

MINUTES of the Warding Working Party of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 8th February, 2016 at Crown Chambers, Melksham at 10.15am

Present: Cllrs. Richard Wood (Chair), John Glover (Vice Chair), Alan Baines, Rolf Brindle, Terry Chivers, and Steve Petty.
Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk)

Apologies: There were no apologies.

- 486/15 **Housekeeping:** Cllr. Wood welcomed all to the meeting and explained the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire.
- 487/15 **Appointment of Chair of Working Party:** It was agreed that a Vice Chair was not required for this Working Party, and if the appointed Chair was not available for a subsequent meeting then the Chair of Council would Chair the meeting.
Resolved: Cllr Alan Baines was appointed Chair of the Warding Working Party for 2015/16.
- 488/15 **Public Participation:** There were no members of the public present.
- 489/15 **History & Background Information:** The Working Party noted the report on this information. The latest set of Electoral Registers (published 1st December 2015) show a total of 6,482 electors. If the current number of electors in the East of Melksham development are transferred to the Town parish when the Boundary Review decision takes effect at the May 2017 election, then there will be 1,241 electors less meaning Melksham Without would have 5,241 electors. Keeping a 13 member Council means that there would be an average of 400 electors per member. There were presently two Wards; Shaw & Whitley with 3 members and Bowerhill & Beanacre with 10 members.
- It was noted that due to the transfer of the East of Melksham development to within the Town boundary that the Warding arrangements in the Town would have to be assessed and changes made; and therefore there was the opportunity to request any changes in the Melksham Without parish to be considered by Wiltshire Council at the same time. The Head of Electoral Services, Mr John Watling, had been informed of the Parish Council's request and was happy to receive suggestions of potential Ward changes.
- 500/15 **Proposals for new Ward arrangements:** Members discussed a variety of options, and also discussed the current planning applications in the Parish, and how these could affect the number of houses and electors in the future.

A decision on the planning application for the Land East of Spa Road (**14/06938/OUT**) for 450 houses was being made on Weds 10th February, and with the Planning Officer recommending approval, for the purposes of this Working Party's recommendations it was agreed to proceed on the assumption that this would go forward. Approximately 400 houses from this application would be in the Parish (the remainder in the Town). It was noted that Wiltshire Council use a calculation of 1.8 electors per household so this would yield potentially 720 electors. This gave the option of a new Ward with Woodrow and Sandridge which with 2 members would be over represented before any new houses were built although it was likely that some could be built by the 2017 Election but would be under represented when they were all occupied (this would likely be by the 2021 Election).

There were also two other large planning applications currently under consideration:
 150 houses Land east of Semington Road (**16/00497/OUT** - potentially 270 electors)
 100 houses Land at Sandridge Common (**15/12454/OUT** - potentially 180 electors)

Recommendation: The Parish Council suggest the following new Ward arrangements to Wiltshire Council for consideration.

| Proposed New Ward | Electoral Register | No. of Electors | No. of Members | Representation of Electors per Member |
|--|-----------------------|--|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Shaw, Whitley & Beanacre | FX1 FW1 | 1,330 | 3 | 444 |
| Bowerhill <i>(from A365 to A350 to K&A Canal)</i> | FW4 & FW5 | 2,855 | 6 | 476 |
| Berryfield <i>(West of river to A350, Including Semington Road, Mobile Home Park, Shails Lane)</i> | FW3 (part) | 629 | 2 | 314 |
| <i>Planning Application for Land East of Semington Road</i> | | Potentially <u>270</u> <u>899</u> | | 449 |
| Woodrow & Sandridge + Remainder of FW3 register The Spa, Redstocks) | FW2 FW3 (part) | 281 <u>146</u> <u>427</u> | 2 | 213 |
| <i>Planning Application for Land East of Spa Road</i> | | Potentially <u>720</u> <u>1,147</u> | | 573 |
| <i>Planning Application for Land at Sandridge Common</i> | | Potentially <u>180</u> <u>1,327</u> | | 663 |
| TOTAL | | 5,241 Potentially <u>1,170</u> <u>6,411</u> | 13 | 403 493 |

The members sought guidance on the number of members required per Electors. The Chair, Cllr Baines explained that the 13 member current council sat within the historic guidelines which had wide bandings, but it would be useful to seek the current guidance. ***Recommendation:*** The Clerk seek guidance on the guidelines for numbers of members in a Council.

Meeting closed at 11.15am

Chairman, 15th February, 2016