



27th August 2010

Dear Jessica,

Electoral Review – Hartlepool Borough Council

The issue of the above review was discussed at the meeting of Elwick Parish Council on Monday 26th July and the Parish Council came to the following view.

The Council recognised that it did not have the knowledge or expertise to express more than a general view about the total number of Borough Councillors. There was a view that, with the introduction of a mayoral system some years ago, perhaps this should be recognised by an overall reduction in the total numbers of councillors.

However, on the more specific issue of the Elwick Ward, Members were adamant that the rural character of the ward must be maintained. Members did recognise that, as one of only two wards in the Borough represented by a single councillor, we were at a distinct disadvantage should the incumbent become absent for whatever reason. This is no reflection on the abilities of the current councillor but a view made from experience when our previous councillor became seriously ill.

We recognise that one of the main aims of the Commission is to create as far as possible equality of representation and that to simply increase our ward councillors would have the opposite effect. Consequently, any solution would have to involve a revision of the boundaries of the ward. To maintain a ‘villages’ ward but increase the numbers of electors to a size whereby an additional councillor could be justified would only be possible if additional rural areas were brought into the Elwick Ward. We appreciate that this is an issue for the second stage of the review but felt it was worth making the point at this stage since we feel the issues are connected. Indeed, we were somewhat at a loss to understand how you could come to a view on the one question without addressing the other.

I trust the above is of use to the Commission. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Chris Banks

(Chairman)