

**Funtley Parish Council:**

**Petition Submitted**

**How a Community Governance Review was triggered in the previously un-  
Parished Village of Funtley**

### Headlines:

- The village of Funtley is in the Borough of Fareham, in the county of Hampshire.
- Funtley Village Society triggered a Community Governance Review in Fareham Borough by collecting signatures for their residents on a petition and submitting it to the Borough Council.
- The Borough Council were initially unaware of the legal changes relating to a Community Governance Review [which caused friction between the Village Society and Fareham Borough].
- This Case Study is the story of how issues between the Village Society and Fareham Borough Council were overcome by building relationships, regularly communicating and how the advice from the Hampshire and National Associations of Local Councils was helpful in this venture.
- Currently (January, 2016) the Funtley Village Society are awaiting the results of a Borough Council consultation undertaken during the Community Governance Review and the lessons learnt so far from this campaign that party politics should be absolutely minimised at every stage of a Community Governance Review.

Ed Morell, Campaign Champion from the Funtley campaign said; *“We feel we have done extremely well to trigger the Funtley Community Governance Review in Fareham Borough as we are only a small village of 568 people, gathering 322 signatures over 6 weekends in February / March 2015. We have got the impression that whilst Fareham Borough Council have fulfilled their minimum legal obligations in initiating the CGR, they have lacked certainty as to their responsibilities in undertaking a Community Governance Review – we will however continue to work constructively with them”*

### What is the theme? – Why a Council is wanted

The theme of this case study has been applied from a campaign pyramid used by the National Association of Local Councils together with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) since September, 2013 when the New Councils’ Programme began - to gauge progress with funded campaigns to create new parish councils in previously un-parished areas. Funtley is currently in the ‘green’ strata on the pyramid which represents campaign areas that have submitted a petition to their principal authorities, and a Community Governance Review has been triggered.

Residents in Funtley wanted a new Parish Council to give the area a stronger voice. They no longer wanted to be instructed by Fareham Borough Council in their dealings as a small village. Parish councils are statutory, and almost always permanent, democratically elected bodies – so this model was a further attraction to Funtley. Recently, new Parish Councils have been formed in Sutton Coldfield, Bingley and Kidderminster.

*“A Funtley Parish Council will only take on duties that we decide we want to take on.” – Funtley Village Society website.*

### **Contextual issues related to the theme:**

Once a Community Governance Review has ended – and hopefully resulted in the principal authority agreeing the creation of a new Parish Council – an election date is usually set. A temporary or shadow council is usually then set up to agree reporting and a first budget with the principal authority which can be agreed at the first Full Council meeting of the Parish Council. The Funtley Community Governance Review apparently needs to end in June, 2016.

Funtley was first mentioned in the Domesday Book (available: <http://www.domesdaymap.co.uk/place/SU5608/funtley/>). Its medieval manor was originally a village situated west of the River Meon and is still marked by the site of Great Funtley Farm. Funtley shrank during the 15th and 16th centuries until only the manor house (now the farmhouse) and the corn mill remained. However in the 19th century, when the construction of the railway opened up the clay deposits east of the Meon, there developed to the east a new industrial hamlet, also known as Funtley, which was much larger than the original village to the west.

### **Who are the key partners / stakeholders involved?**

The main campaign group to create a new Parish Council in Funtley has been the Funtley Village Society. Without the Village Society and its Campaign Champion Ed Morell there simply would have been no campaign.

The Hampshire Association of Local Councils accessed DCLG funding during 2015-16 from the National Association of Local Councils which helped to progress campaign activity with the production of leaflets and the holding of public meetings, etc. The National Association of Local Councils campaign funded the Hampshire Association of Local Councils and the Funtley Village Society and it is fair to say that this funding was instrumental in both triggering the Community Governance Review and helping to communicate the benefits of a Parish Council to Funtley residents. DCLG assisted by providing the funding to NALC to disburse to both HALC and the Funtley Village Society.

### **What are the key issues / challenges? – Progress with the campaign to date**

The Funtley Village Society has been an excellent driving force in the campaign to create a new Parish Council in Funtley. It was the body which gathered the petitionary signatures and submitted the petition to Fareham Borough Council in 2015. The Hampshire Association of Local Councils (in particular Steven Lugg and Cllr. Mike Evans) were instrumental in advising the Society during every stage of the campaign. HALC and NALC both advised on

technical issues around the Community Governance Review and how to play the inevitable party political minefield with Fareham Borough Council.

### **How have these issues / challenges been overcome?**

The initial challenge the campaign faced was Fareham Borough Council not being aware that the law in regards to the CGR's had changed in March, 2015 which gives the principal authority a year from the date a petition is submitted to complete its CGR. Fareham Borough Council was unaware of this change and had to work alongside relevant parties to get the CGR done within a year; this challenge was overcome through regular communication and negotiation between the relevant parties. The HALC and the NALC steered Funtley Village Society toward holding workshops and engaging in regular communication with Fareham Borough Council as well as local residents during the CGR phase.

### **Outcomes – Learning from the campaign**

The Funtley campaign group are soon to hold (March, 2016) a series of workshops for residents which will again promote the benefits of creating Parish Councils. Residents of Funtley will benefit from the creation of a Parish Council as the Parish Council will be able to choose the services the precept is spent on to benefit residents of Funtley alone. Leaflets have regularly communicated this back to residents.



*The edge of the village of Funtley.*

### **What have been the key elements of success?**

The Village Society were responsible for driving the campaign to secure resident signatures in addition to meeting with Fareham Borough Council and organising workshops and public meetings during 2015-16 to promote the benefits of a Parish Council for the village. Resident buy-in was secured through regular leaflet communications on the benefits, also.

## **What has been learnt? Campaign lessons to share with others**

Campaigners recognise that attending the two NALC New Councils' Briefings (09/15 and 01/16) to network with other campaigners was the main way in which literature and feedback was shared from the Funtley campaign.

Minimisation of party politics was seminal to the latter half of the campaign. More guidance at an earlier stage of the campaign is what the campaign group if pressed would have done differently.

## **Who Can I Contact?**

*Campaign Champion: Ed Morell 07714 104543 / [edmorell@me.com](mailto:edmorell@me.com)*

*Steven Lugg of HALC: [hampshirealc@eastleigh.gov.uk](mailto:hampshirealc@eastleigh.gov.uk) / 02380 688 061.*

## **Other information**

*More information on how to create a council – The NALC's Create A Council web page - <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/create-a-council> .*

*NALC Power To The People publication here - <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/publications> .*

*Funtley Village Society - [www.funtleyvillagesociety.org.uk](http://www.funtleyvillagesociety.org.uk) .*

*Hampshire Association of Local Councils - <http://www.hampshirealc.org.uk/> .*