

Appendix 19 – Draft Recommendations for Sherburn Parish Council

Contents

1.0 Current governance arrangements and history of the area	2
Current governance arrangements	2
History of the area	3
Five year electorate forecast	3
2.0 Assessment of consultation responses for Sherburn Parish Council ..	4
3.0 Final assessment and draft recommendations	6
Annex 19A – Consultation survey	7
Annex 19B – Summary of consultation responses	7

- 1.4 Sherburn Parish Council is comprised of 11 elected parish councillors. In order to meet and take decisions and be quorate, at least 4 councillors must be present. Parish Councils must hold an annual meeting and at least 3 other meetings each year.
- 1.5 Parish councils can raise a precept to raise monies for spending for the benefit of the parish. Sherburn Parish Council raised a precept of £34,000 for the 2025/26 financial year.

History of the area

- 1.6 In 2016, Ryedale District Council (the responsible authority at the time) was notified of a Community Governance Review (CGR) request from Sherburn Parish Council to reduce their councillor numbers from 11 to at least 9, in order to reduce the quorum from 4 to 3 councillors. At the time, the request was not considered urgent as the parish council was still functioning and holding meetings.
- 1.7 In June 2025, North Yorkshire Council (NYC) contacted the Sherburn Parish Council Clerk to confirm whether the CGR request still stood to reduce the council size, which it did. NYC was notified that due to a lack of residents willing to become parish councillors, Sherburn Parish Council had been holding several vacant seats for some time and would shortly be down to 4 councillors out of 11. As a result, parish council meetings were often cancelled due to not enough parish councillors being present.
- 1.8 After consultation with Democratic Services, it was suggested that a CGR be carried out for Sherburn Parish Council. Following the Standards and Governance Committee on 20 June 2025, Full Council approved the terms of reference of the 2025/26 Community Governance Review, which included Sherburn Parish Council on 16 July 2025.
- 1.9 As Sherburn Parish Council has held vacant seats for a period of ten years, it is not within the interest of the public to keep the current governance arrangements as meetings are often inquorate and therefore cannot take place. Reducing the councillor numbers from 11 to at least 9 will reduce the meeting quorum from 4 councillors to 3 councillors and will ensure that meetings are less likely to be cancelled.

Five year electorate forecast

- 1.10 The electorate and 5 year electorate forecast for Sherburn Parish Council is as follows:

Parish	Electorate (2025)	Electorate prediction (2030)*	Predicted electorate increase
Sherburn	680	727	47

2.0 Assessment of consultation responses for Sherburn Parish Council

2.1 The following table shows the number of households written to, with the number of consultation responses received, and response rate.

Households sent CGR consultation letter	402
Consultation responses received	48
Response rate	11.9%

2.2 Consultation letters were sent to households in the parish of Sherburn as following the CGR request made by Sherburn Parish Council to reduce their councillor numbers, this was the area under review.

2.3 A copy of the consultation survey can be found at Annex 19A. A summary of consultation responses received can be found at Annex 19B.

2.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the free text comments received through the consultation process reflect the views of the individual respondents alone. These comments do not represent the views of North Yorkshire Council and should not be construed as being endorsed by the Council.

2.5 The response rate in the table above was calculated by comparing the number of consultation responses with the number of households directly consulted by means of a letter sent to all properties in the area under review. The total number of responses for Sherburn Parish Council was 48.

2.6 Of the 48 respondents, 47 reported that they lived in Sherburn, with one of these respondents also indicating that they were a representative of a community organisation in Sherburn. One respondent advised that they worked in Sherburn.

2.7 52% (25) of respondents indicated that they were aware that Sherburn Parish Council had experienced difficulty finding residents to stand as parish councillors and was holding several vacant seats.

2.8 49% (23) of respondents were of the opinion that the current number of parish councillors, 11, was too many. 34% (11) of respondents thought that 11 councillors was about right, 9% of (4) respondents thought that 11 councillors was too few and 9% (4) respondents were unsure.

2.9 The majority of respondents chose to reduce the number of councillors from 11 to 9, as detailed in the table below.

Option	Number	Percentage
11 councillors	11	23%
10 councillors	2	4%

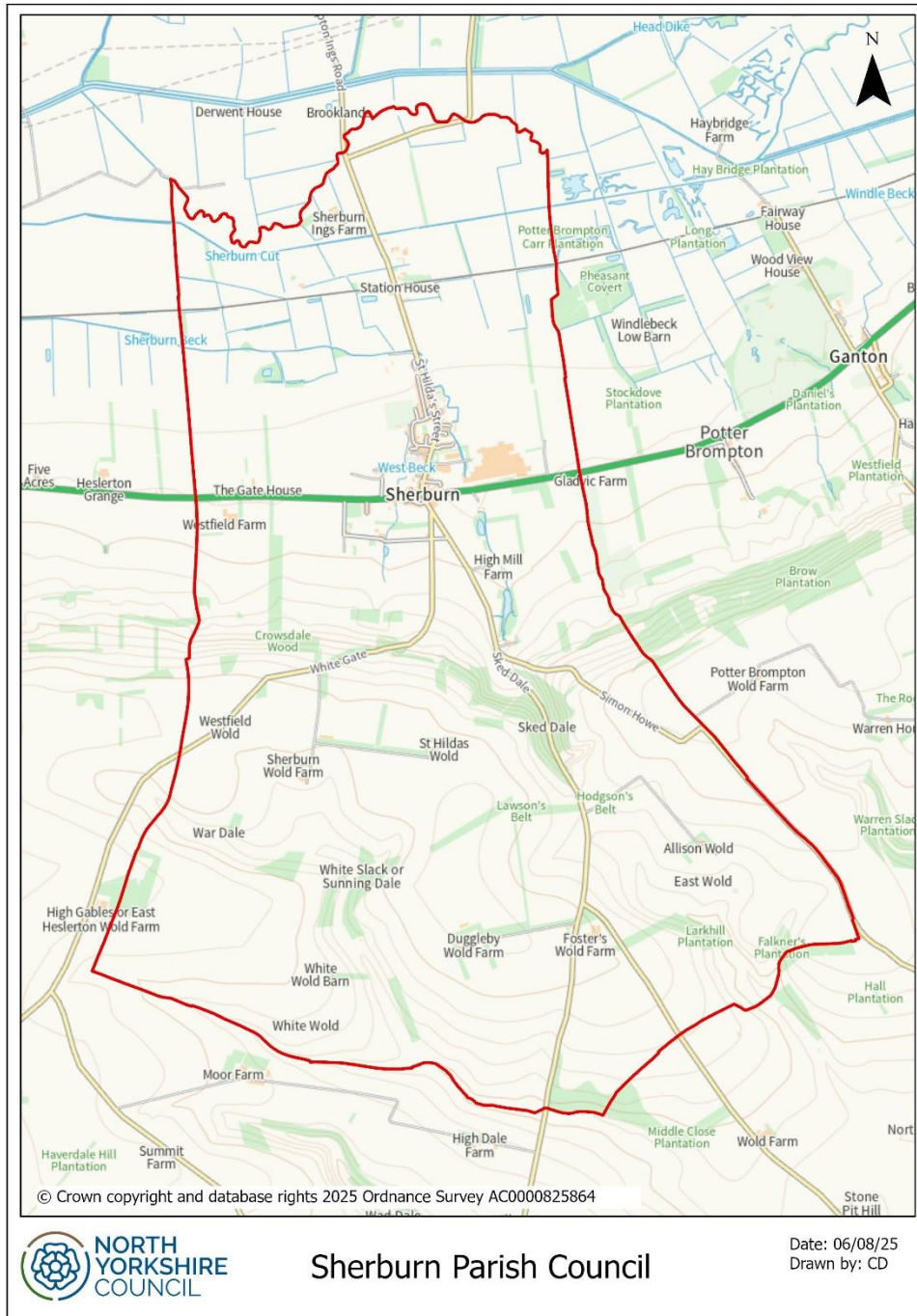
9 councillors	22	46%
8 councillors	3	6%
7 councillors	5	10%
Another option - please describe below	2	4%
I do not know	3	6%
Total	48	100%

- 2.10 Of the two respondents who choose “another option”, one suggested as few councillors as possible (which would be 5) and the other felt that as Sherburn is continually growing, 11 councillors was not enough.
- 2.11 Annex 19B summarises at page 2 the reasons people gave for supporting a reduction in the number of councillors. The most popular reason referenced was that it is difficult to fill vacant seats, which was supported by 17 respondents. 14 respondents gave the reason that the parish council is small and does not need as many councillors and 13 respondents supported the reason that meetings are often cancelled due to insufficient councillor numbers. 5 respondents provided another option which included the view that the parish councillor vacancies should be better promoted. 4 respondents advised that they were unsure.
- 2.12 Additional comments about the CGR review included further support for a reduction in the number of councillors. One respondent commented *“I would like to offer my support to the Sherburn Parish Council request to reduce the number of councillors to 9. Sherburn is a small village and it seems that a fixed number of 11 is too many to ensure regular quorate meetings to make effective progress in their important and valued work”*.
- 2.13 Some comments included that Sherburn residents were unaware of the lack of parish councillors as well as suggestions that the vacancies should be more widely promoted. One respondent advised that they would consider applying to be a parish councillor if they had known about the vacancies. Other comments concerned matters that were outside the scope of the CGR.
- 2.14 Sherburn Parish Council has advised that they support a reduction to 9 councillors as it is difficult to fill the vacant seats and meetings are often cancelled due to not being quorate.

3.0 Final assessment and draft recommendations

3.1 The majority of responses (46%) indicated support for reducing the number of Sherburn parish councillors from 11 to 9 which will reduce the quorum from 4 to 3 councillors. It is therefore proposed that the number of councillors on Sherburn Parish Council is reduced from 11 to 9.

3.2 A map of Sherburn Parish Council can be viewed below:



3.3 A list of recommendations can be viewed below:

Recommendation 1 – the number of councillors elected to Sherburn Parish Council shall be reduced from 11 councillors to 9 councillors

Recommendation 2 – implementation is recommended to take effect administratively on 1 April 2027 with elections to the new arrangements at the next scheduled elections in May 2027, and that changes to the electoral register required for the above take effect on the revised publication ahead of that election (planned for December 2026).

3.4 The recommendations detailed above will form the basis of the Stage 2 consultation which will commence on 19 March 2026.

Annex 19A – Consultation survey

Annex 19B – Summary of consultation responses