Assets and associated services that are proposed to be transferred**

Areas of 'public open space' including recreational areas, parks, gardens, play areas & play equipment, Public conveniences, Triangle Market, Allotments, Museums, Town Hall, Marina Theatre, Community centres/halls, CCTV.

### **Assets and associated services that it is proposed will not be transferred**

- Play area and play equipment at Rotterdam Road (this area is subject to future development plans relating to the third crossing)
  - Public conveniences at Gordon Road (this area is subject to future development plans for the Battery Green Road car park)
  - Dip Farm pitch & putt/miniature golf, playing fields, changing rooms and public conveniences (this area is currently being considered for future development)
  - Lowestoft south beach, and the esplanade area from the South Pier to Rectory Road
- These are specific tourist areas which fall within the tourism

function of the district council. The management and maintenance of the beach and coastline are resource-intensive and this function is supported by specialist officers from the district council. It is therefore not considered suitable for a newly created town council to have responsibility for this function.

- Cemeteries
- The running of cemeteries is a resource-intensive process and, whilst other town councils do run cemeteries in their areas, it would be a considerable function for a newly created town council to take responsibility for without the required staffing provision in place.

Cemeteries could be transferred in future to the town council should they wish to run this service. A further consideration however is that once full, 'closed cemeteries' can become the responsibility of the district council and therefore any that were transferred to the town council would potentially then return to Waveney District Council.

- Pay and display car parks
- These car parks are operated by Waveney District Council, in partnership with Waveney Norse, across the district area, and as such this function would not pass to the town/parish councils in Lowestoft and Oulton Broad.

### **Civic memorabilia and other items to be transferred**

The Mayors robes, hat, and chain of office; items donated to, or purchased on behalf of, the town of Lowestoft and its residents – including pictures, artefacts; Lowestoft porcelain (some items currently on loan to the Broad House Museum); Lowestoft Town signs.

## How would the new councils be funded?

Town and parish councils are funded in part by an additional part of the annual council tax bill which is raised by the town/parish council. They can also apply for grant-funding for specific initiatives and projects, and receive additional funding from things such as Section 106 and 'Community Infrastructure Levy' money which is explained in greater detail on page 18.

### **'Neighbourhood Fund'**

Some of the funds required to run services and administer the council are raised by the town/parish council through the annual council tax bill. Each household in the area contributes to the 'Neighbourhood Fund' for their area and this money is dedicated for use in the area, to improve it in line with their wishes as a resident and to be spent on the things that matter to them locally. It cannot be spent elsewhere in the district, and this means that residents and the local council can choose their own priorities for their local area and spend money on things that matter to them. This includes choosing which services they want to deliver for their area, and which important assets they want to protect. This ensures that local money is used for local priorities, and enables the town/parish council to best represent the needs of its local electorate.

The raising of neighbourhood funds is done through the annual council tax bill which is sent out by the district council.

The annual bill for each household is made up of a contribution for Waveney District Council, a contribution for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk, and a contribution for Suffolk County Council. The breakdown for each contribution is as follows:

- Waveney District Council – around 10% of the total
- Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Suffolk – around 12% of the total
- Suffolk County Council – around 78% of the total

The contribution for Waveney District Council is allocated to services and initiatives across the whole of the Waveney area, and likewise the contributions for the PCC and Suffolk County Council are spent across the whole of the Suffolk area.

The town/parish council element is listed separately so that residents can see the portion that is spent solely in their local area.

Residents in Lowestoft and Oulton Broad will receive their annual council tax bill as usual in March/April 2017. If the new councils are created, residents will see a separate entry for their new town/parish council which will show their contribution to the Neighbourhood Fund for their parish area.

Although this contribution is collected by Waveney District Council with the annual council tax, it is passed over entirely to the town/parish council to be spent by them in your local area.

# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## How would the new councils be funded (continued)

### **Grant-funding**

Town/parish councils can apply for various different grants/funding from external bodies to carry out specific projects and initiatives in their area.

### **Section 106**

Where development occurs in an area, there is sometimes a need for an agreement to be made between the council, the developer and other parties to ensure that the development does not have a negative impact on the area in relation to things like infrastructure, services, and the local environment. These agreements are made under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and are commonly known as 'Section 106 agreements' or 'developer contributions'. Contributions towards the improvement of play areas and open spaces were collected under Section 106 prior to the introduction of the 'Community Infrastructure Levy' which is explained in the next section.

As play area and open space contributions are no longer made under Section 106, this will not generate any ongoing funding for a new town/parish council, but there is a reserve of Section 106 money for the Lowestoft area which is held by the district council which could be used by a new town/parish council. The estimated total amount in this fund at the time of a new council(s) coming into being would be around £77,000, with a certain amount allocated to each of the areas in the town. The responsibility for spending these funds would contractually remain with Waveney District Council, but the money could be

used as a source of funding for a new council(s) to use to improve play areas and open spaces. It can be used to replace equipment or to re-design open space, but not for general maintenance. Deadlines apply for use of the funds and the district council would work with the new town/parish council(s) to make best use of this money.

### **'Community Infrastructure Levy'**

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge introduced by the Planning Act 2008 as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of their area.

In an area which has a town/parish council, that council is entitled to 15% of CIL receipts for the area it covers. This increases to 25% if the council has a neighbourhood plan in place. CIL money can be used to improve infrastructure in the council area.

Currently approximately £17,000 of CIL money for the last financial year is held by Waveney District Council in the absence of a town/parish council for the Lowestoft area, and this money would be apportioned and transferred to the new councils upon their creation.

CIL neighbourhood funding can be spent on a much wider selection of infrastructure than open space Section 106 funds, including the provision, improvement/replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

## Financial illustrations

The amount of funds a town/parish council wishes to raise for its area would be dependent on the services it delivers. Initial work has been undertaken to identify the types of assets and services in the Review area that a new town/parish council might deliver. Residents were asked during the second stage of consultation what sort of services they would like a local council to deliver for them, and residents were keen that a new council(s) should be given responsibility for a wide range of local services.

In the draft proposal document, an estimation of the current cost of delivery of services and assets for each of the areas was made in order to provide some financial illustrations for the likely cost of a new council.

Further to those illustrations, more

detailed financial information for the two proposed new councils is shown below. There are approximately 28,000 households in the whole of the Review area. Of those, 90% of properties in the Lowestoft area and 84% in Oulton Broad, are in council tax bands A-C. Around 7,000 households in bands A-C are supported by the 'Council Tax Reduction Scheme' (CTRS) and receive a discount on their annual contribution. Other discounts are also available, for example for properties with only one occupant ('Single person discount'). For some households, multiple discounts will apply. The examples below are for a band B property. As the majority of properties are in bands A-C, we have shown the estimated figures for a band B property as an illustrative mid-point. A full breakdown of

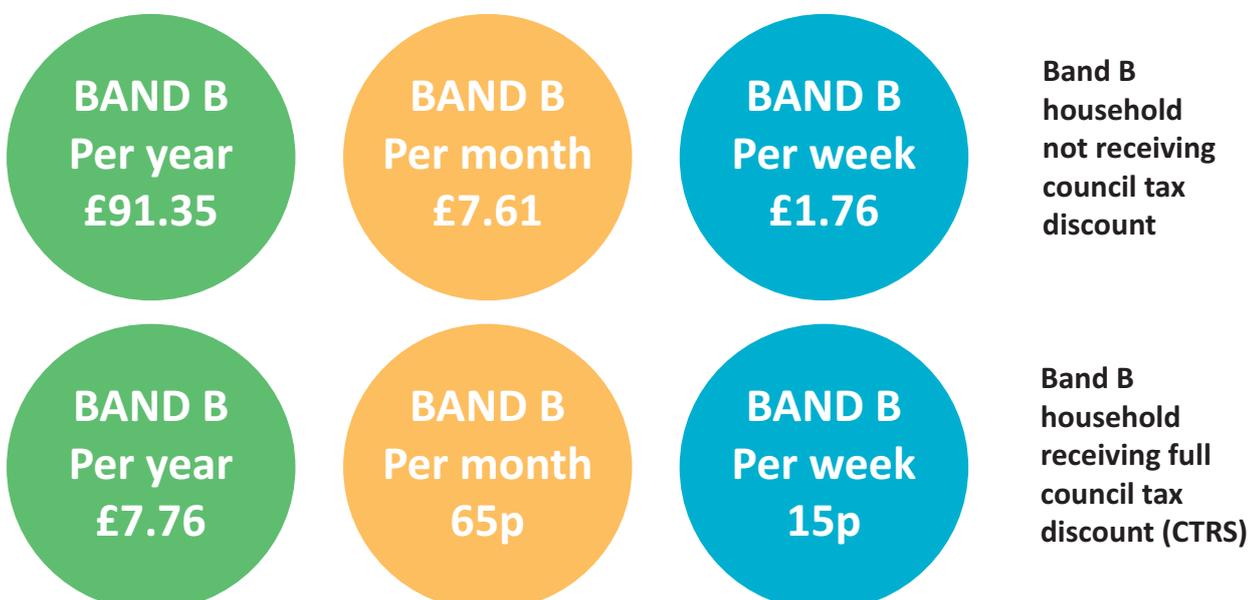
contributions for each council tax band is given on page 24.

The amount each household would contribute is dependent on the individual circumstances of that household, for example which council tax band their property is in, and if they are in receipt of any council tax reduction, single person discount, or a combination of reductions.

Waveney District Council would initially set a budget for the new councils to ensure that they could operate and deliver the services within their area. An illustrative budget has been worked out for the new councils based on the assets and services in their respective areas, along with an estimation of the running costs for a council.

## Illustrative budget for Lowestoft Town Council

**Budget of £1.43million**



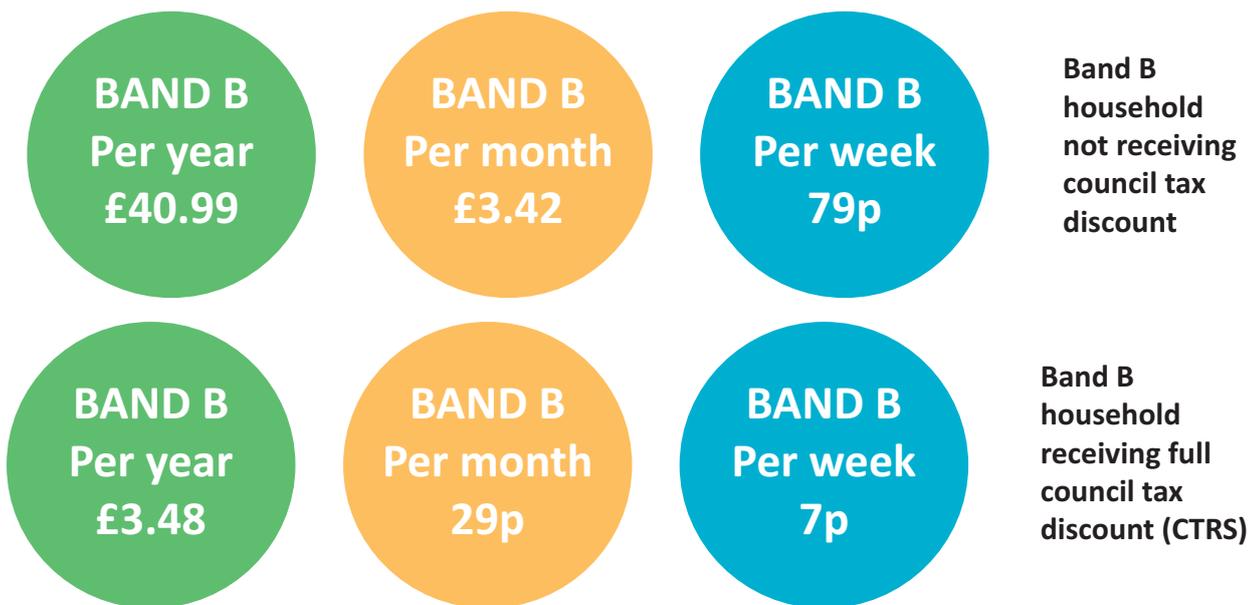
# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## Outline budget

Budget area	Amount (£)
Assets and associated service delivery	974,640
Elections	39,660
Administration (including Town Clerk, other staff members, administration and banking, and civic budget)	315,600
Contingency	100,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,429,900</b>

# Illustrative budget for Oulton Broad Parish Council

## Budget of £167,000



## Outline budget

Budget area	Amount (£)
Assets and associated service delivery	84,070
Elections	9,320
Administration (including Town Clerk, other staff members, administration and banking, and civic budget)	63,000
Contingency	10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>166,390</b>

## Lowestoft Charter Trustees

The 'Lowestoft Charter Trustees' were created alongside the creation of 'Waveney District Council' in 1974. Their purpose was to provide a purely civic and ceremonial role in lieu of a town council for the area.

The Charter Trustees are made up of the district councillors that represent the wards covered by the Charter Trustee area. A Mayor can be chosen from within the group of councillors to represent the town for civic and ceremonial functions.

If a new town council for Lowestoft and a new parish council for Oulton Broad are created, the Lowestoft Charter Trustees will automatically be replaced by these new councils and the Charter Trustees will cease to exist. The current Mayor for Lowestoft would stay in post until a new Mayor for Lowestoft Town Council is chosen from within the group of newly elected town councillors. The Mayors robes and civic regalia would be passed over to the new town council, along with any outstanding funds that the Charter Trustees hold.

## Can the new councils be changed in future?

A new town council for Lowestoft and a new Parish Council for Oulton Broad would give residents in the Lowestoft area the same strengths, opportunities and voice as other towns and villages in Waveney and elsewhere.

Once a town/parish council exists in an area, it is possible to make changes to it in future reviews to ensure that the arrangements remain right for the area. For example, the number of councillors can be reduced or increased, the boundaries can be altered, and new parishes can even be created by dividing existing parish areas.

For this reason it is important to remember that the proposal to create a new town council for Lowestoft and a new parish council for Oulton Broad is really the first building block in achieving new parish-level representation for the Lowestoft area. Whilst councillors have endeavoured to create the best model for Lowestoft and Oulton Broad at this time, there is every possibility that there will be the opportunity through future reviews to make any amendments in light of future changes.

As such, residents are asked to consider this final proposal as the first model for parish-level representation for the Lowestoft area and to embrace the potential for the future of the area in the plans that have been developed.

## How to have your say on the final proposal

The views of residents and other stakeholders in response to this final proposal are welcomed and encouraged. Councillors will review any submissions received during the four-week consultation period from 3rd October to 31st October before making final decisions at Full Council on 16th November 2016.

### **How to submit your views**

Online using the e-form at: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/lowestoftcgr)

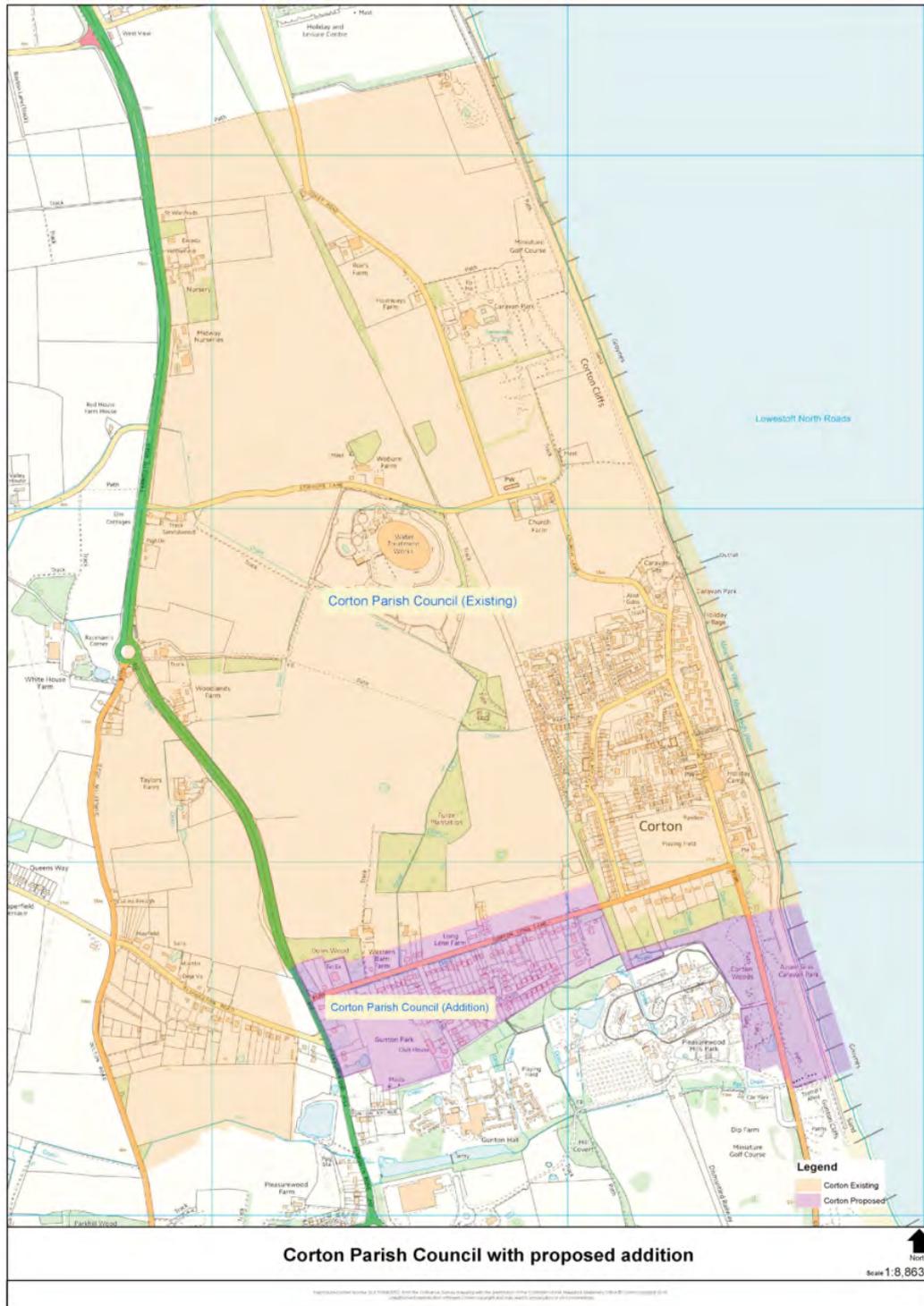
By email: [lowestoftcgr@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:lowestoftcgr@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

By post: Project Officer (Lowestoft CGR), Waveney District Council, Riverside,  
4 Canning Road, Lowestoft, NR33 0EQ

# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## Appendix 1

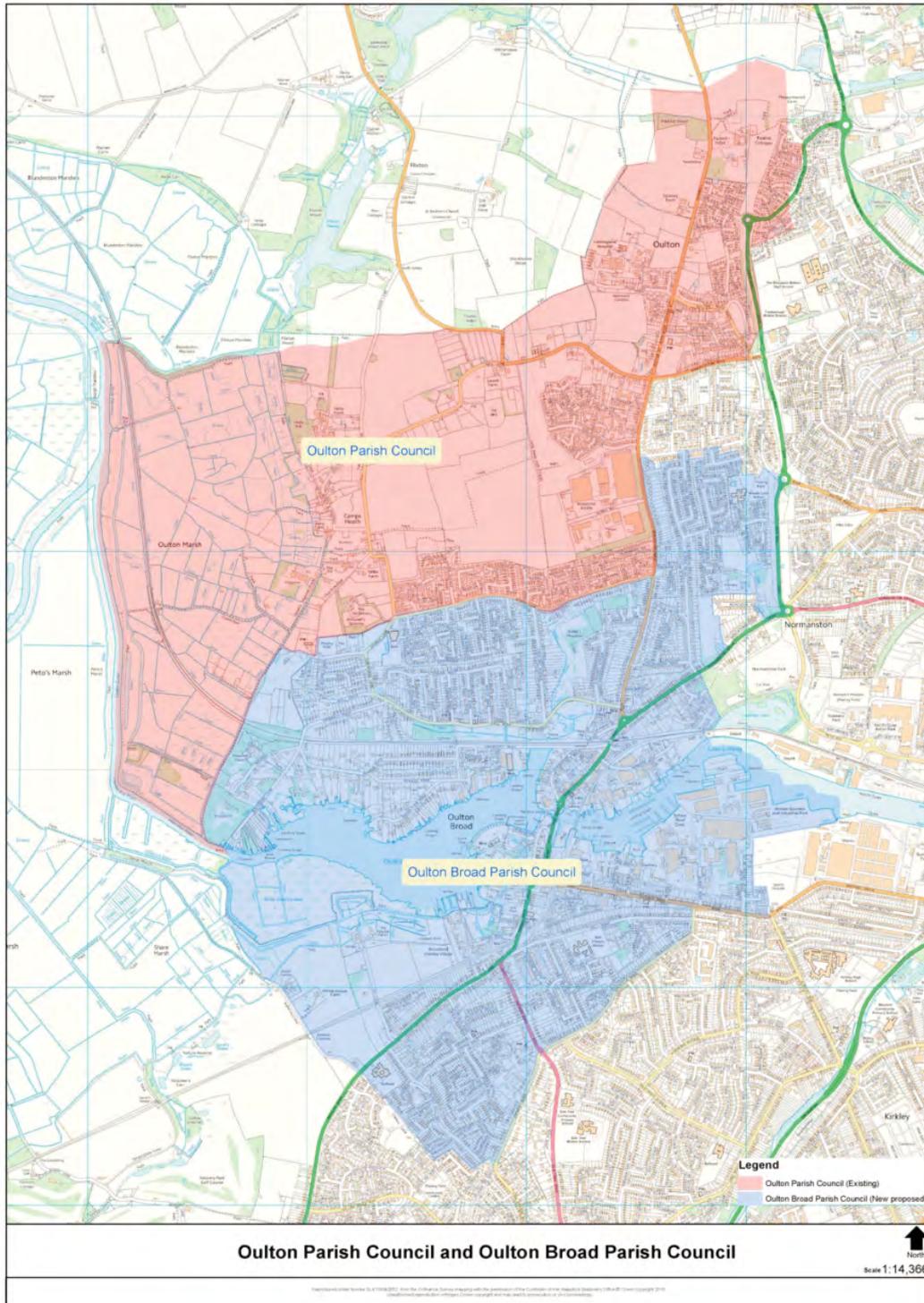
### Map of proposed change to boundary for Corton Parish Council



## Appendix 2

Map of Oulton Parish Council area (existing)

and proposed new Oulton Broad Parish Council Area



# New Town or Parish councils for Lowestoft

## Appendix 3

### Financial illustrations

#### Lowestoft Town Council

Based upon the new council wanting to raise £1.43 million to spend in Lowestoft each year.

*Breakdown of contribution per household*

Council Tax Band	Number of properties	Estimated contribution per household that does not receive council tax reduction (CTRS) (£)			Number of households that receive council tax reduction (CTRS)	Estimated contribution for households that receive full council tax reduction (CTRS) - excluding pensioners* (£)			Number of households where occupier receives Single Person Discount	Estimated contribution for households in receipt of Single Person Discount - CTRS may also then apply (£)		
		(Per year)	(Per month)	(Per week)		(Per year)	(Per month)	(Per week)		(Per year)	(Per month)	(Per week)
Band A	12320	78.30	6.53	1.51	4951	6.66	0.55	0.13	6015	58.73	4.89	1.13
Band B	5374	91.35	7.61	1.76	1207	7.76	0.65	0.15	1740	68.51	5.71	1.32
Band C	2991	104.41	8.70	2.01	300	8.87	0.74	0.17	861	78.31	6.53	1.51
Band D	1479	117.46	9.79	2.26	60	9.98	0.83	0.19	315	88.10	7.34	1.69
Band E	649	143.56	11.96	2.76	13	12.20	1.02	0.23	105	107.67	8.97	2.07
Band F	127	169.66	14.14	3.26	0	14.42	1.20	0.28	16	127.25	10.60	2.45
Band G	34	195.76	16.31	3.76	0	16.64	1.39	0.32	1	146.82	12.24	2.82
Band H	4	234.91	19.58	4.52	0	19.97	1.66	0.38	0	176.18	14.68	3.39
	22978				6531				9053			

\* Note: Pensioners in receipt of CTRS will generally not need to make any contribution

#### Oulton Broad Parish Council

Based upon the new council wanting to raise £168,000 to spend in Oulton Broad each year.

*Breakdown of contribution per household*

Council Tax Band	Number of properties	Estimated contribution per household that does not receive council tax reduction (CTRS) (£)			Number of households that receive council tax reduction (CTRS)	Estimated contribution for households that receive full council tax reduction (CTRS) - excluding pensioners* (£)			Number of households where occupier receives Single Person Discount	Estimated contribution for households in receipt of Single Person Discount - CTRS may also then apply (£)		
		(Per year)	(Per month)	(Per week)		(Per year)	(Per month)	(Per week)		(Per year)	(Per month)	(Per week)
Band A	887	35.13	2.93	0.68	259	2.99	0.25	0.06	424	26.35	2.20	0.51
Band B	1672	40.99	3.42	0.79	263	3.48	0.29	0.07	511	30.74	2.56	0.59
Band C	1289	46.84	3.90	0.90	119	3.98	0.33	0.08	365	35.13	2.93	0.68
Band D	425	52.70	4.39	1.01	21	4.48	0.37	0.09	78	39.53	3.29	0.76
Band E	181	64.61	5.38	1.24	4	5.49	0.46	0.11	35	48.46	4.04	0.93
Band F	100	76.12	6.34	1.46	1	6.47	0.54	0.12	18	57.09	4.76	1.10
Band G	51	87.83	7.32	1.69	1	7.47	0.62	0.14	9	65.87	5.49	1.27
Band H	2	105.40	8.78	2.03	0	8.96	0.75	0.17	0	79.05	6.59	1.52
	4607				668				1440			

\* Note: Pensioners in receipt of CTRS will generally not need to make any contribution