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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 1 December 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present

Councillors

R F Radford (Chairman)
J Bartlett, E J Berry, W Burke, R J Chesterton, S J Clist,
Mrs C Collis, D R Coren, N V Davey, Mrs C P Daw, R M Deed,
R J Dolley (Vice Chairman), C J Eginton, R Evans, P J Heal,
B Holdman, D J Knowles, B A Moore, S Pugh, D F Pugsley,
Mrs E J Slade, C R Slade, Mrs M E Squires, R L Stanley,
L D Taylor, B G J Warren, Mrs N Woollatt and J Wright

Apologies

Councillors

G Barnell, J Buczkowski, J Cairney, Mrs F J Colthorpe,
L J Cruwys, J M Downes, Mrs S Griggs, F W Letch,
Mrs E J Lloyd, Miss J Norton, S J Penny, A White, A Wilce and
A Wyer

87 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllrs G Barnell, J Cairney, J Downes Mrs F J Colthorpe, Miss E Lloyd, Miss J Norton, F W Letch, A Wilce, A Wyer, S J Penny, A White, J Buczkowski and Mrs S Griggs.

88 **Public Question Time**

The Chairman read out the following statement from Susan McGeever:

Halberton Parish Council seeks to look after all its parishioners throughout this large, historic, and predominantly, rural parish.

The newsletter is delivered to all households and issues raised are dealt with expediently - speeding concerns at Lucombe Park, uncut verges, dirty bus shelters, potholes, parking issues at Mid Devon Business Park, disruption caused when the A361 is closed, concerns over AD plants or solar panel farms or the ability to walk to work at Hitchcocks from both Uffculme and Willand.

Halberton Parish Council considers all planning applications based on the 'material planning considerations' and is not adverse to raising questions, asking for conditions or requesting that an application is called in. Ultimately though, it is MDDC Planning Officers and Planning Committee who make the decisions.

In addition, Halberton Parish Council has reached out to its neighbours on issues that affect the combined area such as standardised speed limits throughout.

Last year, the District Boundaries Commission Review, saw Uffculme and Willand ask for changes particularly in relation to the parish of Halberton. The Boundaries Commission rejected these requests on the premise that it would unbalance the numbers.

A year later, the Parish Boundary Review committee is asking for the same changes. So before making your decision ask yourselves: Who was on the Parish Boundary Review committee?

Does the number of responses reflect the majority of the population of the three parishes (6534)? And, how many of those responses came from residents within the parish of Halberton?

Would MDDC Planning Officers or the Planning Committee have come to a different conclusion on any planning application if Uffculme or Willand Parish Council had objected? Will the next step be to invoke Clause 61 of the District Boundaries Commission Review?

Having considered the questions above, if the Council is mindful to adopt one of the three Options put forward, I for one would hope that those individuals who specified they wished to remain in the Parish of Halberton will be allowed to do so.

Ian Batchelor, Chairman of Halberton Parish Council stated:

It's been ongoing for a number of years where neighbouring parishes have been wanting to exert an influence and create a degree of control over our parish and we would like to retain as much of that parish boundary for historical reasons and for the fact that we feel serve all our parishioners very well. The boundary commission and committee that was set up a little while ago, I've made representations to with written reports to show how well we have performed but to no avail, it seems to have been that amendments have been put in place to allow chunks of the parish to go.

If we look at it in the same way, how would certain Members feel if say Hemyock would disappear to Somerset? Just because we feel that there is a more general pull for people in Hemyock to go towards Wellington, is that a good scenario? I don't think it would be, because we want to retain our boundaries as they are, not what people would like them to be, there's enough of that going on in the world as it is.

We worked and were pragmatic and happy to succeed certain areas of the parish where boundary lines cross through housing estates or Mid Devon Business Parks and were quite pragmatic to allow those. But the overall expansion of neighbouring parishes taking parish land which is not with consent I feel that the Committee should look at that and bear that in mind when they are voting on the amendments that are taking place.

The Chairman stated that written responses would be provided.

89 **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct**

Cllr B G J Warren declared a personal interest as he was the current Chairman of Willand Parish Council.

90 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman reminded Members of the Honorary Alderman Ceremony taking place on 5th December.

91 Notices of Motions

1. Motion 584 (Councillor R Radford – 9 November 2022)

The Council has before it a **MOTION** submitted for the first time:

"In the interest of a compromise, Halberton Parish wish to confirm acceptance of options 1 & 2 and that option 3 should be withdrawn"

In accordance with procedure rule 16.6 Cllr R Radford requested that the **MOTION** be **WITHDRAWN**

92 Electoral Review Committee - Parish Review

The Chairman of the Electoral Review Committee thanked Members, Officers and public who had contributed to the review and stated that there had been a large number of responses and strong recommendations made.

Council then dealt with the recommendations set out in the report as follows:

Cllr L Taylor **MOVED**, seconded by Cllr B G J Warren that:

(a) Recommended that given the number of electors within the Yeoford ward of the parish, it was proposed that the number of parish councillors for that ward be increased from 5 to 7.

Cllr D R Coren spoke and stated that the number of parish councillors within the Yeoford ward should not be increased as there would not be sufficient parish councillors to represent the remaining parish which was large and very rural.

Consideration was given to:

- Crediton Hamlets did not want to see an increase in Yeoford parish councillors
- The rural areas of a parish also needed to be represented

Cllr D R Coren **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, seconded by Cllr B Deed, in accordance with procedure rule 16.5 that:

(a) Recommended that the proposed number of parish councillors for Yeoford ward remained at 5

Upon a vote being taken on the original **RECOMMENDATION**, it was declared to have **FAILED**. Therefore Yeoford ward remained at 5 Parish Councillors.

Cllr Taylor **MOVED**, seconded by Cllr S J Clist that:

(b) Recommended that the Council approve Option 3 be put into effect as follows (Appendix 1):- "Move from Halberton Parish to Uffculme Parish - Lucombe Park, together with Hitchcocks and Langlands Business Parks, and the area north east of Bridwell Avenue, plus moving from Halberton Parish to Willand Parish - the Mid Devon Business Park."

Consideration was given to:

- The business park affected Willand and Uffculme more than Halberton
- Residents of Halberton did state their views and some Members could not support option 3

Councillor R F Radford **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, seconded by Cllr C Slade that:

(b) Recommended that Council approve Options 1 & 2 be put into effect as follows:

Option 1 – Lucombe Park move from Halberton to Uffculme and the Mid Devon Business Park move from Halberton to Willand.

Option 2 – Option 1 (as set out above) together with the area north east of Bridwell Avenue be moved from Halberton to Uffculme

Upon a vote being taken the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Cllr Taylor **MOVED**, seconded by Cllr S J Clist that:

(c) Recommended that the Council request the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for a related alteration, in order to put into effect the boundary changes to the district wards of Halberton and Lower Culm.

(d) Recommended that the boundary changes proposed as per submission 33 be accepted with the amendment that the boundary followed the road north of The Orchard so that The Orchard be part of Cheriton Bishop Parish Council (Appendix 2/3/4).

(e) Recommended possibility of merging of Nymet Rowland and Lapford parishes be further considered at a future time (Appendix 6).

(f) Recommended that arising from the consultation with parish councils, the following changes were to be recommended by the ERC for approval by the Council.

(g) Bradninch (Rural Ward) be reduced from 2 to 1

(h) Bradninch (Town Ward) be increased from 10 to 11

(i) Burlescombe be reduced from 9 to 7

(j) Coplestone be increased from 7 to 9

(k) Crediton Hamlets (Yeoford Ward) be increased from 5 to 7

(l) Silverton (North Ward) be reduced from 2 to 1

(m) Silverton (Village Ward) be increased from 9 to 10

(n) Willand be increased from 11 to 12

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

93 Seating Allocations

The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer confirmed that since the last allocation had been agreed there had been requests from Political Groups and Non Aligned Members to gift and swap seats on various Committees. Because the changes could affect the political balance the changes would need to be agreed by Council. Any changes to the political balance would need to be a unanimous vote.

Cllr R Deed **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, seconded by Cllr L Taylor, that

1. That Cllr W Burke transfers from the Scrutiny Committee to the Audit Committee and Cllr R Radford transfers from the Audit Committee to the Scrutiny Committee.
2. That Cllr A Moore remained on the Planning Committee.

Upon taking a vote, the **AMENDMENT** had **FAILED** as this was not a unanimous vote.

Note:

- Cllrs Mrs N Woollatt and B G J Warren requested that their votes against the decision be recorded

Cllr R Chesterton **MOVED**, seconded by Cllr B A Moore that:

1. That Cllr W Burke transfers from the Scrutiny Committee to the Audit Committee and Cllr R Radford transfers from the Audit Committee to the Scrutiny Committee.
2. That Cllr A Moore gifts his seat on the Planning Committee to Cllr R Radford.

Consideration was given to:

- The seats on Scrutiny and Audit Committees would revert back to what they were before the last allocation
- Some Members views that the Planning Committee was non political and therefore would not affect the political balance
- Some Members felt that both changes would affect the political balance on the Committees and could not be supported

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have **FAILED** as this was not a unanimous vote.

Note:

- Cllrs Mrs N Woollatt and B G J Warren requested that their votes against the decision be recorded.
- The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer would provide a written response to confirm the political balance regarding the Scrutiny and Audit transfer.

(The meeting ended at 7.17 pm)

CHAIRMAN

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