

**THESE MINUTES WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE NEXT MEETING OF COUNCIL  
ON 8 NOVEMBER 2006 FOR APPROVAL AS A CORRECT RECORD.**

**WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the: **WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Held on: **WEDNESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2006**

Held at: **COUNCIL OFFICES, BRADLEY ROAD, TROWBRIDGE**

Present: Councillors Batchelor (Chairman), Baker, Blakemore, Brown, Bryant, Burnan OBE, Carbin, Chivers, Clark, J Clegg, M Clegg, Conley, Content, Cox, Cunliffe-Jones, Davis, Farkas, Fortescue, Hames, James, Knight, Lewis, Lovell, Manasseh, March, Mounde, Oakman, Oldrieve, Payne, Phillips OBE, Rosier, Swabey, Viles, and While

Officers: Chief Executive (AP), Head of Legal & Democratic Services (NM), Member Support Officers (MS & PS)

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**93. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Barker, Brice, Mudge, Newbury, Osborn and Repton.

**94. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest

**95. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE**

In September 2006 the Boundary Committee published its final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for West Wiltshire.

Following a request the Chairman had called an extraordinary meeting of Council to discuss these final recommendations and to consider what the Council's response should be.

Cllr Hames put forward the following proposal for discussion:

'This Council notes the final recommendations of the Boundary Committee for England for West Wiltshire.

Council believes it to be a hurried report, which has not adequately considered the alternatives, it fails to address the concerns of residents and local councils

as set out in their responses to the Boundary Committee draft recommendations put to public consultation.

Council believes that the introduction of new boundaries before next May's election is not so urgent or overwhelming a consideration as to justify proceeding with boundary proposals which are the subject of so much public opposition on account of their unacceptably poor recognition of community identities.

Council considers that the costs of a full legal challenge to the recommendations to be undesirable to the Council and local council tax payers.'

A discussion ensued during which the following points were put forward:

- It was felt that the February 2006 report was poor and that in the following six months the Boundary Committee had failed to consider any other proposals which had been put forward.
- It was a bureaucratic exercise – the division of urban wards was not well thought out.
- The Boundary Committee should consider the proposals from Trowbridge Town Council which show more imagination and are worthy of putting forward.
- If the Boundary Committee rejected tonight's recommendation then it should leave the wards as they were in 2003 and have another review after the May 2007 election.
- Westbury Ham has 37% more electorate than the mean. The Councillors workload is large and they will consider not standing unless changes are made to adjust this discrepancy.
- The mixing of rural and urban communities together doesn't work.
- In North Bradley and Southwick 220 people had objected to being part of Trowbridge but this was still ignored, this emphasised the Boundary Committee's resistance to any suggestions made.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the proposal set out above be accepted and that Council writes to the Boundary Committee before 24 October 2006, urging them most strongly to return to consultation on recommendations based around this Council's preference for the alternative district-wide schemes submitted to the Boundary Committee during their periods of formal consultation.**

**The letter should draw upon the arguments set out by Trowbridge Town Council which maintains the unity of communities whilst preserving their respective urban and rural identities.**

Note: Recorded Vote

The above decision was the subject of a recorded vote, which was recorded as follows:

**For the resolution (24)**

Cllrs Baker, Blakemore, Brown, Bryant, Burnan OBE, Chivers, Clark, Content, Cunliffe-Jones, Davis, Farkas, Hames, James, Knight, Lewis, Lovell, March, Mounde, Oldrieve, Payne, Phillips, Swabey, While and Batchelor.

**Against the resolution (2)**

Cllrs J Clegg and M Clegg

**Abstentions (5)**

Cllrs Conley, Cox, Fortescue, Rosier and Viles

These minutes were prepared by Pam Sidgwick, Member Support Officer who can be contacted on direct telephone line 01225 770322 or email

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(7.00pm – 8.07pm)