BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL

HIGH WYCOMBE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

To adopt Option A within the <u>Terms of Reference</u> for the Review and in so doing:

- Not to constitute a parish, and consequently not to create a town council, for the unparished area of High Wycombe; and instead;
- 2) To recognise the sufficiency of the current community governance arrangements, inclusive of the High Wycombe Town Committee, the High Wycombe Charter Trustees and Buckinghamshire Council's community board arrangements;
- 3) To commit to the continuous improvement of the current governance arrangements, and specifically that the Council should commission a review of the remit and operating arrangements of the High Wycombe Town Committee to ensure it is in a better position to respond to local issues; and
- 4) To draw to the attention of the High Wycombe Town Committee and the Cabinet the feedback received from residents about the need for public realm improvements in High Wycombe Town Centre.

THE REVIEW

Introduction – the reason for the review

Background

- 1. During 2019, the former Wycombe District Council undertook a Community Governance Review of the High Wycombe area. The review assessed whether there was any support for establishing a council for the town of High Wycombe and parish councils for the communities of Micklefield, Sands or Totteridge.
- 2. In January 2020, the <u>final report</u> was produced. The report was mindful of two imminent events: firstly, that local government reorganisation was about to occur with the abolition of the district council and the establishment of Buckinghamshire Council as a unitary authority; and secondly that an electoral review of Buckinghamshire Council would then follow shortly after reorganisation. Both would have implications for local governance. In this context, the new Buckinghamshire Council decided to defer any decision until after the electoral review. This was consistent with the expectation of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and the Government's guidance on community governance reviews.
- 3. The electoral review of Buckinghamshire subsequently took place over the intervening years and concluded in May 2023.

Decision to undertake a fresh review

4. At its meeting in August 2023, the Standards and General Purposes Committee concluded that, given the lapse of time since the earlier review, and the significant changes to local governance, it would be pragmatic to commission a new review. The Committee therefore agreed to set up a cross-party community governance working group of elected Members to lead on the review. The working group met on four occasions to frame its recommendations: 26 September, 19 October, 9 November and 7 December 2023.

The Terms of Reference

- 5. The terms of reference for the review were agreed by the Committee on 18 January and published on 12 February 2024 by the Standards and General Purposes Committee. They are attached at **Appendix 1.** The Terms of Reference set out the scope of the review in the form of **two options**:
 - **A)** whether the existing governance arrangements for the area of High Wycombe are sufficient or could be improved; OR
 - **B)** whether the currently unparished area of High Wycombe should be parished and so have a town council for the whole area.

6. The review has been carried out to resolve these two options mindful of the statutory criteria which any community governance review is required to meet.

Criteria

The criteria

- 7. A community governance review concerns parish governance arrangements. Typically reviews can consider:
 - Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
 - The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes;
 - The electoral arrangements for parish councils (the ordinary year of election; council size; the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding); and
 - The grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes.
- 8. Under section 93 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, the Council must comply with various duties when undertaking a Review, including:
 - Having regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review:
 - a. Reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area
 - b. Is effective and convenient
 - Taking into account any other arrangements, apart from those relating to parishes and their institutions that have already been made, or that could be made, for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in respect of the area under review
- 9. In addition, the Council is required to take account of any statutory guidance published by the Secretary of State. In March 2010, the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England published such guidance on Reviews. The guidance is generally supportive of parish councils, but it is not prescriptive and does not state that they should be routinely formed.

The requirement to consult

10. The Council is obliged to consult the local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body which appears to have an interest in the review and must take into account any representations received in connection with the review.

Communications & Consultation - the approach

Principles

- 11. In carrying out a Community Governance Review, the Council is required to consult:
 - local electors in the unparished area and
 - any stakeholders the Council considers to be appropriate.
- 12. At its meeting on 18 January 2024, the Committee agreed a comprehensive consultation plan. The consultation approach was designed in accordance with the Gunning principles for good consultation practice. It was constructed with an appreciation of the demography of the High Wycombe area and sought to be as inclusive as possible through the use of several communication channels, not simply online, and with the offer to translate key documents into other languages. A copy of the consultation and communication plan approved by the Committee is attached as **Appendix 2.**

The consultation

- 13. The consultation was undertaken from Monday 12 February to Sunday 7 April (9 weeks). It included:
 - Household postal survey with free post return envelope and information booklet was posted to all households in the unparished area of High Wycombe (circa 34,000 households)
 - **Online version** of the survey
 - Email and written responses
 - **Key stakeholders** contacted and invited to take part
- 14. The Committee also agreed a significant multi-channel communication plan which was designed to raise awareness of the consultation, including leaflets, roller banners, outdoor adverts and radio advertisements on several channels. Social media publicity took place throughout the consultation period and a mix of free and paid for channels were used to increase visibility of the survey. A number of pop-up events were arranged in key venues to talk to residents about the consultation and encourage completion. A webpage was developed to provide background information, and some frequently asked questions, including additional information about special expenses (a fee which supports the maintenance of local amenities and projects in High Wycombe Town). A total budget of £35,000 was agreed for the consultation and communications activity.
- 15. In addition to the promotional work carried out directly by the Council, it is notable that local campaign group was also active in encouraging responses, for example through the 'High Wycombe Town Council' Facebook group.

Summary of Consultation Responses

- 16. A summary of the feedback is included as **Appendix 3.** In headline terms:
 - Total electorate: 55,125
 - **Total responses:** 3,032 responses were received in total: 1,787 postal responses, 1,231 online responses, 13 emails and 1 written response;
 - **Verified responses:** 2,532 (84% of total responses, 4.6% of total electorate) were validated (address confirmed to be in the unparished area) and verified (name of respondent is recorded on the electoral register)
 - **Stakeholders:** 12 representatives of organisations responded to the Consultation. One Councillor and one MP also responded in writing.
 - **Proportion:** 4.6% of the 55,125 eligible electors (statutory consultees) in the unparished area responded;
 - Note: The Council notes that if this review had originated from a petition, the legal threshold for triggering a review would have been at least 7.5% of the electorate. The response to the consultation falls considerably below this figure. This is an important consideration (see paragraphs 25 and 59 below).
- 17. Analysis of the responses which were both **validated** (address confirmed as being in the unparished area) and **verified** (as being on the electoral register) provides a useful set of base data, outlined below. 212 responses were valid but unverified and these responses are summarised at paragraph 20 and also within **Appendix 3**.
- 18. Responses were reviewed according to demographic profile: age-band, sex, ethnicity, disability. This was important given the inherent focus in a community governance review on understanding identities and communities. Acorn categories (spectrum of affluence and standards of living) and geographical location within the town were also reviewed.
- 19. In terms of outcome, the headlines are:
 - **Preferred governance:** 1,517 people (60% of verified respondents, 2.7% of the electorate) thought that current arrangements should be replaced with a Town Council; 885 people (35% of respondents, 1.6% of the electorate) would prefer to keep arrangements as they are. 127 people (4.9% of respondents, 0.2% of the electorate) answered don't know or suggested a different option. However, there were some notable differences by respondent profile.
 - Willingness to pay: 1,087 people (43% of verified respondents, 1.9% of the electorate) were prepared to pay for a new town council and 1,162 people (46% of respondents, 2.1% of the electorate) were not. 278 people (11% of respondents, 0.5% of the electorate) answered "I don't know".
- 20. This pattern is broadly followed within the 212 responses (0.4% of electorate) which were valid but not verified (i.e. addresses within Buckinghamshire but not demonstrably

electors): 159 (0.3% of the electorate) thought that current arrangements should be replaced with a Town Council; 43 of these respondents (0.1% of the electorate) preferred to keep arrangements as they are; and 6 (0.01% of the electorate) preferred a different option. However, on the question of 'willingness to pay', the outcome was closer. Of the 209 responding to this point, 113 (0.2% of the electorate) were prepared to pay a precept; whereas 96 (0.2% of the electorate) either did not wish to pay or did not know.

Options Available

- 21. The Terms of Reference for the review set out two options for consideration under it.
 - A. To decide that the current arrangements, and any improvements to them, provide sufficient levels of community governance and so not to form a parish or town council.
 - In this scenario, no *structural* governance change would occur.
 - In this scenario, the Council, in response to the consultation could make changes within the existing governance arrangements.
 - B. To agree to parish the unparished area and consequently to form a town council for that area.
 - In this scenario, the next step would have been to carry out a further consultation on the potential form of such a council.
- 22. The Option that was not available under this current review was to form a parish council for part of the area only. That did not form part of the Terms of Reference and so could not be a valid outcome.
- 23. The *Final recommendation* is to follow **Option A** (above, paragraph 5) for the reasons set out below.

Consideration

- 24. In determining the most appropriate form of community governance for an area, the Council is required to consider three essential criteria. The governance will:
 - 1) reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area;
 - that is, it must offer a sense of place and local identity for all residents
 - 2) be effective and convenient;
 - that is, the governance must have the ability to deliver quality services economically and efficiently and give users of those services a democratic voice in the decisions that affect them; services should be easy to reach and accessible to local people.
 - 3) take into account any arrangements for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in the area.

Community identity and interests

- 25. The low response rate to the survey 2,532 people/4.6% of eligible electors (55,125) suggests that the debate about local governance does not engage the overwhelming majority of the residents in the High Wycombe community. It is also very significant that the statutory threshold for those *petitioning* for a change in governance would be 7.5% of the electorate, considerably above the 4.6% response rate to this consultation. This review was not undertaken on the basis of a petition. However, it is highly relevant that the response rate (4.6%) is notably less than the threshold which would normally be required (7.5%) to validate a petition let alone to justify its outcome.
- 26. (An indication of electorate figures projected to 2028 is at **Appendix 4**).
- 27. Nevertheless, it is important to analyse the responses received. Of the individuals who responded to the question about their preferred option, 1,517 people (60% of respondents, 2.7% of the electorate) thought the current arrangements should be replaced with a Town Council, while 885 people (35% of respondents, 1.6% of the electorate) would prefer to keep arrangements as they are. However, there were some notable differences by respondent, for example:

Age: 48% (390) in the 65+ age bands would prefer to have a Town Council whilst 44% (356) would like to keep arrangements as they are. Conversely, 69% (138) of respondents under the age of 35 would prefer a Town Council whilst 26% (52) would prefer to keep arrangements as they are.

Ethnicity: 73% (434) in non-White ethnic groups would prefer to have a Town Council whilst 22% (133) would like to keep arrangements as they are. The corresponding figures for White ethnic groups are 54% (883) preferring a Town Council and 40% (650) preferring to keep arrangements as they are.

Economic: Acorn: 66% (639) of respondents from more deprived Acorn Categories (Steadfast Communities, Stretched Society and Low-Income Living) would prefer to replace current arrangements with a Town Council, with 28% (276) preferring to keep arrangements as they are. This compares with 47% (234) from the most affluent Acorn Categories (Luxury Lifestyles and Established Affluence) preferring a Town Council option and 47% (238) preferring to keep arrangements as they are.

Geography: Geographic analysis of the consultation responses was based on the current ward boundaries. Booker, Cressex and Castlefield Ward had the highest proportion of respondents (75%, 297) who would prefer to replace current arrangements with a Town Council, whilst Terriers and Amersham Hill residents were the least likely to choose this option (51%, 197).

28. Of those in favour of creating a town council (and by implication the creation of a formal parish), the two most common reasons were a perceived betterment to 'local decision

- making and representation' (240) and 'improving the town' (167). By contrast, 'community engagement' (68) and the 'preservation of local identity' (62) were lesser reasons.
- 29. This suggests that the mainspring for change was not a perception that a town council was necessary to create or strengthen community, identity and a sense of place; nor that it would enhance civic engagement generally. Rather the emphasis was on improving the sense of democratic agency in the aspiration that this might 'improve the town'.
- 30. Such agency is an important element in community cohesion. As the Government guidance on community reviews says: "'Place' matters in considering community governance and is a factor in deciding whether or not to set up a parish...Prosperous and cohesive communities...offer a safe, healthy and sustainable environment. One aspect of that is strong and accountable local government and leadership." (Guidance on community governance reviews paragraph 57)
- 31. However, the low levels of feedback citing the preservation of local identity and community engagement, can also indicate that the electorate is generally content that a sense of place exists in any case. The Guidance also notes that "there may well be a variety of different communities of interest within a parish; for example, representing age, gender, ethnicity, faith or life-style groups" (paragraph 60). As regards cohesion across and within such communities, it is noteworthy that support for establishing a council was not consistent even within demography or geography, with notable differences as above.
- 32. Taking this alongside the number of those not wishing to establish formal parish arrangements, there is a suggestion that pursuing a parish option would be potentially polarising, working against the principle of cohesion. This is perhaps especially so given that the overall majority (46%) of respondents to the consultation did not wish to pay a precept to cover the running costs and local investment in a town council (as against 43%.)
- 33. Paying a precept: the survey revealed differences across the range of categories:
 - **sex**: 46% (611) of male respondents were prepared to pay compared with 37% (349) of females
 - age: 48% (96) of under 35s were prepared to pay a precept compared with 36% (288) of over 65s
 - **ethnicity:** 39% (628) of White ethnic groups prepared to pay compared with 51% (305) of Non-White groups and
 - **disability**: 33% (134) of those with a disability were prepared to pay compared with 44% (769) without
- 34. The Council must also be mindful of the **current arrangements** which assist in giving identity to the area of High Wycombe, notably the High Wycombe Charter Trustees. As the Government guidance says, "Charter trustees were established following the local government reorganisations in the early 1970s and 1990s to preserve the historic identity of former boroughs or cities, most with relatively large populations. To this end,

- charter trustees have the power to carry out ceremonial functions." (*Guidance* paragraph 134) Charter Trustees were not intended to act as administrative units. The guidance poses the question "Is there a demonstrable sense of community identity encompassing the charter trustee area?" (paragraph 136(b)).
- 35. A significant number of respondents cited the importance to High Wycombe of the Mayoralty, of civic identity and of the traditions of the town (such as the Mayor Making and weighing in). Among some of those supportive of establishing a parish and a town council, a hope was expressed by that these traditions would be retained. This is suggestive that a demonstrable sense of identity is apparent with the Charter Trustee area.

Effective and convenient

- 36. The Government guidance says this test "is best understood in the context of a local authority's ability to deliver quality services economically and efficiently, and give users of services a democratic voice in the decisions that affect them." (paragraph 62)
- 37. This applies to any new local authority (such as a town council) as it does to Buckinghamshire Council as the principal authority.
- 38. Effective means that the authority should be viable in terms of providing at least some local services; and convenient means that the services provided would need to be easy to reach and accessible to local people. In both respects, an argument can be made and is made by some respondents that a new town council would be an effective means of improving local decision making and of providing a focus on improvements they feel the town needs.
- 39. Undoubtedly, effectiveness in the sense of viability also puts a distinct focus on residents' willingness to pay a precept to cover the running costs and the local investment in a town council. The survey suggests that this is by no means the case in High Wycombe. As above, the largest group expressing a view (46%) were not prepared to pay a precept. The number who are prepared to pay represents 1.9% of the whole electorate.
- 40. This brings into question the third test, the consideration of other governance arrangements that currently exist, or could be improved, or which could be brought into existence. That is, to say, whether the aspiration exhibited for improved decision making and a betterment of the town can be achieved by other means which do not require the creation of another formal layer of local government, which other respondents would see as costly and unnecessary.

Other arrangements for representation and engagement

- A. Current democratic and civic representation:
 - 1) Buckinghamshire Council

- 41. Buckinghamshire Council is a unitary authority established in April 2020. It is a principal council responsible for a range of strategic and localised public services to the people of Buckinghamshire with the objectives of:
 - 1. Strengthening communities
 - 2. Protecting the vulnerable
 - 3. Improving the environment
 - 4. Increasing prosperity
- 42. There are currently 147 councillors. Following the elections in May 2025 there will be 97 councillors for Buckinghamshire Council elected to a range of newly configured wards following a boundary review.

2) High Wycombe Town Committee

- 43. High Wycombe Town Committee advises the Council and Cabinet on Buckinghamshire Council on issues affecting the High Wycombe town area, for example:
 - regeneration
 - community and facilities grants
 - transport, cycling and walking strategies and plans
 - High Wycombe and Penn Road Cemeteries
 - events in the town centre
 - All Saints Churchyard
- 44. The Committee is made up of the 24 Buckinghamshire Council elected councillors whose wards currently include any part of the unparished area of High Wycombe. The Committee also works with local organisations.

3) High Wycombe Community Board

- 45. In 2020, Buckinghamshire Council established community boards uniting local councillors and key partners. We did this to understand and respond to local issues and priorities. The High Wycombe Community Board delivers projects that meet local needs using our funding. The Board would continue regardless of whether a town council was created or not.
- 46. Community Boards are informal partnerships convened by Buckinghamshire Council.

 They bring the council, groups, organisations and local people together. The value of the Community Boards is being able to listen and respond to local needs. Community Boards aim to:
 - represent the voice of local people
 - capture thoughts, ideas and suggestions
 - bring together key community partners and residents
 - identify local needs and work to produce creative solution

- 47. The Board has operated a set of Action Groups which consider project ideas and requests for funding linked to the Board's priorities:
 - Environment and climate change
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Recovery and regeneration
 - Local infrastructure and transport

4) High Wycombe Charter Trustees

- 48. The Charter Trustees of High Wycombe were established in 1974. The 24
 Buckinghamshire Council councillors whose wards currently include any part of the unparished area of High Wycombe are appointed as the Charter Trustees. They have a ceremonial role, in addition to their Buckinghamshire Council responsibilities. They are responsible for preserving the historic identity and civic traditions of the town. Annually, one of the Charter Trustees is nominated by their peers to be Mayor of the Town. The Mayor of High Wycombe is a ceremonial and non-political role. The Mayor represents the town at civic and ceremonial events.
- 49. <u>Summary:</u> In terms of community governance, these arrangements provide a reasonable, flexible and convenient means of engaging with local people on local issues, with a democratic underpinning. Taken together, they are reflective of the identity and diversity of High Wycombe as a place and as a town with distinct civic traditions.
- 50. The existing arrangements also provide a reasonable means of reflecting the identity and interests of local communities. These arrangements are capable of adaptation over time and, through the Town Committee and Community Board, provide a means of building community cohesion through a locally-focused responsiveness to community interests. The work programme and the action planning of the Community Board, for example, are designed to identify the specific economic, social and cultural trends within the town. As a whole the arrangements afford communities an opportunity to influence decisions affecting their lives.

B. Other arrangements and those that could be made

- 51. The Buckinghamshire Council arrangements under 1)-4) above are kept under review. A commitment to continuous improvement includes a responsiveness to community feedback. Responsiveness to the outcomes of this consultation could be part of that continuous improvement.
- 52. For example, several points recur within the feedback irrespective of the commenters' preferred outcome. Together they could indicate areas of future focus for review and action planning.

Environment: concerns were expressed about the "littering", "neglect", "cleanliness", "potholes", "graffiti", and the need for planning and highway "enforcement".

Resource: concerns were expressed about apparent inequity of "funding" for the town; and a need for more "prosperity".

Oversight: comments from all sides suggested that a greater focus on the needs of the town is required; that "the current council is not close to the needs of residents of High Wycombe". This was a reason that some gave for wishing to establish a town council. However, respondents not wishing to establish a town council also agreed with this general point (only 25 respondents felt the current arrangements were not in need of some change).

53. The consistent message, then, is that local governance should connect more directly with the lives and interests of residents in a much more visible way and with demonstrable outcomes. Respondents clearly differed in how this should be achieved, but the aspiration is evident. It provides a clear road map for improvement. The Cabinet and the High Wycombe Town Committee, for example, are both well-placed to review the feedback as part of a commitment to making public realm improvements in the town.

Governance:

- 54. In democratic and representational terms, the area of High Wycombe is represented by duly elected councillors with decision-making powers within Buckinghamshire Council, representationally on the High Wycombe Town Committee, in a partnership setting through the Community Board and in overseeing the civic-ceremonial traditions of the town.
- 55. Following the Buckinghamshire Council election in May 2025, there will be 97 councillors overall and a revised set of wards. For High Wycombe 16 councillors will still represent the residents of High Wycombe in 10 wards:
 - Abbey
 - Booker and Cressex
 - Castlefield and Oakridge
 - Disraeli
 - Downley
 - Hazlemere
 - Marsh and Micklefield
 - Sands
 - Terriers and Amersham Hill
 - Totteridge and Bowerdean
- 56. <u>Summary:</u> The community governance arrangements currently in place through the Council's decision-making bodies, the Town Committee, the Community Board and the Charter Trustees are all capable of providing the effective and convenient levels of service and community engagement envisaged by responses to the survey. This of course already complements the community activity across the town.

Financial implications

57. The main financial implications would have arisen if the unparished area were to be parished and a town council were to be created. That is not the focus of these Final Recommendations. No adverse financial implications arise directly from the Final Recommendations. The existing approved budgets for the High Wycombe Town Committee would remain in place. Any planned revisions to the Council's community governance arrangements may have financial implications but these would be set out in the relevant reports at the time.

Legal Implications

58. Section 82 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 authorises a principal council to commission a community governance review. The Act requires a Council to publish Terms of Reference for a review and to consult local electors within the area of the proposals and any other stakeholders the Council deems appropriate.

Overall Conclusion

- 59. The low response rate to the survey 4.6% of eligible electors suggests that the debate about local governance does not engage the overwhelming majority of the residents in the High Wycombe community. This figure is considerably less than the 7.5% of the electorate which would be necessary even to trigger a petition on the same question. Indeed, the number of those respondents supporting Option B (town council) represents only 2.7% of the electorate, far short of the 7.5% of electors which would be required under the petition regime even to pose the question. The statutory guidance clearly envisages that a certain number of electors would normally be required to legitimise a petition-based review. While this review was not petition-based, the Council concluded that there was not enough support from the whole electorate for structural change.
- 60. While some respondents were clearly attracted to the idea of an additional layer of democratic governance to give an added focus and agency to the issues affecting the town, there was no equivalent interest in sustaining it financially.
- 61. Notably, support for change was not consistently evident across age, gender, ethnicity, disability, affluence or location.
- 62. Mindful of these factors, the Council believes there is no clear mandate for parishing the town of High Wycombe and for establishing a town council; and that to introduce additional governance structures now may well be a polarising step which would not be conducive to community cohesion. Perhaps particularly so in the current economic climate, a point made by some respondents.

- 63. However, while the consultation does not provide a mandate for new structures of governance, it does suggest that there is an appetite for enhanced local engagement resulting in tangible improvements to the local area. This was the case whether individual respondents preferred a town council option or not. The feedback gives a clear steer that structures were less important than the resolution of commonly viewed aspirations; that is, for a greater understanding of local needs, an improved environment and enhanced prosperity.
- 64. These aspirations can be recognised through specific, measurable commitments from the Council:
 - a) to commit to the continuous improvement of the current governance arrangements, and specifically that the Council should commission a review of the remit and operating arrangements of the High Wycombe Town Committee to ensure it is in a better position to respond to local issues; and
 - b) to draw to the attention of the High Wycombe Town Committee and the Cabinet the feedback received from residents about the need for public realm improvements in High Wycombe Town Centre.
- 65. On balance, and in the absence of a clear mandate for an additional layer of formal governance, the Final Recommendations recognise that the community identity of High Wycombe is sufficiently established through the current arrangements; that the Town Committee, Community Boards and Charter Trustees each help to maintain that identity and that the levels of democratic representation and civic activity provide distinct channels and bases for improved engagement.
- 66. The Council will review those arrangements with its stakeholders and partners to maximise their effectiveness. The May 2025 Buckinghamshire Council elections, returning 97 councillors on a revised set of wards, also represents a further opportunity to tailor those arrangements afresh.
- 67. The Council is also mindful that some respondents expressed a preference for representation at a more local parish level rather than the town as a whole. This review did not make a judgement on that.

Final recommendation

- 68. The Final Recommendation is that the Council should not establish a formal parish for the whole of the unparished High Wycombe area (map at **Appendix 5**) and consequently should not establish a town council. Instead the Council should look to build on and improve the current community governance arrangements with the intention of increasing community engagement and raising the profile of High Wycombe issues and outcomes. This should be articulated through two specific commitments from the Council:
 - a) to the continuous improvement of the current governance arrangements, and specifically that the Council should commission a review of the remit and operating

- arrangements of the High Wycombe Town Committee to ensure it is in a better position to respond to local issues; and .
- b) to draw to the attention of the High Wycombe Town Committee and the Cabinet the feedback received from residents about the need for public realm improvements in High Wycombe Town Centre.

Next steps

69. These Final Recommendations, as adopted by Council, will be published on the Council's website, closing this Community Governance Review.

September 2024.