



Parish Briefing on the new Northstone, Ivelchester, St Michaels Ward

To the Parishes of:-

Barton St David, The Charltons, Keinton Mandeville, Kingsdon, Kingweston,

Chilton Cantelo, Ilchester, Limmington, Mudford, Yeovilton

Chilthorne Domer, Montacute, Tintinhull

In May 2017 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) commenced a review of South Somerset's electoral arrangements. This electoral review was carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in South Somerset are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the district

The first part of the review concluded that the Council should retain 60 Councillors as the electorate forecasts projected 5 years ahead suggested that the councillor:elector ratio would increase from 2,196 electors at present to 2,290 in 2023.

The second part of the review was to invite proposals on a warding pattern to accommodate 60 Councillors. Submissions were made by the Liberal Democrat group, the Conservative group, an officers submission, individual District Councillors, Parish and Town Councils and local residents. In January 2018, the Boundary Commission published their draft recommendations based on these submissions and invited comments on them.

Following the consultation period, in May 2018, the Boundary Commission published their final conclusions. In these final conclusions, several Ward boundaries had changed and some Wards had been amalgamated. **A new three member Ward of Northstone / Ivelchester / St Michael's (NIST) has been created.**

This newly proposed Ward of Northstone / Ivelchester / St Michaels (NIST) had not been considered previously in the consultation process and as such, had not been consulted upon. Both officers and Councillors questioned this and the Boundary Commission response was:-

"While geographically large, this ward will be well connected throughout by the A303 and A37. We acknowledge that some of the communities within this ward may feel that they have little in common. However, we will always endeavour to keep communities together and avoid splitting any parishes wherever possible. The Commission will, on occasion, place seemingly disparate communities within the same ward if necessary to achieve what we consider to be the best balance of our statutory criteria. The only other

option would have been to create smaller district wards but divide parishes between them in order to secure good electoral equality.

Our proposals now largely follow as requested by the submissions received, the existing Ward Boundaries for Cary, Camelot, Blackmore Vale and Milborne Port. We acknowledge that our recommendations have brought together the existing Wards of Northstone, Ivelchester and St Michael's into a single ward, but, we have retained the wider external boundary lines for this area subject to a minor alteration in the south west which reunites the parish of Stoke-sub-Hamdon into a single ward”

Therefore, at the District Councillor elections on 2nd May 2019, the electors in your parishes will be asked to vote for 3 candidates for the new Northstone, Ivelchester, St Michaels Ward.

This will not affect your Parish Council elections which are happening on the same day but it does mean you will be represented by 3 District Councillors from May 2019 rather than one as at present.

This also has some further implications for the parishes of Chilthorne Domer, Montacute and Tintinhull. Because of the Area working system operated by SSDC, it has been agreed that any grant and planning applications in these parishes which are referred to Area Committee for determination will be referred to the Area East Committee (rather than the Area North Committee). Currently, the Area East Committee meet on the second Wednesday of each month in Wincanton, starting at 9.00am.

The current Chairman of this Committee, Councillor Nick Weeks, would be very happy to meet you to discuss any issues which you feel this may pose to your parishes.

I would be very grateful if you could bring this proposed change to the attention of your local residents.

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