

PROPOSED INCREASE IN NUMBERS ON SWAY PARISH COUNCIL – CONSULTATION FROM NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

This article has been prepared by New Forest District Council to consult Sway Parish residents on the Parish Council's request to increase numbers on the Council from 8 to 11.

Background:

The District Council has power to vary the size of parish councils after following certain statutory requirements, which include consulting with local government electors for the area concerned. This article has been prepared to meet the requirement to consult.

The issue:

The Parish Council has requested that its numbers be increased from 8 to 11. By law, parish councils must have at least 5 councillors, but other than this minimum, there are no statutory or recommended sizes for parish councils. National averages are:

- 501 – 2,500 electors – between 6 and 12 councillors
- 2,501 – 10,000 electors – between 9 and 16 councillors

Sway has approximately 2,900 electors, so the District Council's preliminary view is that the request to increase the number of councillors to 11 appears reasonable.

In making its request, the Parish Council has said that it wishes the increase because:

- The Parish Council has become more active in the recent past and has changed its operational structure to meet increasing demands;
- A new Planning and Transport Committee and an Amenities Working Group have been established, both of which meet monthly. These are part of the process of the Council becoming more open and transparent. The Council is also looking to introduce a Finance or Policy Committee which will also meet monthly. The Council needs to increase its numbers to allow the workload to be spread over a larger base and to ensure that councillors have the time to involve themselves in the detail of issues, rather than merely carrying out an overview role.
- The Council is also becoming more involved in developing community facilities, with increased pressure on the relatively small number of councillors to cover the workload.

If a change is made, it will take effect from the May 2015 four-yearly elections.

Your views:

If you have any views on the proposal that you wish to make known to the District Council, please e-mail rosemary.rutins@nfdc.gov.uk or write to:

Mrs Rosemary Rutins
New Forest District Council
Appletree Court
Beaulieu Road
Lyndhurst
SO43 7PA

Your responses should be received by **Friday 29 November 2013**.

What will happen next:

The District Council will consider the responses to this consultation and will publish draft recommendations. These will appear on the District Council's website – www.nfdc.gov.uk The District Council then has to consult on the draft recommendations, consider any representations received, publish its final recommendations and, if it agrees an increase, make an order formally to increase the size of Sway Parish Council.

Further information:

If you would like any further information about the process for the review, please contact Rosemary Rutins at the addresses above, or telephone her on (023) 8028 5588.

If you would like further information from the Parish Council, please contact the Parish Clerk, Neil Gulliver, at the Parish Office, Jubilee Field Pavilion (Mon-Thurs am); telephone him on 01590 718116 or email neilgulliver@btinternet.com