



Electoral Services
Dorset Council
County Hall
Colliton Park
Dorchester
Dorset DT1 1XJ.

25th October 2021

Dear Sir / Madam,

I understand that Bridport Town Council wish to take over responsibility for Bradpole Parish and, in this matter, it is Dorset Council which will decide the outcome. As a resident of the Parish, it is my opinion that this proposal should be rejected.

Having considered the views expressed by members of Bridport Town Council it is only of advantage to them and is nothing short of an opportunist grab for power, land and finances. I am not aware of any substantial desire amongst the residents of Bradpole to become a part of Bridport Town and friends in Allington and Bothenhampton and Nalditch Parishes, which are also the subjects of take over, confirm a similar lack of support for any transfer within their communities.

This is not surprising as, if successful, the take over will result in the loss of a number of historic parishes with

their individual identities as represented by their councils. These work for the benefit solely of the residents and are accountable to them only. As part of Bridport Town, this control will be lost and representatives of Bradpole wards can simply be outvoted. The gain of a small say in how Bridport Town is governed is no real recompense.

It is also certain that my and other Bradpole residents' Council Tax precepts will rise substantially to level up to that currently being paid by residents of Bridport Town. Bridport Council argues that this is fair as the surrounding parishes form an integral entity with the Town and that they are one. However, our view of Bridport Town is no different from those of the surrounding villages of Bother Bradstock, Chideock, Symondsbury, Hodders etc.. It is a place to shop, to acquire services, to be entertained and to attend functions. It is not somewhere of which we feel a part.

I have concern too that an expanded Bridport Town will mean that what is left of the countryside in Bradpole Parish will be much more likely to be built on in the desire for yet more residents and financial income. Currently Bradpole Parish Council can oppose this but in a larger Town Council the Bradpole area ward representatives can be readily outvoted.

I am also concerned that, in the matter of how people are governed locally in our democratic society, a change can be imposed by authorities in which the affected residents have no or an absolute minimum of representation and without their opinions being fully assessed. Consultation is rarely thorough. In national matters of a similar nature a final referendum is now the accepted method. This should also be the accepted method at more local levels. May I, therefore, suggest that if Dorset Council wishes to establish the opinion of Bradpole and

other Parish residents in this matter, a referendum should be held and the result honoured.

Finally, I believe that in Dorset, where local government has become more remote from the people which it serves with the abolition of the second tier structure, it is important that more authority should be given to the parishes. This will provide residents with more opportunity to decide what is best and affordable for their individual area and, by such empowerment, improve their feeling of well being. In no way should parishes be abolished as has been proposed around Bridport. This additional authority will also encourage residents to take an interest in parish affairs and promote the democratic election of representatives, which has sadly been non-existent in Bradpole for many years. This can only enhance democracy in the country as a whole.

I trust that the County Council will support the continued existence of Bradpole Parish and Council.

Yours sincerely,

