

6 JUNE 2016

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee held in Committee Room 3, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 6 June 2016

- * Cllr S J Clarke (Chairman)
- * Cllr L R Puttock (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- * G C Beck
- * G R Blunden
- Ms L C Ford
- R L Frampton
- * A T Glass
- * L E Harris
- * J M Olliff-Cooper

*Present

In attendance:

Councillors:

Mrs D E Andrews
P J Armstrong
J E Binns
Mrs S V Beeton
M R Harris

Councillors:

- * A K Penson
- D N Tungate
- A S Wade
- * Mrs C V Ward
- * J G Ward
- Mrs P A Wyeth

Councillors:

Mrs A J Hoare
D M S Poole
W S Rippon-Swaine
M A Steele
M L White
C A Wise

Also In Attendance:

County Cllr Miss Jacqui England, Lymington

Officers Attending:

Mrs R Rutins and Ms M Stephens

Apologies:

Cllrs Ms Ford, Frampton, Tungate and Mrs Wyeth

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 4 March and 16 May 2016 be signed by the Chairman as correct records.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by members in connection with an agenda item.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

6 ELECTORAL REVIEW OF HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Committee considered the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) amended final proposals for the county division boundaries for the New Forest. The Commission had said that “in the event that we do not receive sufficient evidence for all of the potential changes set out in the attached maps, the Commission is likely to revert to its draft recommendations and confirm these as final”.

Councillors expressed disappointment with some of the LGBCE’s revised proposals and the limited influence of both the County and the District Councils in influencing the outcome. Members were urged to submit their views direct to the LGBCE before the close of the consultation.

In discussing latest LGBCE recommendations, the following comments were made:-

Members were pleased that the revised recommendations included keeping the Bransgore, Copythorne and Netley Marsh Parishes within single Electoral Divisions.

Whilst some members were pleased that the LGBCE had decided to retain Exbury & Lepe in the Brockenhurst Division, they pointed out that the LGBCE had not followed similar logic with regard to Boldre, that is, that rural parishes should not be combined with towns. Cllr Wise requested that the Committee lobby the LGBCE to retain Boldre within the Brockenhurst Division rather than the Lymington Division. It was noted that the proposal would mean further substantial re-drawing of the divisions to maintain elector equality. No action was taken on Cllr Wise’s request.

Members expressed concern at the proposal to divide the Bashley ward of New Milton Town Council across two County Divisions. This would mean creating a separate ward of New Milton Town Council and losing the co-terminosity of the District and Parish Wards, was less than ideal. It was also contrary to two of the three statutory criteria on which the LGBCE is required to operate, maintain community identity and securing effective and convenient local government.

Other members expressed their disappointment regarding the proposals in relation to Hyde and Burley. They considered that the proposals put forward by NFDC for both these parishes were more appropriate.

Concern was expressed that an unelected body such as the LGBCE had the power to determine the makeup of electoral areas, taking little or no account of views expressed by elected representatives who had greater insight into the needs and identities of the their communities. The Committee felt that this Council should lobby local MPs regarding the undemocratic nature of the LGBCE and requested that a recommendation to this effect be submitted to the Council for debate.

Members discussed the alternative names for some of the proposed Divisions put forward previously by the Committee. Amended proposals are set out in the resolution below.

RECOMMENDED:

That the local Members of Parliament be requested to take up the issue of the undemocratic nature of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, its lack of accountability, its perceived reluctance to take account of the views of local democratic representatives in determining electoral boundaries; and its apparent inflexible adherence to electoral equality considerations at the expense of

- ***Community interests and identities with readily identifiable boundaries; and***
- ***Effective and convenient local government.***

RESOLVED:

That the LGBCE be advised that the Council:

- (i) Welcomes the fact that the revised final recommendations provide for the Bransgore, Copythorne and Netley Marsh Parishes to be contained within single electoral divisions;
- (ii) Is disappointed that the revised final recommendations provide for the division of the Bashley ward across two divisions but accepts this in the light of the remainder of the recommendations now proposed;
- (iii) Reiterates its recommendations for the renaming of the following Divisions as indicated:

LGBCE Proposal
Brockenhurst
Ringwood
Milford & Hordle

NFDC suggested alternative
Mid-Forest
West Forest
Milford, Hordle & Fernhill

- (iv) Requests the following further change of name:

LGBCE Proposal
Totton North

NFDC suggested alternative
Totton North & Netley Marsh

- (v) Withdraws its previous recommendation to change the name of the proposed Lyndhurst & Fordingbridge Division.

CHAIRMAN