

## **Meeting: Proposed Borough Ward Changes**

**Troston Village Hall 15.00 19th March 2018**

### **Present:**

Joanna Spicer (Suffolk County Council) Simon Brown (Pakenham & Troston Ward), Andrew Smith (Honington & Bardwell Ward), Rob Williams (Honington & Sapiston Parish Council), Graeme Norris and Roger Anderson (Troston Parish Council), Diana Saunders (RAF Honington Community Support Officer).

### **Creation of Single District Council:**

In February 2018, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed that he is going to start the legislative process in Parliament to create a single District Council for West Suffolk.

If Parliament approves the orders then a new set of wards will need to be created before the first elections May in 2019.

Initial options for the new ward boundaries have been proposed. The aim is that each councillor represents roughly the same number of voters (give or take 10% from the average).

### **Problem:**

The proposed boundary changes for the new West Suffolk cut RAF Honington in two halves **again**. The northern part in the civil parish of Honington (about 400 voters) going in a new ward with Bardwell and Honington village and the southern part (about 260 voters) in the civil parish of Troston staying in the Pakenham ward.

### **RAF View:**

This reverses the very sensible changes made about 15 years ago by the Boundary Commission and the Borough to keep the "camp" as one – and splits the camp right down the centre. The Commander of the RAF Base, Wing Commander David Tait, wanted it to be clear he believed it was important for the camp to be regarded as one entity. It would seem that those councillors involved in this new proposal either disregarded the view of the 2015/16 consultation or thought they were putting the camp back with Honington village not realising they were actually leaving a split at the camp.

**Parish Views:**

Troston Parish Council discussed the matter on the 5th March and did not support either Option A or B being proposed. Councillors believe the existing Ward Boundary is a better option as it regards the Camp as one entity.

Honington Parish Council met 12th March and also do not support the proposed change. They will be writing to the Borough to say that the RAF station should in their view be all in the Pakenham/Troston ward and not split between two borough councillors.

**County & Borough Councillors' Views:**

The existing boundary kept the married quarters on the camp together and was within SEBC numbers commitment and plan.

**Conclusion:**

The meeting unanimously agreed that neither Option A or B kept the camp together as one entity - and therefore, we did not support the proposed new boundary.

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