

Penketh Parish Council Community Governance Review

Open comments from the consultation

This document contains open comments (33) and file uploads (3) from those participants who stated **NO** to question 4 below.

A unique ID is displayed for each participant and all personal details have been redacted.

4. Do you feel that Penketh Parish Council should be abolished? Please select one option.				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		0.00%	0
2	No		100.00%	37
3	Don't know		0.00%	0
			answered	37
			skipped	0

5. In support of your answer to the above question please give your reasons why in the space below. Please provide as much detail as possible including what alternatives could be considered. (max 250 words) Alternatively, you can upload information below.				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	33
1	ID: 207814445	They provide a valuable service to our community.		
2	ID: 207849080	The petition was 2 years ago and all the current committee where voted in by the residents		
3	ID: 207884426	The parish council seems to be running well since the original petition was entered in 2020. I value the services which the parish council delivers and feel it can be trusted to do so in the interests of the people of Penketh.		
4	ID: 207888544	The last elections delivered the biggest change in the borough at the last election and therefore the Council should not be abolished but supported where possible to achieve its objectives.		
5	ID: 207892670	The independent councillors have been doing a great job working for the local community and I want them to continue.		
6	ID: 207920135	With the new administration in place things have improved. This consultation is now invalid as the petition is based on the previous inept administration.		

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7	ID: 207966998	Local decisions by local people. A few bumpy years should not be a reason to destroy an institution.
8	ID: 207972638	The council we have is mainly independents therefore working for all the people and not restricted by party politics
9	ID: 207983542	Email sent to support the answer (Smart Survey admin attached email at Q6 11/01/23)
10	ID: 208214299	New independent councillors are making inroads and beneficial changes. Previous partisan councillors did not do due diligence when tendering and no improvements to area. New people need time to effect improvement and changes
11	ID: 208218826	
12	ID: 208311241	The Parish council do a great job over matters concerning Penketh. They listen to what the people want and act accordingly
13	ID: 208314192	The current Parish Council are working hard to improve facilities and public spaces for the local community. It is refreshing to have a Parish Council that do not speak as one political voice but rather consider the residents wants and needs.
14	ID: 208315365	The current counsellors are doing a good job. And are focused on improving our local community. Just look at all the work they have done bringing penketh pool back into use after years of under funding and poor management.
15	ID: 208321779	I think they provide good value and are vital for us as a community
16	ID: 208323886	Loose the community feel and the personal touch
17	ID: 208324569	The parish council, when this petition was raised, was not working. The current parish council is working.
18	ID: 208334329	Having resided in Penketh for over 20 years I believe the value they add to the area and community is a benefit to all residents
19	ID: 208352887	Working tirelessly on issues that effect the local community and are overlooked by the borough
20	ID: 208554219	I believe local people who stand as Parish councillors are better placed to recognise the needs of the local community
21	ID: 208556490	Penketh is a distinct area and should have local representation at parish level.
22	ID: 208563631	I would like the input from local representatives to make decisions for Penketh
23	ID: 208635074	Whilst I agree it requires an overhaul and potentially greater oversight from Warrington council I think a parish council is required for local people to have a say on how their community is run
24	ID: 208637976	But needs to avoid any back biting and nasty comments from council members the independent members seem to be doing a great job maybe cut down on the number of meetings and get the baths open

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25	ID: 208743507	I believe the independence members at Penketh parish council are doing an excellent job
26	ID: 208791078	uploaded as this keeps telling me it is in the wrong format
27	ID: 209166122	I feel that by abolishing the Parish Council we would lose that first point of contact on local issues with people who care.
28	ID: 209933334	The Parish Council may not be perfect but I am not aware of a better system that has been proposed for managing local affairs
29	ID: 211080250	The previous Penketh Parish Council was a disgrace. Scant (if any) attention was paid to views of locals. The Labour "controlling group" was an embarrassment to Penketh and to democracy. The behaviour was arrogant and appalling. I assume that ex members are involved in the submission to WBC for the governance review. The current Parish Council, though not perfect, communicates with local residents and has arranged several events and occasions within the community. Residents are treated with respect as opposed to contempt and I fully support the continuation of the Penketh Parish Council with efforts to provide its service to the community.
30	ID: 211081768	I signed the original petition as I was disillusioned with the parish council serving Penketh at that time 2020, however since May 2021 the council has new members elected that are representing Penketh in a holistic & open transparent way, The majority of councillors on the council do not represent any political party, they are independents. Since 2021 great strides have been made both in gaining respect & trust of electors but also moving Penketh forward by tackling projects that are community led& based, I joined the council - co-opted in October 2022 as I know I have skills to support the current council in representing & serving the parish of Penketh
31	ID: 211116814	Penketh Parish Council give great local governance and allows Penketh issues to be dealt with by folks we have elected not as an afterthought by WBC who seem to focus on the inner Wards.
32	ID: 211161644	I don't have any issues with them and I'm unsure what this is really about
33	ID: 211280278	I believe that past Parish Councils have made errors insofar as vital community resources, such as the Baths, Hall and our Green spaces, have largely been left to rot. There has been too much political posturing and too little practical improvement to the locality. The current Parish Council however, appear to have put the people first and have made huge strides forward in improving the local area. Things such as regular litter picks, the Jubilee Beacon and heroic attempts to restore locally owned amenities have given a real sense of what a Parish Council can achieve when it puts people before power and politics. I suggest that we keep our Parish Council and provide more in terms of administrative and professional support from the Borough

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Council so that prospective, candidates who genuinely love their communities, can stand without fear or favour of any legal or personal backlash! Everyone is aware of some very ugly scenes at meetings of PC's that have made the National Media! This deters those who would seek to stand purely from a desire to serve the community where they live! What is important to realise is that local elected councils are run by "ordinary" people who do not always have the necessary skills and knowledge to run what is basically a huge business with a very large budget! Responsible Finance Officer should not be tacked on to Clerk's job description, it should be a post that is held by a suitably qualified accountant and remunerated accordingly.

answered	33
skipped	3

6. You can upload up to two documents per comment by selecting the choose file button below. Each should be smaller than 10 MB and can be in any major file and shape file format. If you wish to submit a larger document or file in a different format, please contact us at elections@warrington.gov.uk

File Type	Average Size	Files Uploaded
.docx	17799Kb	3
.txt	3392Kb	1
To view the files uploaded, go into the individual results.	answered	4
	skipped	33

Appendix B

1	ID 207983542	<p>The Governance Review was requested at a point in time when the previous Labour controlled Parish Council were not acting in the public's best interest. Spending (without consent or approval) £10,000 on a local bus which did not benefit the residents. £56,000 on a single piece of play equipment and making the play area worse instead of better (without any form of consultation with the full table of elected councillors) and during the start of the pandemic spending a lot of public money without consent or authorisation on items which were being privately distributed to favour and strengthen labour support - this money was also benefiting people outside of the penketh area as opposed to what the precept was collected for. There were also many issues surrounding the appointment of a clerk who was Politically biased and would not act in the parish council best interest allowing particular individuals from the Labour group to make decisions out of public meetings and without being fair to all councillors. There were many financial irregularities highlighted in annual audits and it was also noted that an individual was employed to take over the complete running of the pool and community centre at a cost of £3,000 per month being paid through the payroll service without any deductions such as national insurance or income tax deductions this was without any official decision being made which was in breach of HMRC/inland revenue policy. This would bring the parish council in to disrepute and the reason why the final option to instigate a petition was considered by residents. Since the new parish council was formed after the election in May 2021 there has been a lot of positive change and many improvements have been made. Openness and transparency has been restored and so I would NOT be in favour of abolishing the parish council.</p>
2	ID 208380423	<p>I am very happy with the work our Parish Council are doing, and their communication via Facebook and other means is good too. We already have the means to interact with the Parish Council, and to vote for members, or alternatives when the time comes. This petition is therefore superfluous to the mechanisms already in place and, I feel, has come in to being for political point scoring, rather than for the benefit of the area and its residents.</p>
3	ID 208791078	<p>Before i answer the above question - why has it taken over 2 years to get to this stage? The petition is from October 2020 during the last administration. Is this happening because it is no longer a labour run council and therefore WBC cant dictate what to do anymore? The people of Penketh have spoken overwhelmingly since then by voting for a parish council run by Independent councillors rather than one party. The current council is transparent in its running - continuing to live stream meetings after they were able to meet face to face. They have moved ahead to fix the problems with the pool. They appear to have the finances under control. The previous administration were all about what the chair wanted - jobs for the boys. It didn't matter what was proposed, if it wasn't proposed by the labour majority it was voted out. Stop wasting peoples time with this 'consultation'. We need more independent councillors in WBC as well as in the parishes of Warrington. Party politics has no place in local councils. Councils should run for the people of Warrington.</p>

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4	ID 213610663	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the CGR consultation regarding Penketh Parish Council.</p> <p>As you might expect our view is that the loss of a town or parish council is a backward step for a community as the legitimacy that envelops locally democratically elected members representing the views of a community is something that is of value.</p> <p>However, we are aware that Penketh Parish Council has struggled for a number of years with relationships between groups of councillors being so strained that no meaningful business has been able to be conducted for several years.</p> <p>Although the sitting councillors were given advice and support both by ChALC and by the Borough Council (in particular the Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive) no progress was made. Sadly this meant that the Council did not operate as a functioning entity for over three years.</p> <p>We still maintain that a parish council is the best option to represent and support the community of Penketh BUT it needs a greater level of professional support than it has been privy to in the past.</p> <p>Unfortunately councillors decided to remove Penketh from membership almost 2 years ago in order to continue to work they way they wanted to.</p> <p>I would suggest that the council be maintained BUT that in the interim the clerk is an external appointment that way they cannot be bullied/influenced by factions within the council. The cost of that appointment can be recouped from Penketh.</p> <p>I hope for the benefit of the electors of Penketh that we are able to retain the parish council but that we also redouble our efforts to support them in order for them to become a fully function entity.</p>
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