



INCREASE IN NUMBERS ON ELLINGHAM, HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

In October the District Council asked for your views, as parish residents, on the Parish Council's request to increase the number of parish councillors from 8 to 10. If agreed, the increase will take effect from the May 2015 elections.

New Forest District Council may vary the size of parish councils after following certain statutory requirements. These include consulting local residents who are eligible to vote (electors) on two occasions – firstly, on the Parish Council's initial request, and, secondly, when the District Council has agreed draft proposals.

Initially, the District Council had reservations about the need for more members. By law, parish councils must have at least 5 councillors, but, other than this minimum, there are no statutory or recommended numbers. Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley has 955 electors. Typically, across the country, parish councils with 501 – 2,500 electors have between 6 and 12 councillors. Within New Forest District, parishes with 501 – 2,500 electors have between 7 and 10 councillors, with those parishes with larger electorates tending to have more councillors. Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley Parish Council does not have more duties or responsibilities than other parish councils with comparable electorates and which operate successfully with fewer councillors.

The District Council was advised that a number of residents had expressed interest in serving on the Parish Council. While welcoming this interest, district councillors were concerned that the current enthusiasm would not continue and that the Parish Council might in future find it difficult to fill all the places on the council. However, the District Council agreed to consult residents on the Parish Council's request in order to assess local views.

Responses and the District Council's draft proposals

Thirteen responses (1.57% of the electorate) were received from residents to the first consultation. Eleven were in favour and two were against the proposed increase. In light of these responses, the District Council now proposes that the Parish Council's request to increase the number of parish councillors from 8 to 10 should be agreed.

Tell us what you think:

Please send us your views on these draft proposals by e-mail or letter to arrive not later than Friday 19 December 2014 to:

rosemary.rutins@nfdc.gov.uk

or

Rosemary Rutins

New Forest District Council

Appletree Court
Beaulieu Road
Lyndhurst
SO43 7PA

Telephone: (023) 8028 5588 (ask for Rosemary Rutins)

Next steps:

Responses to this consultation will be submitted to the District Council's General Purposes and Licensing Committee on 16 January 2015 and to the full Council on 23 February 2015. If the Council agrees to increase the numbers on the Parish Council, the change will take effect from the May 2015 elections.