1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 Following consultation on the Draft Recommendations, it is recommended that the number of councillors serving on Bacton Parish Council be increased from nine (9) to twelve (12), with effect from the next ordinary parish council elections.

2. CONSULTATION OUTCOME

2.1 The initial consultation received no responses. A further consultation was subsequently undertaken, during which five (5) responses were received through Microsoft Forms, email and post. Of those responding, four (4) individuals (80%) supported the proposal to increase the number of parish councillors from nine (9) to twelve (12), whilst one (1) respondent opposed the proposal.

2.2 The response received from Bacton Parish Council strongly supported the proposal and highlighted recent and planned housing growth, increasing workloads on councillors, the need to build resilience into council operations, and evidence of local interest in serving as a parish councillor. The Parish Council also advised that recent casual vacancies attracted more applicants than available vacancies, indicating a healthy pool of potential councillors.

2.3 The sole objection argued that insufficient justification had been provided for increasing council size and questioned whether additional councillors were necessary. However, little weight is attached to this representation. The objection did not appear to recognise the voluntary nature of the parish councillor role, the practical governance challenges faced by smaller councils, or the long-established national position that communities substantially exceeding 150 electors are generally expected to be served by a parish council.

2.4 Overall, the consultation demonstrated clear support for the proposal. The representations received indicate that an increase to twelve councillors would strengthen the Parish Council's capacity and resilience, whilst no substantive concerns were raised that would justify retaining the current council size.

3. KEY INFORMATION

Electorate	Current Seats	Current Occupied seats
1208 (October 2025) 1310 (as of October 2026)	9	8

3.1 National Association of Local Councils (NALC) member ratio guidance

Electorate	Councillor allocation
Less than 500	5-8
501 – 2,500	6-12
2,501 – 10,000	9-16
10,001 – 20,000	13-27
Greater than 20,000	13-31

3.2 Quorum requirements

SEATS	Quorum
5 - 9	3
10 - 12	4

4. REASONING

4.1 The Working Group has considered the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) guidance and is satisfied that a council size of twelve (12) members is appropriate for a parish of Bacton's size. Twelve councillors remain within the recommended range of six (6) to twelve (12) councillors for parishes with an electorate between 501 and 2,500 electors.

4.2 Significant weight has been attached to the growth experienced within the parish. Bacton has seen substantial housing development in recent years, resulting in a notable increase in electorate size, with further growth forecast. Whilst the projected electorate growth does not necessarily justify a significant increase in councillor numbers on representation ratios alone, increasing the council to twelve (12) members would broadly maintain the existing councillor-to-elector ratio over the longer term and ensure governance arrangements remain appropriate as the parish continues to expand.

4.3 The Working Group considers that the current council operates close to the minimum level necessary to maintain resilience. Whilst the Council is presently able to function effectively, a relatively small number of vacancies, absences or conflicts of interest could have a disproportionate impact on its ability to conduct business. Increasing membership would provide greater flexibility, distribute workloads more evenly and strengthen the Council's long-term resilience.

4.4 The Working Group has attached significant weight to the views of Bacton Parish Council, which formally requested the increase and is best placed to assess its governance requirements, councillor workloads and operational resilience. The Parish Council advised that increasing responsibilities arising from community growth, planning matters, local projects and community engagement have increased demands upon elected members.

4.5 The Working Group notes that increasing the council from nine (9) to ten (10) members would increase the quorum requirement from three (3) to four (4) members. However, increasing the council further to twelve (12) members does not increase the quorum requirement beyond four (4). Once the threshold of ten members is crossed, there is therefore no additional quorum impact associated with adopting a council size of twelve rather than ten or eleven.

4.6 Given the size of the electorate, continuing housing growth and increasing responsibilities placed upon parish councils, it is reasonable for Bacton Parish Council to be positioned towards the upper end of the NALC recommended range. On balance, twelve (12) councillors is considered proportionate, sustainable and consistent with securing effective and convenient local government.