Stours Parish Council

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**Details for Proposal for Stand Alone Parish Council for East Stour Parish**



**What a Parish Council is:** Parish councils are civil local authorities found in England which are the lowest tier of local government. They are elected corporate bodies, with variable tax raising powers, and they carry out beneficial public activities in geographical areas known as civil parishes.

Parish councils receive the majority of their funding by levying a precept upon the council tax paid by the residents of the parish (or parishes) covered by the council.

Their activities fall into three main categories: representing the local community, delivering services to meet local needs, and improving quality of life and community wellbeing.

**To establish a local council**, we need to trigger a Community Governance Review. A Community Governance Review can be triggered by either the principal authority themselves or by the community, through the submission of a petition. The number of minimum signatures required varies according to the size of the population. If the petition area:

East Stour has a population of about 458, we need to receive 37.5% of the 458 to vote for this proposal, so we need 172 people.

Once the petition gathers the required number of signatures, it can be submitted to the principal authority, who will validate the signatures and, provided that the minimum threshold is met, will conduct a Community Governance Review within 12 months of submission. During this time, the principal authority will launch a consultation, asking residents to state whether they are in favour or against the establishment of a local council.

At the end of the consultation period, the council will review residents’ responses before reaching a decision. If the principal authority decides in favour of a parish council, it will also set the date for the first election.

As you are under the Parish Council, I would be sure that if the Parish Council agree, we can do the request through them as the principal authority, but I am sure that there will be more than 187 electors interested in having their own Parish Council!

**Top tips for leading a successful campaign -** One of the most important factors to be borne in mind is the ability to persuade other residents in your area about the benefits of creating a new local council and that it is the right model of local governance for your community. You need to do your research and know what the benefits are of having a local council.

Positives for having your own Parish Council

1. Provide a line of communication to the Local Authority & maybe therefore ensure a response. To provide a pressure group to ensure that the local authority actually listen to the concerns of the local authority.

2. Local people would have an opportunity to express their views which could then be taken to the Parish Council for decisions rather than having to take proposal for approval to the grouped Parish Council.

3. Better local control for the Parish

4. To have the powers to resolved matters for your village at your own meetings with your own Clerk.

5. As you do already, manage your precept and budget and applying for grants.

Things to consider.

1. There will be additional cost to employ a Parish Clerk (for a village your size, I would say you could meet every other month and the Clerk hours could be from 6 to 8 hours a week- from £15.00 an hour £6240 a year. You will not need to pay pension as it is under the requirement, and you will not have to pay employees NI as it is under the threshold.

2. An election will mean that everyone that is a Councillor at the moment will have to put their names forward, they will not be automatically elected on to the new Parish Council