

Members are requested to CONSIDER the proposed response to potential boundary changes.

Update

At the Wiltshire Council Electoral Review Committee (ERC) meeting on 26 March, the following proposal was made:

- To recommend transfer of land around Common Platt to be transferred to Purton.

At the Parish Council meeting on 23 April, it was agreed to respond to this proposal in advance of the next ERC meeting.

Proposed Response

Lydiard Millicent Parish Council (LMPC) has concerns regarding the proposal to transfer land around Common Platt from our parish into Purton parish for a number of reasons.

Lydiard Millicent parish is a long, narrow parish, that incorporates numerous, disparate settlements. The Council has representation from across the parish, including a councillor who lives in Common Platt, and we work hard to ensure that we act on behalf of the whole parish, rather than just the central settlements.

Residents from Common Platt have benefited from the following recent LMPC initiatives:

1. We have undertaken work with residents, Taylor Wimpey (who had built houses in the area) and the Wiltshire Council drainage team to address long term flooding issues around Common Platt. This has been a problem for nearly 10 years, and has been exacerbated because the area sits on the boundary between Purton and Lydiard Millicent, and between Wiltshire and Swindon, but, as a result of our initiative, there was no flooding there last winter.
2. We have worked with LHFIFG to improve road safety on Common Platt. This has resulted in a substantive bid that is due to be implemented in June of this year (LHFIFG ref 11-23-08). LMPC has contributed £2,318 to these works, but Purton Parish Council opted to make no contribution, despite the fact that the work is on the boundary between the two parishes.
3. We have investigated options for installing defibrillators in the area. We have come to an agreement with Toomers Garden Centre, on Stone Lane, to re-site their defibrillator so that it is available 24x7, and are looking the possibility of installing another on Common Platt itself. This initiative was triggered by a concerned resident who highlighted the lack of defibrillators in the area; there is only one defibrillator on all of Ridgeway Farm, despite its size, and that is located at the school so is only available during school hours. We tried to pursue this as a joint initiative with Purton Parish Council but have not been able to get any traction.

LMPC is a very active council, with a full complement of councillors, and, because we have a relatively small parish, we are able to focus on residents' requirements in a way that larger councils, such as Purton, would not be able to do. The attached PDF of our latest newsletter gives some more information on items 1 and 2 described above, along with a flavour of the work that we do. It's worth noting that our newsletters are produced and distributed on a voluntary basis, which reflects the level of involvement with the community.

As a result, we believe that the residents in the area around Common Platt would not benefit at all from the proposed transfer, and in fact it is likely to have a negative impact on them.

Conversely, because we are a relatively small parish, the proposed boundary change is likely to result in a 5 – 10% decrease in our precept, meaning that we would have to increase charges or look at changes such as staff cuts to address the issue.

Taking all of these points into consideration, LMPC believes that the proposed change would have a negative impact on all residents in the parish, so respectfully asks the ERC to reconsider this proposal, and leave the boundaries between the parishes of Lydiard Millicent and Purton as they are. We would be very happy to meet to discuss this further if required.

Recommendation

Members are requested to CONSIDER the draft response, and discuss any changes required prior to submission to the ERC.