

Saint Anne's on the Sea Town Council Steering Group



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The Rt. Hon. N. Raynsford, M.P.
Local Government Minister
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

4 February, 2005

Dear Mr Raynsford,

As you will be aware, on the 29th July 2004, The Fylde (Parish) Order 2004 was made creating the new parish of Saint Anne's on the Sea with effect from 1st April 2005. This was the culmination of considerable hard work by the Town Council Steering Group on behalf of the people of the town and a petition submitted under section 11 of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997.

Members of the Steering Group believe that Fylde Borough Council, having failed in its statutory duties under sections 12(2), 12(6) and 12(7) of the Act, and following totally inadequate public 'consultation', is now attempting to pervert the democratic process by making an Order to create the parish council which will provide unequal and inappropriate representation by proposing a total of seven councillors to represent 21,500 electors, or approximately one councillor for every 3000 electors. However, the corresponding warding arrangements mean that some councillors would represent 1,200 electors while others would represent 3,600, an obvious inequality.

Fylde Borough Council are proposing to make that Order at a special meeting of the Executive Committee on Tuesday 8th February 2005 and we are calling on you to use the powers vested in your Office to prevent Fylde Borough Council from making such an Order.

The Steering Group has submitted counter proposals for the electoral arrangements for the new parish both to Fylde Borough Council, prior to the Fylde (Parish) Order 2004 being made, and also to the Boundary Committee for England in December 2004. These proposed a total of eighteen councillors in seven wards across the parish giving roughly equal representation of one councillor to every 1,200 electors. This is on a par with the current District ward representation. Even the transitional arrangements provided for in The Fylde (Parish) Order 2004 allow for 21 councillors to represent the electorate across the seven wards.

The Steering Group is of the opinion that, by minimising the number of councillors in the new parish, it is the Fylde Borough Council intention to severely limit any influence that the parish council may potentially have on the manner in which Fylde Borough Council conducts business across the Fylde in the future.

It is the Steering Group's belief that the Electoral Commission is the correct body to make the Order creating the parish council and we further believe that in making that Order, they would correctly and impartially, evaluate the electoral representation that

most adequately reflects the needs of the electors within the new parish. It is for this reason that we request the Secretary of State to prevent Fylde Borough Council from making an Order and to direct the Electoral Commission to do so in order that the election of parish councillors can take place at the earliest possible opportunity.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Bainbridge', with a small dot at the end.

John Bainbridge
Secretary