

Question from Teresa Strange, Clerk to Melksham Without Parish Council.

Questions:

Can the Council please confirm the date when any changes will take place with regard to Precepting and Tax Base calculations; is this 1st April 2016, 1st April 2017 or another date?

The “Guidance on community governance reviews” issued by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England of which “Principal Authorities are required, by section 100 (4) of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, to have regard to”; states the following:

30. Reorganisation of community governance orders creating new parishes, abolishing parishes or altering their area can be made at any time following a review. However for administrative and financial purposes (such as setting up the parish council and arranging its first precept), the order should take effect on the 1 April following the date on which it's made. Electoral arrangements for a new or existing parish council will come into force at the first elections to the parish council following the reorganization order.

This is a different date than the date in your Community Governance Review Report published with the agenda papers which states:

5.4.Precepts. Depending on how many changes are approved by Council, there will be considerable work involved in reconciling property records to their new parish, both in respect of council tax and in many other departments. Further, parish councils would need an indication of their tax base for precepting purposes, and an introduction date of 1 April 2017 would seem to offer the best compromise.

Could you please clarify the date the change comes into effect.

Response

It is not possible, at this stage, to be definitive as to when any changes to community governance arrangements will come into effect. This will depend on when final approval is given to the proposed changes and how long it then takes to prepare and approve the necessary legal orders.

It is, however, unlikely that any final Order could be made before April 2016. The intention would therefore be for any approved changes to come into effect on 1st April 2017, if possible, which would give time for any necessary preparatory work to be undertaken and would be consistent with the advice from the Guidance quoted in the question.