

COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BECKERMET WITH THORNHILL PARISH

INITIAL PROPOSALS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Copeland Borough Council has agreed to a request from Beckermets with Thornhill Parish Council to undertake a Community Governance Review of the parish.

1.2 This document sets out the Borough Council's initial proposals, which will form the basis of consultation with local government electors in the consultation stage of the Review.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Beckermets with Thornhill Parish Council has 14 Councillors.

2.2 At the last parish council elections in May 2015, only 7 nominations were received for election to the Parish Council. There was therefore no election in Beckermets and the 7 nominees were returned unopposed.

2.3 The Parish Council has since May 2015 filled a number of vacancies by co-option. A parish council can co-opt members to fill vacancies as long as the number of elected councillors is sufficient for a quorum. If the number of elected members falls below a quorum, the Council can no longer co-opt members or indeed take lawful decisions, and it would fall to the Borough Council as principal authority under Section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972 to appoint members to run the Council in the interim.

3 PROPOSALS

3.1 Beckermets with Thornhill Parish Council has suggested moving from a Council membership of 14 to 12.

3.2 The Council is satisfied at this stage of the Review that a change from 14 to 12 Councillors would satisfy the two requirements in the statutory guidance on Community Governance Reviews, firstly to ensure that community governance reflects the identities and interests of the community in the review area, and second that community governance in the review area is efficient and convenient. The Council will therefore be putting forward this proposal as the basis for consultation with local government electors and other interested organisations.

4 CONSULTATION

4.1 The Council is required to consult local government electors in the review area, and any other persons or organisations it considers to have an interest in the review. The consultation will run for a period of six weeks starting on 19 December and closing on 6 February.

5 NEXT STEPS

5.1 The Council will take into account all objections and representations received in the consultation. Its final recommendations will be published late in February 2017 and will be formally considered by the full Council at a date to be confirmed. Any changes will come into effect at the next Parish Council elections in May 2019.

