SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 30 SEPTEMBER 2015

REPORT OF THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE

The Boundary Committee met on two occasions the mornings of Monday 3rd August 2015 and Thursday 27th August 2015

On Monday 3rd August 2015 the Boundary Committee considered the matter set out below:

1. **Electoral Review of Lancashire County Council**

   The committee received a letter from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England concerning an electoral review of Lancashire County Council. An initial ten week consultation period had commenced and the commission had invited proposals for the new electoral division arrangements. The deadline for submissions was 31 August 2015.

   The letter stated that the commission was minded to recommend that 84 councillors should continue to represent Lancashire. This would mean that South Ribble would continue to have eight councillors. As the overall electorate for Lancashire in 2021 was anticipated to be 930,978 and therefore each councillor would represent approximately 11,083 electors.

   However, the Democratic Services Manager suggested that it would be more appropriate to use the anticipated electorate for South Ribble of 92,911 which would mean that there would be approximately 11,614 electors per councillor.

   The committee discussed the options available within South Ribble and the difficulty of ensuring that communities would not be divided. Two proposals were provided to the committee. The first was from the Labour Group and the second was from the officers at Lancashire County Council. Both proposals were completely different but followed the boundaries of existing polling districts as was thought to have been required. But because of trying to reach the electorate required, there was no option but to split some communities.

   Councillor M A Green stated that he had received information from Lancashire County Council the day before the meeting which indicated that polling districts could be split if necessary. The committee agreed that this would be helpful and asked if officers could clarify this as it would help significantly in ensuring that communities were not split.

   The Chairman suggested that it would make more sense for Lancashire to be considered as a whole rather than looking at each borough individually and having to keep the divisions within each borough boundary.

   The committee also discussed the possibility of creating two or even three member divisions. They were informed that other counties did have multiple member divisions, but traditionally Lancashire had only had single ones.

   It was decided:

   1. That officers clarify if polling districts could be split as this would significantly help in ensuring that communities were not divided.

   2. That officers clarify if proposals could include two or three member divisions.

On Thursday 27ᵗʰ August 2015 the Boundary Committee considered the matter set out below:

2. Electoral Review of Lancashire County Council

The Leader of the Councillor introduced this item which was to consider the Councils response to the Local Government Boundary Commissions consultation on the Electoral Divisions of Lancashire County Council.

The Committee expressed concern at the tight timetable and the limited amount of time that the Council had to put forward proposals.

The Committee noted the report and proposals that were to be considered at the forthcoming Lancashire County Council meeting which proposed two options for South Ribble.

Councillor Tomlinson confirmed that the proposal South Ribble 2 which proposed a three member ward for Leyland and Farington would be withdrawn at the Lancashire County Council meeting.

He also confirmed that the Labour Group at County Council would support the proposal South Ribble 1.

Councillor Tomlinson informed the Committee that he and Councillor Michael Green had met together and as a result he had produced a proposal based on these discussions which he then described.

Councillor Michael Green informed the Committee that he had worked up three separate proposals. One based on two member wards as suggested at the last meeting and two other options.

Members agreed not to pursue the two member option as it was felt that it did not lead to a better reflection of existing communities because of the geographical size of the resulting divisions.

Councillor Michael Green explained in detail the other two options

The meeting adjourned at 12.00pm for a map of Councillor Matthew Tomlinson's proposals to be prepared.

The meeting reconvened at 12.08pm

Councillor Matthew Tomlinson explained the proposal named "South Ribble version 1" which met the Local Government Boundary Commissions criteria for electoral equality, provided an alternative pattern that better reflected the existing communities, avoided the need to split polling districts and retained intact more of this Council's newly created Wards than the South Ribble: Political Governance Working Group Proposal 1.

They also noted that the "South Ribble version 1" proposal produced a better average variance than South Ribble: Political Governance Working Group Proposal 1.

Following an in depth study of the proposed "South Ribble version 1" the Committee agreed to support this proposal for submission to the Boundary Commission.

It was decided that, following consideration of the proposed "South Ribble version 1" as shown on attached plan, the Boundary Committee adopt this proposal as the Council's preferred pattern for the County Divisions in South Ribble Borough Council and therefore recommend this proposal to the Commission.

3. **Forthcoming Meetings**

The Committee were informed that the next stage of the process would the Draft Recommendations Consultation 17 November 2015 – 11 January 2016 when the Council would have the opportunity to consider the Local Government Boundary Commissions draft recommendations.

It was decided that the next meeting be arranged for 4.00pm on Wednesday 18 November 2015.

I hereby commend the report of the Boundary Committee to the Council.

COUNCILLOR MRS MARGARET SMITH

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE