

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

The November issue of “Sway News” included an article consulting local people on a request from Sway Parish Council to increase the number of members on the Council from 8 to 11. A small number of responses was received, with both support for and opposition to the proposal, and a view that the number should be increased to 12 instead of 11.

The District Council has considered the responses and, in the light of the fact that electors have not expressed a clear preference, has decided at this stage to proceed with the Parish Council’s initial proposals to increase the numbers from 8 to 11. The law requires the District Council to consult further on what are now its draft proposals, so the further views of Sway electors are requested.

### **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.

In making its original request for an increase from 8 to 11, the Parish Council said that:

- It had become more active and had changed its operational structure to meet increasing demands;
- A new Planning and Transport Committee and an Amenities Working Group had been established, both of which meet monthly. The Council was also looking to introduce a Finance or Policy Committee which would also meet monthly. The Council needed to increase its numbers to allow the workload to be spread over a larger base and to ensure that councillors had the time to involve themselves in the detail of issues, rather than merely carrying out an overview role.
- The Council was also becoming more involved in developing community facilities, with increased pressure on the relatively small number of councillors.

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. Sway has 2,900 electors. National average sizes of parish councils are:

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

### **Your views on the draft proposals:**

If you have any views on the District Council’s draft proposals for increasing the numbers on the parish council from 8 to 11 that you wish to make known to the District Council, please e-mail [rosemary.rutins@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto: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 **Wednesday 26 February 2014**.

**What will happen next:**

The District Council will consider the responses to this consultation and will then publish final recommendations. These will appear on the District Council's website – [www.nfdc.gov.uk](http://www.nfdc.gov.uk) If an increase in the size of the Parish Council is agreed, the change will take effect from the four-yearly elections in May 2015.

**Further information:**

If you would like any further information about 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 [clerk@sway-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@sway-pc.gov.uk)