



Melksham Town Council

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Cllr Jane Scott OBE
Leader – Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

1 July 2013

Dear Councillor Scott,

Re: Community Governance Review

Melksham Town Council believes that the parish boundary between Melksham Town and Melksham Without Parish Council has become anomalous in the light of recent housing development particularly on land to the east of the town.

Indeed, you may recall that the degree of confusion over the boundary between Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council initially resulted in incorrect tax base figures being provided by Wiltshire Council to the two councils for the purposes of determining the appropriate budget and precept requirement for 2012/2013.

Representations concerning the unsatisfactory Melksham/Melksham Without boundary issue have already been made to Dr Carlton Brand by letter dated 22 February 2012, and his response of 1 March 2012 is attached to this letter for your information.

As you will be aware, the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 devolved the power to take decisions relating to the creation or abolition of parishes; the boundaries of parishes; and the electoral arrangements of parish councils, to principal councils who have the responsibility for undertaking Community Governance Reviews and deciding whether to implement any recommendations made in those reviews.

The Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in 2010 by The Local Government Boundary Commission on behalf of the DCLG recognises that making changes to the boundaries of existing parishes will ensure that community governance arrangements continue to reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government. The Guidance recognises that over time communities may expand with new housing developments which can often lead to existing parish boundaries becoming anomalous as new houses are built across the boundaries resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours. In such circumstances, it is suggested that the council should consider undertaking a community governance review, the terms

of reference of which should include consideration of the boundaries of existing parishes in order to put in place strong, clearly defined boundaries, tied to firm ground features.

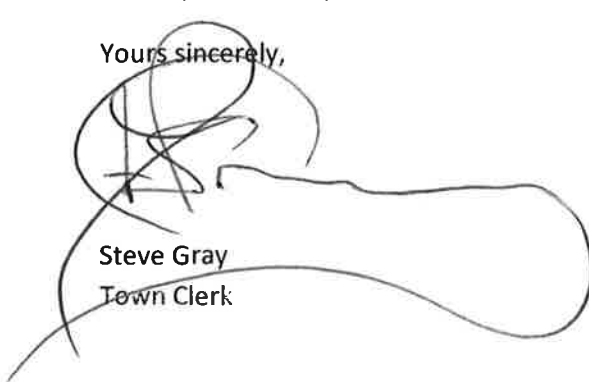
At Melksham Town Council's Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 24 June 2013, Councillors reaffirmed their belief that the Melksham town boundary had become anomalous in the light of recent housing development and sought to impress upon Wiltshire Council the urgent need to undertake a Community Governance Review that would encompass and address this situation. In that vein, Melksham Town Council passed the following resolution:

Further to the commitment made by Wiltshire Council that following the 2013 elections it would reconsider the issue of Community Governance Reviews to ensure that existing developments are allocated to the most appropriate parish, town or city council and that boundaries therefore better relate to a sense of place and community, could Wiltshire Council confirm to Melksham Town Council how it intends to take forward that commitment?

Melksham Town Council would be grateful for, and looks forward to, your response in due course.

Thank you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,



Steve Gray
Town Clerk

1 March 2012

County Hall
Bythesea Road
TROWBRIDGE
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Mr S Gray
Town Clerk
Melksham Town Council
Town Hall
Melksham
Wiltshire
SN12 6ES

Dear Mr Gray

Thank you for your letter of 22 February regarding the boundary between Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council.

I have forwarded your letter to John Watling, Head of Electoral Services. John will contact you directly to discuss this further.

We recognise that there is a degree of uncertainty about boundaries as there has been a lot of development on the boundaries between four of the parish wards. John and his team will be happy to go through this with you.

However, I understand that any alteration to boundaries will require a governance review and Council agreed that any such reviews would take place after the 2013 elections.

I hope that this is helpful.

I will ask John to contact you to discuss your concerns. In the meantime, if you would like more information please contact him on 01249 706599 or by email john.watling@wiltshire.gov.uk

Yours sincerely



Dr Carlton Brand
Corporate Director