

COUNCIL

22 November 2011

- Present:-** The Worshipful the Mayor
(Councillor Trevor Hambleton in the Chair)
- Councillors Allport, Mrs Astle, Bailey, Bannister, Becket, Mrs Beech, Blair, Boden, Mrs Burke, Mrs Burnett, Cairns, Clarke D, Clarke M R, Cooper, Miss Cooper, Mrs Cornes, Eagles, Fear, Gilmore, Mrs Hailstones, Hailstones, Mrs Hambleton, Mrs Heames, Mrs Heesom, Holland, Howells, Mrs Johnson, Jones, Kearon, Lawton, Mrs Lewis, Loades, Matthews, Nixon, Olzewski, Miss Olzewski, Miss Reddish, Richards, Robinson, Mrs Shenton, Mrs Simpson, Slater, Snell, Studd, Sweeney, Tagg J H, Tagg S J, Taylor K-N, Miss Walklate, Waring, Welsh, Wilkes, Mrs Williams and Williams

320. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

321. **RESPONSE TO THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS IN RELATION TO THE PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY OF NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME**

Further to Standing Order 5(2), five members of the Council had called an Extraordinary Meeting to consider alternative proposals to those put forward by the Boundary Commission for the Parliamentary Constituency of Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Councillor Snell proposed the motion and it was seconded by Councillor Becket.

The Borough of Newcastle under Lyme was already divided along four parliamentary boundaries (Stoke North, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire Moorlands and Stone). The original proposal from the Boundary Commission sought to divide the Borough into two parliamentary constituencies; Newcastle under Lyme and Stone; and Kidsgrove and Tunstall. The substantive motion put forward also proposed that there be two parliamentary constituencies of Stoke on Trent North and Newcastle under Lyme. Newcastle under Lyme parliamentary constituency would include all of the Borough Wards except for Newchapel, Kidsgrove, Butt Lane, Talke and Ravenscliffe which would form part of the Stoke North Constituency.

An amendment to the substantive motion was presented to the Council. The amendment also split the Borough into two constituencies but with Porthill and Bradwell included in the Newcastle and Stone Constituency and Silverdale and Parksit; and Knutton and Silverdale included in the renamed Newcastle North and Tunstall Constituency.

The question was raised as to whether changes to the parliamentary boundaries would actually have an effect on the nature of the Borough. The Mayor stated that based on the feedback he had received from constituents the proposed changes were not wanted.

Members agreed that there was a requirement to ensure equalisation of constituencies in terms of voters. Some Members raised concerns that the substantive motion put forward would have a knock on effect on other areas such as Staffordshire Moorlands but other Members considered that this was inevitable if the way in which communities actually worked was to be taken into consideration. The amendment to the substantive motion would not have a knock on affect on neighbouring areas.

Councillor Robinson stated that many of his constituents felt they had more affinity with wards such as Biddulph and as such would be in favour of the original substantive motion.

A named vote was taken on the amendment to the substantive motion:

In favour: 18

Councillors Bannister, Mrs Burke, Cooper, Miss Cooper, Fear, Gilmore, Mrs Hailstones, Hailstones, Mrs Heames, Mrs Heesom, Holland, Howells, Loades, Matthews, Slater, Sweeney, J Tagg, S Tagg.

Against: 30

Councillors Allport, Mrs Astle, Bailey, Mrs Bates, Becket, Mrs Beech, Boden, Cairns, D Clarke, M Clarke, Mrs Cornes, Snell, Miss Walklate, Welsh, Mrs Williams, Williams, Wilkes, Eagles, Mrs Hambleton, Mrs Johnson, Jones, Kearon, Lawton, Nixon, Olszewski, Reddish, Richards, Robinson, Mrs Shenton, Mrs Simpson.

There were no abstentions.

The Council returned to discussions on the substantive motion and again considered whether it was better to approach the proposals with a broad sweep or to try and make any changes as minimal as possible. Councillor Jones considered that the approach taken regarding the substantive motion started from the situation as it currently existed and that this was the better way to proceed rather than to use the proposals from the Boundary Commission as a starting point. The point was emphasised that any proposal needed to highlight the need for an MP and their community to have a real link and that the petitions signed by constituents against the Boundary Commission proposal needed to be considered as a factor. It was however considered by some members inevitable that surrounding areas would be affected and some community links severed.

A named vote was taken regarding the substantive motion.

In favour: 31

Councillors Allport, Mrs Astle, Bailey, Mrs Bates, Becket, Mrs Beech, Boden, Cairns, D Clarke, M Clarke, Mrs Cornes, Eagles, Mrs Hambleton, Mrs Johnson, Jones, Kearon, Lawton, Nixon, Olszewski, Miss Reddish, Richards, Robinson, Mrs Shenton, Mrs Simpson, Snell, Miss Walklate, Welsh, Wilkes, Mrs Williams, Williams, Hambleton.

There were no votes against.

Abstained: 18

Councillors Bannister, Mrs Burke, Cooper, Miss Cooper, Fear, Gilmore, Mrs Hailstones, Hailstones, Mrs Heames, Mrs Heesom, Holland, Howells, Sweeney, J Tagg, S Tagg, Loades, Matthews, Slater.

T HAMBLETON
Chair