

SHOTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr R Wrinch, Hill House, Wades Lane, Shotley, Ipswich IP9 1EW



Please address all correspondence to the clerk:

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Review Manager
(Norfolk/Suffolk Review)
The Boundary Committee for England
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW

29 September 2008

Your ref:

Our Ref:

e-mailed to: reviews@boundarycommittee.org.uk

Dear Sir

The Boundary Committee's Draft Proposals for the future of Local Government in Suffolk

We write in response to the Boundary Committee's ("BC") Draft Proposals issued in July of this year.

Shotley Parish Council ("Council") have discussed at length the two options put forward by the BC and have also held a public consultation meeting at which representatives from the Borough, District and County Councils were in attendance. The Council's views are as follows:

Unitary Option

- It was felt that Shotley would be better served by the preferred option of a two unitary authority ("UA") set up for Suffolk.
- The majority of councillors support Babergh District Council's ("BDC") suggestion that the North Haven UA be expanded on its western boundary to encompass certainly Hadleigh so as to balance out the rural and urban population
- A minority supported a further expanded western boundary to include Hadleigh's hinterland
- Residents of Shotley identified more closely with Ipswich as it is used by them for their social, shopping and educational needs and also provided many with employment.
- It was assumed that Ipswich would be the administration centre and that this would be more beneficial to the Peninsula because of its proximity.
- Should neither of the options put forward by the BC receive sufficient support to go forward, the Council's preferred "fallback" position would be an earlier suggestion of BDC's of an East/West split of Suffolk with Shotley to be included in the Eastern area along with Ipswich and Felixstowe etc.

Name of Unitary Authority

- It was felt that "North Haven" was not representative and did not reflect the history of the local area.
- It was also felt that "Ipswich" should not be featured in any name finally selected.

- A possible suggestion for consideration was “Orwell Unitary Council” as the river runs through the centre of the area outlined.

Community Forums/Neighbourhood Boards/Area Committees (“Forums”)

- Although some information had been forthcoming on Forums from various sources, it was felt that more was needed before the Council could comment on how they saw themselves getting involved and what might work best for our area.
- The Council did feel however that the Forums be based on existing parish boundaries.

Constituency

- The Council feels that any reshuffle of wards should be based on existing parish boundaries and make geographic sense.
- At present we have two councillors covering the Berners Ward with approximately 3000+ constituents – a ratio of 1:1500. We understand that a constituency is to likely to be in the region of 1:5000 which would effectively leave constituents partly disenfranchised and the councillors representing the wards considerably overstretched.

Lowestoft

It was felt that Lowestoft was best placed to decide as to their placement with either a Suffolk or Norfolk Unitary and the Council supported whatever decision they made.

Planning developments

The Council considered the Committee’s view that “planning developments taking place in the Shotley peninsular” will have a strong focus on Ipswich. We have assumed that the developments are the HMS Ganges site and the redevelopment of the Brantham industrial area. In respect of the HMS Ganges site a proposed residential development was recently rejected by the Planning Inspectorate who found the proposal to be unsustainable. We are not aware that any application for the Brantham site has been submitted. However, a planning guidance statement has been prepared which states that a mixed use development is the preferred sustainable solution for the site. Rather than these two sites looking to Ipswich for services the new unitary authority should be looking to opportunities on the peninsula to improve sustainability, protect and enhance the special protection and conservation areas and improve access for recreation for the urban population. This would bring important balance in the new unitary area.

Timescale

The Council believe that insufficient time had been allowed for consultation on the financial costings and therefore feels unable to comment.

Yours faithfully

Linda Rowlands
Parish Clerk