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Mr John Watling  
Head of Electoral Services  
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County Hall  
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July 2014

Dear Sir,

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW (CGR) 2014

May I place on record my formal objection to the proposal to move parts of Rudloe from the Parish of Box into the Parish of Corsham.

Rudloe currently sits within the Parish of Box, and the proposal to move some almost 450 properties from Box into Corsham represents approximately 30% of the parish of Box; this would bring into question the Viability of Box as a parish. There have been no significant population shifts or additional developments, and there is therefore little justification for making changes to the existing Parish Identity.

This proposal from Corsham has not (apparently) been discussed by the full Corsham Council, and is only an idea from the Planning Committee, which can only be viewed as a 'land grab' in order to offset any review from the East of Corsham by Chippenham and an effort to increase the Corsham Council income; I am informed that the Corsham parish precept is already higher than that in Box.

I have looked at the available evidence, and the justification and there are serious anomalies in the proposal. I have attached a list of the areas which Corsham hold could be resolved by the CGR, and have commented on each of them (my comments in red). If anything, the Western boundary of the Corsham Parish Boundary/Eastern boundary of Box Parish should follow the Bradford Road, which would leave Rudloe as a complete entity, unlike the divisive proposal from Corsham which, unfortunately, reveals a lack of local knowledge about Rudloe; this again weakens the case for Corsham's claims to 'take over' Rudloe.

I would be most grateful if you could ensure that I am informed in advance of the date, time and location of any County Council meetings which will discuss the issue as this is too important an issue to be discussed without full representation from the residents who might be affected by any change.

Thank you for your assistance, and I am happy to discuss further as necessary.

Yours faithfully

Iain Johnston

A Community Governance Review of Corsham could:

Correct parish boundary anomalies through Rudloe and Westwells; **Not correct as the proposal would leave the Rudloe properties on the West side of Leafy Lane in Box, with the East side in Corsham**

Replace the arbitrary parish boundaries which dissect and divide Rudloe housing estate and would avoid people living in different parishes to their neighbours; **Not correct, see above.**

Put in place clearer settlement boundaries and identities for Corsham and Box, based on fixed features which are likely to remain in place for many years. The current proposal follows the established and recognised AONB and A365 as boundaries; **Irrelevant as Wiltshire County Council ignored the AONB when granting planning permission to the Rudloe Hall Hotel a few years ago despite local opposition. The boundary could equally easily be the Bradford Road.**

Facilitate the future sustainable development and expansion of Corsham; **An unsubstantiated statement**

Provide clearer and effective governance of Corsham and Box, with more inclusive participation, representation and leadership; **Speculation, and probably incorrect.**

Offer more efficient, cost effective and convenient delivery of council services at a local level; **this needs to be quantified and specified; eg exactly what services are being proposed to be provided by Corsham?**

Enable a clear and effective Neighbourhood Plan to be produced for Corsham; **this is based on Corsham's perceived requirements without consideration for 'neighbours'.**

Build a stronger, cohesive and more engaged Rudloe community which feels part of one place; **this has not been evidenced in the past, as exemplified by the saga of the Rudloe Community Centre, and also, see para 1 above. Why do Corsham feel the need to build a stronger Rudloe community; it is already a strong community.**

- Improve democracy, electoral accountability and representation with increased elected representation in a new/merged ward; **again, this is an easy statement to make, but what does it actually mean?**
- Update out-of-date historic boundaries which have not been reviewed in over 100 years; **there have been previous opportunities to review the boundaries; this is not the first CGR in the last 100 years, so statement erroneous.**
- Strengthen relationships with MOD Corsham and businesses to the west of Westwells Road, promoting an economically vibrant community; **the (current MOD) area to the West of Westwells Road is annotated for housing development, so will cease to be part of MOD; this statement is misleading, but supports the economic justification for the boundary change, which is not a viable justification for a change.**
- Align the boundary to likely changes in housing and employment land as indicated in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Wiltshire and Swindon Strategic Economic Plan; **this supports the economic motive behind the proposal**
- Bring Corsham Primary School (Broadwood site) into Corsham, where the majority of pupils reside; **I believe this to be incorrect. The majority of pupils live in the Rudloe area on the West side of the Bradford Road.**
- Provide a building block for the unitary council division ward boundaries; **this is purely a council administrative arrangement and does not add to the Corsham/Box case**
- Allow Chippenham parish to have a clearer settlement boundary, using the A350 as a boundary; **this is eminently sensible, but is irrelevant to the Corsham/Box issue.**