

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES



Comisiwn Ffiniau
Llywodraeth Leol
i Gymru



Local Government
Boundary Commission
for Wales

**REVIEW OF COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES IN THE
COUNTY BOROUGH OF THE VALE OF
GLAMORGAN**

REPORT AND PROPOSALS

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REPORT AND PROPOSALS

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 We the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales (the Commission) have completed the review of community boundaries in the County Borough of the Vale of Glamorgan as directed by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government in his Direction to us dated 31 March 2008 (Appendix 1).

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 We propose that:

- the boundary between the Communities of Llandough and Michaelston in the area of the property named Croft Mawr be realigned to follow the boundary shown in green on the map at Appendix 3;
- the boundary between the Communities of Llanmaes and Llantwit Major in the area of the B4265 be realigned to follow the boundary shown in green on the map at Appendix 4;
- the boundary between the Communities of Penarth and Sully in the area of Whitcliffe Drive be realigned to follow the boundary shown in green on the map at Appendix 5;
- the boundary between the Communities of Penarth and Sully in the area of Merlin Close and Brockhill Way be realigned to follow the boundary shown in green on the map at Appendix 5.
- The boundary between the Communities of Pendoylan and Welsh St. Donats be realigned to follow the boundary shown in green on the map at Appendix 6;
- The electoral arrangements for the Community of Llantwit Major are revised; and
- The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council consider a review of the community wards for Barry Town Council, St. Athan Community Council and Wenvoe Community Council in accordance with section 57(4) of the Act.

3. SCOPE AND OBJECT OF THE REVIEW

3.1 The purpose of the review is to consider whether, in the interests of effective and convenient local government, the Commission should propose changes to the present community boundaries. The review is being conducted under the provisions of Section 55 of the Local Government Act 1972 (the Act).

3.2 Section 60 of the Act lays down procedural guidelines, which are to be followed in carrying out a review. In line with that guidance we wrote on 1 May 2008 to The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council, the Community Councils of Barry, Colwinston, Cowbridge with Llanblethian, Dinas Powys, Ewenny, Llancarfan, Llandough, Llandow, Llanfair, Llangan, Llanmaes, Llantwit Major, Michaelston, Penarth, Pendoylan, Penllyn, Peterston-super-Ely, St. Athan, St. Bride's Major, St Donats, St. Georges and St. Bride's-super-Ely, St. Nicholas and Bonvilston, Sully, Wenvoe, Wick, and Welsh St. Donats, the Member of Parliament for the local constituency, the Assembly Members for the area and other interested parties to inform them of our intention to conduct the review and to request their preliminary

views. We also publicised our intention to conduct the review in local newspapers circulating in the area and asked the Councils to display public notices. Notification of the start of the review and the closing date for representations to be made (4 July 2008) was given on the web site of the Commission.

4. DRAFT PROPOSALS

- 4.1 In response to our initial invitation, we received representations from Barry Town Council, Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council, Ewenny Community Council, Llandough Community Council, Llangan Community Council, Llanmaes Community Council, Llantwit Major Town Council, Penarth Town Council, Pendoylan Community Council, Penllyn Community Council, St. Athan Community Council, Wenvoe Community Council and Wick Community Council; 3 Councillors; and 316 other interested bodies and residents. In our draft proposals published on 12 February 2009, we considered the issues raised in the representations.
- 4.2 Suggested changes to community boundaries were made in the following areas: Ewenny, Llandough, Llanmaes, Llantwit Major, Michaelston, Penarth, Pendoylan, St Bride's Major, Sully, Welsh St Donats and Wick.

Llandough / Michaelston

- 4.3 In our Draft Proposals report we noted the suggestion from Llandough Community Council proposing a change to the boundary between the Community of Llandough and the Community of Michaelston that the property known as Croft Mawr would be more appropriately included within another Community area. After conducting a site visit it was confirmed that the only access to this property was via the Community of Michaelston and it appeared that the property was remote from settlement areas within Llandough. We considered that this change to the boundary was desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government and proposed a realignment of the boundary to move the property from Llandough into Michaelston.

Llanmaes / Llantwit Major

- 4.4 We noted the suggestion from Llanmaes Community Council to realign the boundary between their Community and that of Llantwit Major to follow the B4265 road at Boverton. We considered that this proposal had merit in that the busy road provided an effective boundary between the two community areas. We did notice however, after conducting a site visit, that the Council's suggested boundary omitted two properties to the south west of Llanmaes. We therefore proposed to extend the boundary further west along the B4265 to include those two properties within the Community of Llanmaes. We were of the view that this change to the boundary was desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government and proposed a change to the boundary between the Communities of Llanmaes and Llantwit Major.

Penarth / Sully

- 4.5 In our Draft Proposals report we considered the suggestion made by Penarth Town Council that the boundary between their Community and the Community of Sully be realigned to include properties in Whitcliffe Drive, currently in the Lavernock Ward

of Sully within the Plymouth Ward of Penarth. We observed that access to said properties in Whitcliffe Drive was made solely from Penarth and proposed that the area of Whitcliffe Drive be included within the boundary of the Community of Penarth.

- 4.6 We also noted a further anomaly in the boundary between the Communities of Sully and Penarth in the area of Merlin Close and Brockhill way. We proposed that this anomaly be rectified to take the boundary to the delineated fencing to the rear of the properties.

Pendoylan / Welsh St. Donats

- 4.7 In our Draft Proposals report we noted the suggestion made by Pendoylan Community Council to move two properties from Welsh St. Donats into Pendoylan. The suggested boundary followed the natural forestry boundary around the Warren Farm area. A site visit was made to the area which confirmed that access to Warren Farm was through Pendoylan. The suggested boundary appeared to be clearly defined in that it followed field boundaries although it did not appear to give any advantage in this respect over the current boundary. From the evidence we considered at this stage of the review, we were of the view that the two properties had no obvious greater association with Pendoylan than with St Donats, but we stated that we welcomed further representations on the subject showing how it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government for such a change to be made.

St. Bride's Major

- 4.8 In our Draft proposals report we noted the many representations received in support of the suggestion that the Ogmore-by-Sea Ward of the Community of St. Bride's Major should form a Community in its own right. We also noted the suggestion that the area of this new Community be extended to include the Southerndown area of the St. Bride's Major Ward.
- 4.9 We considered the number of electors in both the suggested new communities and noted that other rural communities existed within The Vale of Glamorgan with lower numbers of electors. We had also considered the level of public support for an Ogmore-by-Sea community that was demonstrated in the representations we had received at this stage. In view of the cogent and numerous representations in support of this proposal to constitute a new Community and in all the circumstances, the Commission was satisfied that the proposal had merit, but welcomed further representations.
- 4.10 We observed the suggestion that the area of the proposed Ogmore-by-Sea Community be extended to include the area of Southerndown. We noted however that the existing warding arrangements of the Community of St. Bride's Major were of long standing and we were unaware of suggestions that had arisen in respect of the boundary between the two wards since their formation in 1982. We were not persuaded at this stage therefore that it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government to extend a proposed Ogmore-by-Sea Community to include the area of Southerndown. We welcomed comments and representations on this matter in particular from residents of the Southerndown area and from

residents of the whole of the existing St. Bride's Community and other interested parties in respect of the general proposal to form two new communities.

Wick

- 4.11 We considered the suggestion from Wick Community Council for changes to their boundaries with Community of St. Bride's Major and with the Community of St. Donats. The change suggested to the boundary between Wick and St Bride's Major was to include Sealand Farm and two footpaths leading from Heol Las to the cliff tops within the Community of Wick. The change suggested to the boundary between Wick and St Donats was to include East Monkton Farm and West Monkton Farm within the Community of Wick
- 4.12 We noted that the two footpaths were already either within or, in part, formed the boundary of the Community of Wick and therefore no realignment of the boundary was necessary. In respect of Sealand Farm it was considered that although access to the Farm was through Wick the extent of the surrounding land belonging to the Farm was not known and an appropriate alternative boundary could not be identified. As the existing boundary was clearly defined we did not consider that the suggested change to the boundary between the Communities of Wick and St. Bride's Major to be desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. In respect of East and West Monkton Farms it was also considered that as the extent of the surrounding land belonging to the Farms had not been identified, it was not possible to identify an appropriate alternative boundary. As the existing boundary was also clearly defined in this area we did not consider that the suggested change to the boundary between the Communities of Wick and St. Donats to be desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We made no proposals, at that stage, for changes to the boundary of the Community of Wick. We stated that we would give the matter further consideration in light of any further representations and information.

Barry

- 4.13 We noted the ward boundary changes suggested by Councillor Richard Bertin of Barry Town Council within the Community of Barry. We pointed out that this review is being carried out under Section 55 of the Act which allows us to make proposals for the electoral arrangements (which would include an alteration to ward boundaries) of a community that are consequential on a change to the community boundary. As we had received no suggestions for a change to the boundary of the Barry Community, we therefore made no proposals for changes to the ward boundaries for the Community of Barry at the Draft Proposals stage. We did suggest however that Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council considers a review of the community wards for Barry Town Council.

Llantwit Major

- 4.14 In our Draft Proposals report consideration was given to Llantwit Major Town Council's request to increase the number of Councillors in the Council's Boverton Ward. Such a change could only be considered as part of this review as a consequence of a change to the Community boundary involving the Boverton Ward. It is correct that the change proposed by Llanmaes Community Council (4.4)

involved a change to part of the boundary of Boverton Ward of the Community of Llantwit Major, and we were entitled to propose changes to electoral arrangements consequent upon that change (and we considered doing so at paragraphs 8.6 and 8.7 below - no change was proposed), but the change to electoral arrangements proposed by Llantwit Major which is not consequential upon any such boundary change is not within our powers to consider in the context of the Review.

St. Athan

- 4.15 In our Draft Proposals report we noted the changes to electoral arrangement changes suggested by St. Athan Community Council. We pointed out that this review is being carried out under Section 55 of the Act which allows us to make proposals for the electoral arrangements of a community that are consequential on a change to the community boundary. As we had received no suggestions for a change to the boundary of the St. Athan Community, we therefore made no proposals for changes to the electoral arrangements for the Community of St. Athan at the Draft Proposals stage.

Wenvoe

- 4.16 We noted the ward boundary changes suggested by Wenvoe Community Council. We pointed out that this review is being carried out under Section 55 of the Act which allows us to make proposals for the electoral arrangements (which would include an alteration to ward boundaries) of a community that are consequential on a change to the community boundary. As we had received no suggestions for a change to the boundary of the Wenvoe Community, we therefore made no proposals for changes to the ward boundaries for the Community of Wenvoe at the Draft Proposals stage.

Ewenny

- 4.17 In our Draft Proposals report we noted the correspondence from Ewenny Community Council and a resident of Ewenny suggesting changes to the boundary between the County Borough of The Vale of Glamorgan and the County Borough of Bridgend. We pointed out that this review is a review of community boundaries in the County Borough of the Vale of Glamorgan as directed by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government and we are of the view that consideration of changes to the boundary of the principal council (County and County Borough) areas would be beyond the remit of this current review. We would, as we do in all cases, consider requests to undertake reviews of the boundaries between principal council areas but we noted that this particular area was reviewed by us as recently as 1999 and as far as we are aware there have been no significant developments in the area in the interim.
- 4.18 We made no proposals for changes to the remaining community areas within the County Borough of Vale of Glamorgan.

5. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT PROPOSALS

- 5.1 We received representations from Barry Town Council, Ewenny Community Council, Llandough Community Council, Llantwit Major Town Council, and Welsh St Donats Community Council; one MP; one AM; 4 Councillors; and 297 other interested bodies and residents. We considered all of these representations carefully before we formulated our proposals. A summary of these representations can be found at Appendix 2.

6. ASSESSMENT

Llandough and Michaelston

- 6.1 We considered in our Draft Proposals report a proposal to change the boundary between the Community of Llandough and the Community of Michaelston in the area around the property known as Croft Mawr. The proposal from Llandough Community Council stated that it would be more appropriately included within another Community area. A site visit was conducted and it confirmed that the sole access to this property was via the Community of Michaelston and it appeared that the property was isolated from settlement areas within Llandough. After the Draft Proposals report was published, Llandough Community Council agreed with the proposal as set out. We consider therefore that this change to the boundary is desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government and propose a realignment of the boundary to move the property from Llandough into Michaelston (map at Appendix 3).

Llanmaes and Llantwit Major

- 6.2 In our Draft Proposals report we considered a change in the boundary between the Community of Llanmaes and that of Llantwit Major to follow the B4265 road at Boverton. We considered that the proposal had value as the busy road provided an effective boundary between the two community areas. After conducting a site visit we were made aware that the Council's suggested boundary excluded two properties to the south west of Llanmaes. We therefore proposed to extend the boundary further west along the B4265 to incorporate these two properties within the Community of Llanmaes. Llantwit Major Town Council wrote to us that they had no objections to the proposed boundary changes. We noted the emphatic representation against this proposal received from a resident of Llantwit Major, and we have very careful consideration to it. However we considered the advantage in establishing the B4265 as the boundary were overwhelmingly in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We propose the change to the boundary between the Communities of Llanmaes and Llantwit Major as shown on the map at Appendix 4.
- 6.3 Consideration was given to the initial request from Llantwit Major Town Council for an increase in representation in the Boverton ward of the Community of Llantwit Major due to an increase in residents. As this review is being carried out under Section 55 of the Act it only allows us to make proposals for the electoral arrangements of a community that are consequential on a change to the community boundary. As we have proposed a change to the boundary between the Boverton ward of Llantwit Major and Llanmaes Community (6.2), we can therefore make a proposal to change the electoral arrangements for the Boverton ward of Llantwit Major Town Council. We propose changes to the electoral

arrangements for Boverton, South East and West wards of Llantwit major Town Council to address parity issues across the community. Details of these changes are found at 8.9.

Penarth and Sully

- 6.4 Consideration was given to the suggestion made by Penarth Town Council that the boundary between their Community and the Community of Sully be amended to include properties in Whitcliffe Drive, currently in the Lavernock Ward of Sully within the Plymouth Ward of Penarth. After conducting a site visit we observed that access to said properties in Whitcliffe Drive was made exclusively from Penarth and we propose that the area of Whitcliffe Drive be included within the boundary of the Community of Penarth (map at Appendix 5).
- 6.5 We propose that the additional anomaly encountered in the boundary between the Communities of Sully and Penarth in the area of Merlin Close and Brockhill Way be rectified to take the boundary to the delineated fencing to the rear of the properties (map at Appendix 5).

Pendoylan and Welsh St. Donats

- 6.6 The suggestion made by Pendoylan Community Council to transfer two properties from Welsh St. Donats into Pendoylan was given further consideration. The suggested boundary would follow the natural forestry boundary around the Warren Farm area. The site visit that was made to the area confirmed that access to Warren Farm was through Pendoylan and the suggested boundary was clearly defined in that it followed field boundaries. In our Draft Proposals report we stated that we would welcome further representations as it seemed that the two properties had otherwise no obvious greater association with Pendoylan than with Welsh St. Donats. No further representations were received after the Draft Proposals report was published. Therefore, from the evidence we have considered, we are of the view that, it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government for such a change to be made. We propose the change to the boundary between Pendoylan and Welsh St. Donats as shown on the map at Appendix 6.

St. Bride's Major

- 6.7 Consideration was given to the many representations received in relation to the initial suggestion that the Ogmore-by-Sea Ward of the Community of St. Bride's Major should form a Community in its own right. We also noted the suggestion that the area of this new Community be extended to include the Southerndown area of the St. Bride's Major Ward.
- 6.8 Following on from our request in the Draft Proposals report welcoming further representations, we received numerous representations both supporting and opposing splitting the Community from all areas of the current Community. We also extended the consultation process for an additional two weeks to ensure that electors from all areas of the St. Brides Major Community had the opportunity to put their views forward.

- 6.9 The case for change came most strongly from residents of Ogmore-by-Sea rather than St. Bride's Major and Southerndown. The core reasoning of the case to split was that the 3 villages were seen as separate entities, although there was some affinity suggested between Ogmore-by-Sea and Southerndown as coastal areas. In addition to this Ogmore-by-Sea was perceived as having been neglected in respect of facilities with the concentration of facilities being in St. Bride's Major. The substantial growth of Ogmore-by-Sea was also mentioned in the representations with the potential for a substantial increase in housing over the next 15 years. The bulk of the representations in favour of splitting came by means of a proforma from a sizeable proportion of Ogmore-by-Sea electors. A comprehensive report was also collated reflecting a door to door survey carried out in the villages of Ogmore-by-Sea and Southerndown. The results from St. Bride's Major were collated from a petition posted in the local Post Office.
- 6.10 Those representations received wishing to retain the status quo, put forward arguments and evidence to counter or contextualise the points made in 6.9 above. These representations, whilst not including any form of petition or proforma came from residents of each of the 3 settlements and included points such as:
- The historical basis of the current arrangements
 - Many of the problems cited by those in favour of change were not the responsibility of the Community Council
 - The facilities available were used by residents from other villages
 - The relatively small area covered by the present Community Council
 - Potential additional costs if a split were agreed
 - The suggestion that fewer, larger Community Councils were needed, not more
 - Questioning the methodology by which residents views were sought in one part of the Community Council area.
 - Current arrangements were capable of working well if those charged with governance were willing to work together.
- 6.11 After conducting a site visit to the area it was realised that the area was not a large one taken as a whole. Whilst St. Bride's Major is not at the sea edge, it is not a distinct and remote entity cut off from the other villages. A lot of the issues mentioned in the representations supporting a split are beyond the capacity of a Community Council to remedy. The closure of shops, public houses and Post Offices owes as much to changing living patterns and economics as it does to politics at such a local level. Where problems arise which require the intervention of other agencies, effective representations can be made by a strong Community Council and that can be the current Community Council. The location of public facilities in an area will always be a contentious issue and it is not unusual for constituent parts of an area to argue that they lose out to other areas and this case is an illustration. It is not realistic or practical to expect that facilities should be replicated in every settlement, but they can still be convenient even if sited in a neighbouring village.
- 6.12 The Beecham Report put forward collaboration between public bodies as a way of producing both more efficient and more effective services. One of the reasons for this was that Wales already has a large number of public bodies for a population of its size. To add to that number would, we believe be both right and reasonable if there was a strong enough case to do so. However, we do not believe that case has been made out. We have considered the evidence and implication of this

proposal, and given careful consideration to the powerful representations both for and against it. We are of the view such a change would not be in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We therefore make no proposals for change in the St. Bride's Major Community.

Wick

- 6.13 We considered the suggestion from Wick Community Council for changes to their boundaries with Community of St. Bride's Major and with the Community of St. Donats. The change suggested to the boundary between Wick and St. Bride's Major included Sealand Farm and two footpaths leading from Heol Las to the cliff tops within the Community of Wick. The change suggested to the boundary between Wick and St. Donats included East Monkton Farm and West Monkton Farm within the Community of Wick.
- 6.14 We noted that the two footpaths were already either within or, in part, formed the boundary of the Community of Wick and therefore no realignment of the boundary was necessary. In respect of Sealand Farm it was considered that although access to the Farm was through Wick the extent of the surrounding land belonging to the Farm was not known and an appropriate alternative boundary could not be identified. As the existing boundary is clearly defined we do not consider that the suggested change to the boundary between the Communities of Wick and St. Bride's Major to be desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. In respect of East and West Monkton Farms it was also considered that as the extent of the surrounding land belonging to the Farms had not been identified, it was not possible to identify an appropriate alternative boundary.
- 6.15 In our Draft Proposals report we requested further representations and information regarding suggested boundaries to those currently in place for consideration. We received no further representations or information suggesting an alternative boundary. As the existing boundary is clearly defined in this area we do not consider that the suggested change to the boundary between the Communities of Wick and St. Donats to be desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We therefore make no proposals for changes to the boundary of the Community of Wick.

Barry

- 6.16 We noted the changes to the ward boundaries made by two Councillors of Barry Town Council within the Community of Barry. As this review is being carried out under Section 55 of the Act it only allows us to make proposals for the electoral arrangements (which would include an alteration to ward boundaries) of a community that are consequential on a change to the community boundary. As we have received no suggestions for a change to the boundary of the Barry Community, we have power to propose changes to ward boundaries. We do propose however, that The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council consider a review of the community wards for Barry Town Council.

St. Athan

- 6.17 We considered the suggestion from St. Athan Community Council, that changes should be made to the electoral arrangements of their community to reduce the

number of Councillors in the St. Athan Ward and increase the number of Councillors in Flemingston Ward to better reflect the changes in the electorate in each ward. Whilst there appears to us to be merit in reviewing the electoral arrangements of the community we are unable to do so as part of this review.

- 6.18 This review is being carried out under Section 55 of the Act which allows us to make proposals for the electoral arrangements of a community that are consequential on a change to the community boundary. We have received no suggestions for a change to the boundary of the St. Athan Community. We therefore make no proposals for changes to the electoral arrangements for the Community of St. Athan. As at 6.16 above we do propose however, that The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council consider a review of the community wards for St. Athan Community Council.

Wenvoe

- 6.19 Consideration was given to the suggestion from Wenvoe Community Council that changes should be made to the electoral arrangements of their community to create a new ward at Parc y Gwenfo as the Council considered that the population justified the change. Whilst there appears to us to be merit in reviewing the electoral arrangements of the community we are unable to do so as part of this review.
- 6.20 This review is being carried out under Section 55 of the Act which allows us to make proposals for the electoral arrangements of a community that are consequential on a change to the community boundary. We have received no suggestions for a change to the boundary of the Wenvoe Community. We therefore make no proposals for changes to the electoral arrangements for the Community of Wenvoe. As at 6.16 above we do propose however, that The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council consider a review of the community wards for Wenvoe Community Council.

Ewenny

- 6.21 We noted the correspondence from Ewenny Community Council and a resident of Ewenny suggesting changes to the boundary between the County Borough of The Vale of Glamorgan and the County Borough of Bridgend. The suggestions made would mean that Ewenny would wholly fall within The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough and Ewenny Community Council. This review is a review of community boundaries in the County Borough of The Vale of Glamorgan as directed by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government and we are of the view that consideration of changes to the boundary of the principal council (County and County Borough) areas would be beyond the remit of this review. We would, as we do in all cases, consider requests to undertake reviews of the boundaries between principal council areas but we note that this particular area was reviewed by us as recently as 1999 and as far as we are aware there have been no significant developments in the area in the interim. We make no proposals for changing the boundaries between The Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend County Borough Councils.

Barry, Llantwit Major, St. Athan and Wenvoe Community Ward Boundaries and Electoral Arrangements

- 6.22 The changes suggested to the Barry, Llantwit Major, St. Athan and Wenvoe Community Ward Boundaries and electoral arrangements need to be considered as part of a review of Community electoral arrangements which may be carried out by The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council under Section 57(4) of the Act. We suggest therefore that The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council consider a review of the electoral arrangements of Barry Town Council, Llantwit Major Town Council, and St. Athan Community Council and Wenvoe Community Council. As we are due to undertake a review of the electoral arrangements of The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council by 30 June 2011 we would urge the County Borough Council to review their community electoral arrangements as a matter of urgency. If such a review is not completed and an Order made by the time we start our review then we will be obliged to use the community wards as they then stand when considering the pattern of electoral divisions.
- 6.23 We make no proposals for changes to the remaining community areas within the County Borough of The Vale of Glamorgan.

7. PROPOSALS

- 7.1 Having considered the evidence available to us at this stage of our review we propose that the boundaries of the Communities of Llandough, Llanmaes, Llantwit Major, Michaelston, Penarth, Pendoylan, Sully and Welsh St. Donats and should be realigned in the area under review to follow the boundaries shown in green on the maps at Appendices 3, 4, 5 and 6.
- 7.2 Detailed maps to a larger scale showing the proposed new boundaries can be inspected at the offices of The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council and at the office of the Commission in Cardiff.

8. CONSEQUENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 In considering the various changes to the community boundaries it was also necessary for us to take account of the effects on the electoral arrangements for community councils and the principal authority, which would result from these changes. This section of our report details our proposals for consequential changes to the electoral arrangements. The electoral statistics used in this report were provided by The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council.

Community Council Electoral Arrangements

- 8.2 The Community of Llandough is not warded and currently has 1,474 electors represented by 10 Councillors (147 electors per Councillor).
- 8.3 The Community of Michaelston is currently divided, for Community electoral purposes, into the community wards of Michaelston and Leckwith. The following table shows the number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C*
Michaelston	Michaelston	178	5	36
	Leckwith	75	2	38
		253	7	36

* Electors per Councillor

8.4 Under our proposals the number of electors in the Community of Llandough will decrease by 3 to 1,471 and the number of electors in Community of Michaelston will increase by 3 to 256.

8.5 We are of the view that the changes to the number of electors as a consequence of the proposed boundary changes are not so significant as, at this time, to require either an increase or a decrease in the number of councillors representing each Community Council. We therefore make no proposals for changes to the electoral arrangements of the Michaelston or Llandough Community Councils.

8.6 The Community of Llanmaes is not warded and currently has 348 electors represented by 7 Councillors (50 electors per Councillor).

8.7 The Community of Llantwit Major is currently divided, for Community electoral purposes, into the community wards of Boverton, North, South East and West. The following table shows the number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C*
Llantwit Major	Boverton	2,159	3	720
	North	2,525	5	505
	South East	1,455	4	364
	West	957	3	319
		7,096	15	473

8.8 Under our proposals the number of electors in the Community of Llantwit Major will decrease by 3 to 7,093 and the number of electors in the Community of Llanmaes will increase by 3 to 351.

8.9 We are of the view that the changes to the number of electors as a consequence of the proposed boundary changes are not so significant as, at this time, to require either an increase or a decrease in the number of councillors representing each Community Council. However we have taken into account the request from Llantwit Major Town Council to review the electoral arrangements in Boverton Ward. In addition to this to create better parity within the Llantwit Major community we make the following proposals for changes to the electoral arrangements of the Llantwit Major Town Council.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C*
Llantwit Major	Boverton	2,159	4	540
	North	2,525	5	505
	South East	1,455	3	485
	West	957	2	479
		7,096	14	507

- 8.10 The Community of Penarth is currently divided, for Community electoral purposes, into the community wards of Cornerswell, Plymouth, St Augustine's and Stanwell. The following table shows the number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C*
Penarth	Cornerswell	3,946	4	987
	Plymouth	4,432	4	1,108
	St Augustine's	4,479	5	896
	Stanwell	3,189	3	1,063
		16,046	16	1,003

- 8.11 The Community of Sully is currently divided, for Community electoral purposes, into the community wards of Lavernock and Sully. The following table shows the number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C*
Sully	Lavernock	756	1	756
	Sully	2,600	8	325
		3,356	9	373

- 8.12 Under our proposals the number of electors in the Community of Sully will decrease by 45 to 3,311 and the number of electors in the Community of Penarth will increase by 45 to 16,091.

- 8.13 We are of the view that the changes to the number of electors as a consequence of the proposed boundary changes are not so significant as, at this time, to require either an increase or a decrease in the number of councillors representing each Community Council. We therefore make no proposals for changes to the electoral arrangements of the Sully or Penarth Community Councils.

County Borough Council Electoral Arrangements

- 8.14 The Dinas Powys electoral division consists of the Communities of Dinas Powys and Michaelston and currently has 6,164 electors represented by 4 Councillors. The proposed change to the boundary between the Communities of Llandough and Michaelston would mean the number of electors in the Dinas Powys electoral division would increase to 6,167.

- 8.15 The Llantwit Major electoral division consists of the Communities of Llanmaes, Llantwit Major and St Donats and currently has 7,874 electors represented by 4 Councillors. The proposed change to the boundary between the Communities of Llanmaes and Llantwit Major would have no effect on the number of electors in the Llantwit Major electoral division.

- 8.16 The Plymouth electoral division consists of the Plymouth ward of the Community of Penarth and currently has 4,432 electors represented by 2 Councillors. The proposed change to the boundary between the Communities of Penarth and Sully would mean the number of electors in the Plymouth electoral division would increase to 4,477.

- 8.17 We are of the view that for all of the above electoral divisions the changes to the number of electors as a consequence of the proposed boundary changes are not so significant as, at this time, to require either an increase or a decrease in the number of councillors representing each electoral division. We have been directed to complete a review of the electoral arrangements for all of the principal councils in Wales by 30 June 2011. We will therefore be shortly looking in detail at the electoral arrangements for The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council and will take into account any changes that arise from these proposed changes to community boundaries.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 We wish to express our gratitude The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council and the Community Councils for their assistance and to all persons and bodies who made representations to us.

10. THE NEXT STEPS

- 10.1 Having completed our consideration of the review of Community Boundaries in the County Borough of the Vale of Glamorgan and submitted our recommendations to the Welsh Assembly Government, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Act.
- 10.2 It now falls to the Welsh Assembly Government, if it thinks fit, to accept them or to direct the Commission to conduct a further review.
- 10.3 Any further representations concerning the matters in the report should be addressed to the Welsh Assembly Government. They should be made as soon as possible, and in any event not later than six weeks from the date that the Commission's recommendations are submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government. Representations should be addressed to:

Democracy Team
Local Government Policy Division
Welsh Assembly Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

MR P J WOOD (Chair)

REV. HYWEL MEREDYDD DAVIES BD (Deputy Chair)

Mr D J BADER (Member)

E H LEWIS BSc. DPM FRSA FCIPD (Secretary)

September 2009

THE WELSH MINISTERS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 PART IV

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR
WALES (REVIEW OF COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES)(THE
COUNTY BOROUGH OF THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN)
DIRECTION 2008**

The Welsh Ministers give the following Direction to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales in exercise of the powers conferred upon the Secretary of State by section 56 of the Local Government Act 1972⁽¹⁾ which powers are now exercisable by the Welsh Ministers⁽²⁾:

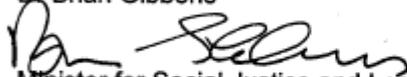
1. In this Direction:

"the Act" ("y Ddeddf") means the Local Government Act 1972;

"the Commission" ("y Comisiwn") means the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales.

2. Pursuant to section 56(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers direct the Commission to conduct a review of the community boundaries in the County Borough of The Vale of Glamorgan for the purpose of considering whether or not to make such proposals in relation to the areas reviewed as are authorised by section 54 of the Act and what proposals, if any, to make; and the Commission must, if they think fit, formulate such proposals accordingly.

Dr Brian Gibbons



Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Date

31/3/08

⁽¹⁾ 1972 c.70; section 56 was amended by the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994.

⁽²⁾ See the National Assembly for Wales (Transfer of Functions) Order 1999 (S.I. 1999/672) which transferred the functions of the Secretary of State to the National Assembly for Wales. The functions of the Assembly were subsequently transferred to the Welsh Ministers by schedule 11 to the Government of Wales Act 2006 (2006 c.38).

Summary of Representations Received in Response to the Draft Proposals

Barry Town Council resolved to support the foregoing draft proposals as set out in the draft report.

Ewenny Community Council proposed a further review of the County Borough boundaries of Bridgend and Vale of Glamorgan to rectify the anomaly of the split of Ewenny village. This proposal would mean that Ewenny would wholly fall within the Vale of Glamorgan and Ewenny Community Council.

Llandough Community Council fully supports the proposal for the property named Croft Mawr to be included within the Community of Michaelston.

Llantwit Major Town Council had no objections to the proposed boundary changes.

Welsh St Donats Community Council had no objections to the proposed change in their area.

Madeleine Moon, MP for Bridgend wrote on behalf of one of her constituents who raised the issue of notification regarding a meeting in St. Bride's Major to discuss the separation of the community council, as it was so poorly attended. An extension to the representations date was requested to let residents have more time to put their views forward.

Jane Hutt, AM for Vale of Glamorgan wrote in support of the views of one of her constituents stating that he was against the proposal to divide the community of St. Bride's Major.

Councillor Barry Shaw, Castleland Ward, Barry Town Council wrote to outline additional ward boundary anomalies found within the Barry Town Council area.

The following anomalies were based on the locality of the communities that they are closely associated with and /or the location of the nearest polling station:

- Part of Oxford Street currently in Illtyd ward, should be moved into Baruc ward.
- Pearce Court currently in Court ward should be moved to Gibbonsdown ward.
- Weycock Road currently in Dyfan ward should be moved into Illtyd ward.
- Enfield Drive, part of Highlight Lane, Liscum Way, Purdey Close, Whitmore Park Drive all currently in Illtyd ward should be moved into Dyfan ward.
- Glen Affrick Close, Glen Mavis Way and green banks Drive currently in Illtyd ward should be moved into Dyfan ward.

Further to this he noted that there is an imbalance of Councillors to electors in some wards of Barry Town Council. Currently the Council has 22 members and it is suggested that this should be an odd number rather than an even one. The following anomalies were noted:

- Cadoc ward with 6,500 electors only has 3 councillors
- Castleland and Court wards both have a similar electorate of 2,900 but Court has 3 councillors whilst Castleland only has 2.

- Dyfan ward has more electorate than Court and Gibbonsdown wards respectively, but only has 2 elected members as opposed to 3 in Court and Gibbonsdown.

Councillor Alan Morgan of St. Bride's Major wrote in a personal capacity to reiterate the comments he made in the first round of consultation, believing the initial submissions received by the Commission gave a great deal of support for the creation of a separate community council in Ogmore by Sea.

With regard to Southerndown he also wanted to reiterate his support for the creation of a separate ward for the village. He believes Southerndown deserves its own dedicated representative whether the village is included in the community of St. Bride's Major or Ogmore by Sea. He noted that the Commission initially rejected this proposal on the grounds that 'warding arrangements...are of long standing'. He does not accept that that is a valid argument and notes that the draft report makes a number of proposals for change and presumes that all alter arrangements that are 'long standing'. He considers that there are a significant number of Southerndown residents who share his view and would like to have their own dedicated representation.

He went on to note that the Commission received a proposal from Wick Community Council to alter the community boundary so that Sea Land Farm is taken from St. Bride's Major and included in the Wick community. He supports this proposal, and was surprised to find that the property was not already in the Wick community. He could not see how maintaining the boundary as it stands could be conducive to the provision of effective and convenient local government.

Councillor Christina Davison of Ogmore by Sea wrote with concern over the manner in which canvassing had taken place in Ogmore by Sea regarding the boundary change.

A motion was passed at a council meeting allowing councillors to act individually and not as councillors. Following this, concentrated canvassing for a split in St. Bride's was carried out on both occasions by members of the community council. Canvassing was initially carried out in Ogmore by Sea by circulating individual proforma type representation, she states that she did not receive one of these.

A meeting was called in April for discussion regarding the change and although 300 signed the proforma initially, only 14 people attended. She asks as there appeared to be vociferous objection against remaining with St. Bride's, why were so few represented at the meeting.

As Southerndown expressed a wish to stand alone, it was decided to distribute flyers in the area urging residents to support a link with Ogmore by Sea and send in further representations. She states that she asked for a referendum for the residents of the three communities to decide, but it was refused on the grounds of cost.

She states her concerns as follows:

- An individual proforma is not a true way to represent people's views, it is signing a preconceived thought.
- The residents have not been represented by the St. Bride's community council as have all other councils in the draft report. A motion was passed in a council meeting for each councillor to act individually.
- She believes that pressure seems to have been applied to some residents to sign the form before being given time to read it.

- Regarding nothing being available for Ogmore by Sea, money is available under the Urban Renewal. She has called for applications to be made for a children's playground but there has been little movement regarding an application for this grant.
- An application was made for a village hall to be built, the planning has now lapsed and the monies for this are held by two councillor trustees. Information is difficult to access. Without a hall where would meetings be held, if St. Bride's hall is used, charges will be made.
- Some residents appear to believe that the split would mean Ogmore returning to Bridgend rather than remaining in the Vale of Glamorgan where they assume services would improve.
- As the precept would be less, money would not be available for match funding.
- Villages should be working together to understand each others problems not separating and splitting communities.
- As a councillor since May 2008 and proud to serve the residents of Ogmore, she does not believe that the divide the existing community of St. Bride's Major would be for the good of the community. She does not believe that both sides of the argument have been presented to the residents thus enabling them to make an informed decision.

Councillor Chris Howell of Ogmore by Sea wrote in a personal capacity in response to the draft proposals for the St. Bride's Major Community. As a keen advocate of the creation of a new Community based on the Ogmore by sea ward he was very pleased to read that the Commission believes the idea has merit and welcomed the Commission's invitation for interested parties to make further representations. After the report was published he joined with other volunteers from the community to seek out the views of fellow residents. Though he expected a strong majority in favour of an independent voice for the area, he was taken aback by the huge majority and the strength of feeling of local people demanding the change. The Community Review process has created a real "buzz" in the ward. Local people who for years have felt that "nothing is ever done for us" have become engaged with local politics again. They have real hopes that the proposed changes will be enacted and they will have the opportunity to influence issues affecting their community.

He was closely involved with conducting a survey petition of local residents. This survey showed massive support for the proposition. Out of a random sample of 420 residents, 406 were in favour giving an enormous majority of 97 percent. These 406 people represent an absolute majority of electors in the ward. He personally talked to scores of people during the survey and was surprised at how well-informed most people were about the issue and how eager so many were to sign their names in support. In common with other volunteers he heard over and over again phrases like, "It's about time.", "We've been left out for too long." and, "Our community gets nothing.". The strength of feeling and sense of grievance was palpable as was the excitement generated by the prospect of our own Community being created in the near future.

The Draft Proposals also reports that the Commission would welcome further comments and representations from residents of the Southerndown area. In response to this the Community Council published and distributed a leaflet to every household in the area. Subsequent to this he joined with volunteers to seek opinions through a survey petition and the results speak for themselves with 70 percent of a random sample of residents in favour of creating a new Community combined with the Ogmore by Sea ward. Reasons given in favour of joining with Ogmore by Sea included the following:

- Ogmore by Sea and Southerndown are seaside villages closely linked by the geography of the coast. The coastline that links the two villages (and that has attracted many of the residents in both to settle here) is a recreation area shared by both

communities. Walkers, surfers, kayakers, sea anglers and beach-goers in general from both communities use the whole of this part of the Heritage Coast from the Ogmere River to Witches Point as “their patch”.

- Being seaside villages brings similar problems to both areas from summertime traffic nuisance and anti-social behaviour.
- People cited close social ties between Ogmere by Sea and Southerndown, particularly among younger families. Southerndown has attracted a good number of young families in recent years, as has Ogmere by Sea, many of which have similar hobbies and interests related to coastal activities. This community of interests has helped to forge social ties between the villages and it is expected that trend will continue with the growing interest in outdoor leisure pursuits. The village pub in Southerndown is used by a numerous Ogmere by Sea residents, particularly since the last pub in Ogmere by Sea village closed down in 2005.
- Ogmere by Sea residents have clearly shown that they would welcome the inclusion of Southerndown in a new Community with 80 percent of respondents in the Ogmere by Sea survey voting in favour of Southerndown’s inclusion if Southerndown people want to join with them.
- Historical links were also cited. The Commons along the Heritage Coast from Dunraven Bay to the Ogmere River were known as “The Downs”, hence, “Southerndown”, with Southerndown being the dominant settlement for much of its history and Ogmere by Sea (not yet named at the time) merely being an outlying extension of Southerndown.
- Southerndown also suffers in much the same way as Ogmere by Sea from a lack of community facilities. The tendency for facilities to be located in St. Bride’s Major has left Southerndown with only a church, a restaurant and a pub. The feeling that the village gets left out when resources are allocated is strong.
- Similarities between the two communities in relation to development issues are also prevalent. Southerndown, like Ogmere by Sea, could see a significant increase in size during the next 15-year planning cycle. Proposals currently before the Vale of Glamorgan Council could, if accepted, lead to a doubling of the number of households in the village.

It was also clear from the consultation that Southerndown has a strong community identity of its own and this was reflected by the high percentage (75%) of people who want Southerndown to be able to elect its own representative to any Community Council covering its area. He believes that a Southerndown ward in a new Community with Ogmere by Sea would give Southerndown the opportunity to play the important role in local affairs that it justly deserves. He also proposes that if such a Community is created it should be called “Southerndown and Ogmere”. He would put “Southerndown” first as a reminder that being a smaller settlement makes its needs no less important and he would use “Ogmere” rather than “Ogmere by Sea” so as not to exclude the settlements of Ogmere Village and Norton. He believes that a well chosen name can make a big difference to public perceptions.

In the Draft Proposals the Commission also welcomes representations from the “whole of the St. Bride’s Community”. The Community Council made efforts to elicit representations from the village as did he with the help of volunteers from St. Bride’s but found that there was very little interest in the process. Only three St. Bride’s Major residents attended the Community

Council's special meeting called to discuss the issue and only two residents put their names on a petition in the local shop. People in the village seemed to be aware that the Community could be divided into two but the idea did not raise strong opinions with the majority of them. From anecdotal evidence, the prevailing opinion seemed to be, "If Ogmores wants to go its own way then we shouldn't stand in their way." In the Community Council's special meeting, one resident said that we would create divisions and animosity between the communities but seemed to accept the counter argument that the current situation was creating resentment on one side which could be healed by two Communities working together as equal partners.

The most concerted opposition to the creation of a new Community of which he is aware has come from local political party activists who support the status quo. He understands the reasons why this should be so but firmly believe that party politics should play no part in Community politics. The local electorate seem to agree with this position with only three declared party members of eleven Community Councillors in St. Bride's Major gaining seats last May, and each of these claiming that party affiliations play no part in their representation of the electorate. He does not believe that the self-interest of political parties should have any bearing on the Community Review. He says he will not restate the reasons he has given in earlier correspondence in support of a new Community in the area. He stands by those reasons and is now convinced that a huge majority of people in Ogmores by Sea demand their own Community and that a large majority of Southerndown people would, in the event of a division, prefer to be included with Ogmores by Sea rather than with St. Bride's Major. He stands by the reasons he and many others put before the Commission earlier and fully supports the reasons given in the proforma letter sent in by scores of residents of Ogmores by Sea in response to the Commission's Draft Proposals.

He sincerely hopes that the exceptional display of unity in support of change in Ogmores by Sea ward and the strong support for inclusion from Southerndown will help to persuade the Commission to recommend creation of a new Community of Southerndown and Ogmores to the Welsh Assembly Government. It is his sincere belief that such a new Community arrangement would fulfil the requirements of the 1972 Local Government Act to provide effective and convenient local government.

In addition to his letter he also enclosed a report of responses to a survey and petition from local residents undertaken by volunteers of Ogmores by Sea.

A resident of Llantwit Major wrote to object about the proposed boundary change in the Llanmaes / Llantwit Major area. He wrote saying that he felt strongly that, as the owner of one of the properties concerned, including some surrounding land, he should have been notified of the proposals to alter the boundary. It was only by chance that a small article in the local paper came to his notice, and following brief enquiries he had not been able to ascertain in which local newspaper the public notice had been printed.

Although he does not reside at the property at the present time, when he did live there he felt completely isolated from the community of Llanmaes, and any activities he and his family were involved with were centred in Llantwit Major. It is his intention to reside in the property in the future, and he feels that it would still be the case for himself or anyone else living in the property, if the boundary were to be altered.

He has visited Cllr Gwyn John of Llantwit Major Town Council and has stated his opinion that he cannot see any benefit or gain either to the residents of the properties involved, or to the village of Llanmaes in moving the boundary. He wanted his objection to be noted.

A resident of Ogmore by Sea wrote with the following points:

After moving to the community 32 years ago and bringing up two children who are now grown up, the facilities in Ogmore were limited even then. There was a café that residents were able to gather together at, but it has long been sold and turned into residential property. Up until recently there were 3 public houses, two of which have since been turned into flats and the remaining pub has been closed. Ogmore has always been the poor relation in local government affairs.

After speaking with numerous residents in the ward, the majority agreed that they should have their own Community Council. Many have attended council meetings and witnessed the problems encountered. A large proportion of residents are elderly and would like a village hall that they could walk to and organise events at. As the Vale Council has always put all the facilities in St. Bride's but said that it is sufficient for other wards, Ogmore has lost out. It is difficult in this day and age of high traffic flows to walk miles if you are infirm/disabled. This also related to families with children that have to travel by car to either a play area or school in St. Bride's. Rising fuel costs may curtail any use of facilities they have.

It appears the residents of St. Bride's Major and Ogmore by Sea have little in common. When residents of Ogmore by Sea had to fight on major issues, the residents of St. Bride's have not helped out. As Ogmore has the larger proportion of residents with differing needs and little interaction between villages. It is time for Ogmore by Sea to have its own Community Council.

A resident of Ogmore by Sea wrote firstly to thank the Commission for undertaking the review as the Vale Council were found wanting in this respect. He had been a Community Councillor for the Ogmore ward until recently, where he endured abuse and put downs by some 'old guard Councillors' who had no understanding of Ogmore ward problems, nor did they wish to.

Ogmore is a young and forward looking type of community with a different set of problems from the St. Bride's ward. One of the greatest problems in Ogmore has been its inability to construct a village hall as a heart of the community. In previous years when in Ogwr, the St. Bride's council advised that there was no need for Ogmore to have a village hall. The explanation being that there were ample facilities in St. Bride's Major. This moved Ogmore from the front to the back of the queue and never recovered from this position due to financial constraints. If Ogmore were to have its own Council the stalemate would change and Ogmore would have to be moved to the top of the list due to the area being bereft of public facilities. As a pensioner, he feels stranded having no meeting place, and with travelling costs escalating he feels trapped in a pretty area with no facilities.

He agreed totally with the integration of Southerndown with the Ogmore ward, if this is what the Southerndown residents want. Southerndown has very similar problems to Ogmore being on the coast with an influx of visitors in the summer months causing problems with parking, fire lighting, vandalism and off-roading. At present Southerndown might not see the advantage of joining with Ogmore, but in the future if Ogmore had its own Council they could work together to overcome these seasonally recurring problems.

He looked forward to the future with a new Community Council able to work together with surrounding wards and Councils to provide effective and convenient local government.

Two residents of Ogmore by Sea wrote to say that they have studied the draft proposals, and they have conflicting views on the proposal to create a new council at Ogmore by Sea. Prior to the 2008 election, St. Bride's Major council had a turbulent existence and very little

was done for the benefit of the community and there was a lack of maintenance to the property owned by the council. Following the election the new council has sorted most of the problems and set in place a maintenance programme for the property for which it is responsible. St. Bride's and Ogmores villages are now working in harmony to the benefit of the community. It is with that in mind that they would be reluctant to agree to a split with a new council being formed.

On the other hand the Vale Council's Unitary Development Plan for the future mentions allocated land for approximately 500 houses at the Ogmores School Camp. Traffic problems, surface water and foul drainage would be a major problem to cope with this development. If the UDP is approved then Ogmores by Sea would definitely require its own council. If the vote was for the status quo then there would be no way to reverse that decision should the Vale Council develop the School Camp area. On the basis of the need for new housing in the UK they thought that the Vale Council will in future allow the development at Ogmores by Sea therefore it will need its own Council.

They considered that the only way to safeguard the interest of the residents of Ogmores by Sea is to take advantage of the suggestion to divide the St. Bride's Community Council to form two new Community Councils, St. Bride's Major and Ogmores by Sea, incorporating Southerndown which has been neglected as a community for far too long.

A resident of Ogmores by Sea wrote to express his displeasure at the proposal to split St. Bride's Major Community Council. He states that Ogmores is well represented on the Council and if there has been any neglect of facilities in Ogmores itself, it was not due to lack of representation. Most of the problems mentioned in the proforma that has been signed by residents would not be in the remit of the council whether it be in Ogmores or St. Bride's. On the question of location, considering how close the small area actually is, he asks if it matters what the council is called. If local politicians really feel the need to canvass people's views then they should knock doors and talk to people, not just hold surveys which may indicate nothing at all, except an exercise in so called 'democracy'. He goes on to say that it might in fact distort the majority view, with the possibility of tapping into things of which most people would have no interest. His view was the fewer councillors and councils there are the better.

A resident of Ogmores by Sea made the point that she was not aware that a 'special meeting' had been called at the church hall at St. Bride's Major on 23rd March, many more people would have attended had there been more publicity.

With regard to the proposal to separate the two communities, she could see no practical reasons to do so. There would be an additional cost in running two councils, plus it is clear to her that there is some empire building taking place. She asked if there was a need for all these councillors deciding very little about anything.

The fact that St. Bride's, Southerndown and Ogmores by Sea are joined makes sense due to the relatively small size and population and it appears to have worked well over 50 years. She continued to say that it appears from previous press reports that Councillors have been squabbling at meetings and that it is not a good reason to split two communities which have existed together for years. She states that she is against the proposal to split.

A resident of Ogmores by Sea wrote as a resident for the last 16 years and a former member for the Vale of Glamorgan Council and St. Bride's Major Community Council (1995-1999) with observations regarding the opposition to a proposed split as follows:

- The present community of St. Bride's Major represents the old parish, civil and ecclesiastical, which has existed for many centuries. Any division of the community would therefore constitute a break in the historical past which would cause great regret to its inhabitants in whichever ward or electoral division they may live. It would not be confined only to those who attend the parish church.
- Until comparatively recently, up to the 1960's, Ogmore by Sea was thinly settled. It has never had any community facilities worth the name, not even a school. A proposal to set up a village hall in the 1970's never got off the ground, and although he tried to revive interest in the idea when he was a councillor, it was clear that there was no general support from residents, particularly new arrivals.
- Recently, a small but vocal minority of Ogmore by Sea have tried to set up a wholly artificial opposition of interests between the electoral wards of the community. They gained some electoral success in the community council elections in 2008.
- The lack of facilities in Ogmore by Sea is due mainly to the fact that many people live in the village part time only as second home owners. A separate community council for the village would not in itself be able to provide such facilities. It would not provide a 'stronger voice', but on the contrary a weaker one. He understood that the Welsh Assembly is in favour of strengthening local democracy by creating larger and more effective communities. The need for this was seen by St. Bride's community council in the past, when it took an active part in the Western Vale Liaison Group with other neighbouring community councils. Since May 2008, such co-operation has ceased.
- He believes it is incorrect to say that residents of St. Bride's Major and Ogmore by Sea regard themselves as having very little in common. Since he came to the area in 1993, he states that he has made friends in all parts of the community, as well as the neighbouring communities of Wick and Ewenny.
- He believes that the proposal to divide the community is ill considered, and makes a specious appeal to a narrow sectional interest on Ogmore by Sea. A separate community council in Ogmore by Sea would be able to do little, if anything, which the existing community council cannot do, and which a wider council, including perhaps Wick and Ewenny would not be able to do better.
- The problems which affect Ogmore by Sea such as litter, traffic and so on are not peculiar to it, but are common to all rural communities in the western Vale and beyond. The way to solve them is by co-operation between the communities, not by each small village in isolation. He believed this approach would have support in those other communities.
- He believes that the proposal in question has not been widely ventilated in the whole community, and needs to be considered much more fully before any final recommendations are made by the Commission.

A resident of Southerndown wrote to give details of a leaflet he had received through his door and to explain why he is against the community splitting. The observations he made in his letter were as follows:

- The leaflet suggested that it was an official document sent out jointly by the St. Bride's community council and the Commission, which he was sure, was not the case.
- Some residents had not received the leaflet and to ask for comments to be submitted within such a short timescale struck him as being undemocratic. Such literature needed to be delivered by post to every affected household.
- It was the first time that he and many other residents had heard about the proposal. He suggested the need for properly organised public awareness and meetings to spell out the positives and negatives of such a change.

- Residents of the St. Bride's Major ward had received no information at all. He wrote that this too was undemocratic and any decision as important as this should be taken by the whole of the community council area.
- The leaflet mentioned a consultation in 2008, again he had not heard of this and questioned how official it was, where the results were published, who did the analysis and what questions were asked.
- The whole idea of splitting the community council goes against the wishes of the Welsh Assembly Government who would prefer larger units. He goes on to mention Merthyr-mawr and Bryn-tyrion communities contemplating joining together to make for a more useful precept.
- He considered it to be a very retrograde step to split the community council in this way. He was a community Councillor for almost twenty years between 1974 and 1996 and assures that the council always acted in the best interests of the whole area. Recent events surrounding the council suggest to him some strange desire to drive a wedge between the communities. He states he would be very strongly against the split.
- He raised the question where Southerndown should be linked should the split ever occur and stated that most in the Southerndown area see connections with St. Bride's Major to be much stronger than those with Ogmore by Sea.

He asked that on the basis of his comments that the Commission consider halting the process to give sufficient time for the whole community to consider the implications of the proposals. He added that he had copied his AM, Jane Hutt, into his letter.

In further correspondence from him, he added that as far as he was aware he did not recognise some of the issues outlined in the draft proposals and that the Community Council did not operate exclusively or deliberately in favour of the St. Bride's ward when he was a Community Councillor himself. Any 'animosity' mentioned has occurred since 2004. He felt that a united council representing both areas, as well as Southerndown, is likely to be much stronger both financially and politically, to best represent the electorate.

He continued, stating that there was a case for an extension of the consultation process, to allow residents in St. Bride's Major to consider their position. He finished saying that there should be a properly conducted referendum of the whole Community Council area, and if the decision of that vote would be to proceed with two councils then fair enough, at least everyone would have had a chance to have participated.

A resident of Southerndown wrote to say that after speaking with various people resident in Southerndown it appeared that there was very little interest in the community council, as any decisions rarely, if at all affect the Southerndown community.

In view of that, he considered that Southerndown should be regarded as a community separate from either St. Bride's Major or Ogmore by Sea. If Southerndown could not be recognised as a community on its own, then he considered being a part of an Ogmore by Sea community council would be more preferable.

A resident of Southerndown wrote regarding the position of Southerndown and the proposed split of the Community Council. As residents of Southerndown for over 50 years, they wanted to support any motion to keep Southerndown with St. Bride's Major Council because of the strong ties they share. Reasons for this were stated as follows:

- On historic grounds – the close connection of the Dunraven family and estates with both Southerndown and St. Bride's, the Dunraven grounds border both villages.

- Geographic – footpaths which bring both villages into close proximity (from the pool in St. Bride's to the beach and Green Lane pathway). The roadway over Southerndown to Heol y Mynydd to St. Bride's. In comparison there is a natural divide after West Farm until you reach Ogmore.
- Farming – Slade Farm lands are within St. Bride's and Southerndown boundaries.
- Organisations – Southerndown has given its name to several organisations, which actually use the facilities in St. Bride's. Southerndown Mothers Union, one of the oldest in Wales is based in St. Bride's. The historic Southerndown Road Station, which is situated in Castle upon Alun, shows the close connection between the two villages.
- The church in St. Bride's is the mother church to the much smaller Southerndown church 'All Saints'. Both have strong connections with Dunraven. The land that All Saints is built on is Dunraven land, but is financed and run from St. Bride's.

For the reasons stated their preference would be to stay with St. Bride's Council.

A resident of Ogmore by Sea wrote to strongly object to the proposed division of the parish, which could impose nothing but increased costs to parishioners.

A resident of Ogmore by Sea wrote to say no splitting up, no division please.

A resident of Southerndown wrote in reference to the proposed changes, he thought it essential that Southerndown be recognised as a ward in its own right, whether it is part of St. Bride's or Ogmore.

A resident of Ogmore by Sea requested that the Commission recommend that the Welsh Assembly do not divide the Parish of Ogmore by Sea and St. Bride's into two separate councils. She believes that the community benefits from the wider community, and that a split would mean an increase in council tax for all villagers in both St. Bride's and Ogmore.

She states that the community already has a strong voice regarding any planning issues that may arise in either St. Bride's or Ogmore by Sea. The villages are closely linked regarding access issues and the use of joint facilities. She would rather see the combined council be ranked higher in the Vale of Glamorgan communities and benefit from the resources that they should enjoy given that size, without incurring any more council tax increases.

A combined council with the right members elected should be able to have a strong voice and work closely with the Vale Council in a close productive relationship as opposed to the historical conflict has been experienced particularly from Ogmore members of the council.

Two residents of Southerndown commented on the proposal to separate St. Bride's, Southerndown and Ogmore by Sea into two separate council areas. They failed to see what merit the split might have. If the proposal is agreed, they state that part of the new areas would be without a Community Centre Hall (nowhere for older people or youth to meet), a Church, a School, a Post Office, a village shop and they would have a much smaller voice to ask for future action. They say that they fail to see how such a move could be classed as having merit. They wanted to register that there were two votes for the proposal to be dropped and for the current boundaries to remain in place.

Two residents of Southerndown stated that they would prefer the Community Council area to stay as it is, to include St. Bride's Major, Southerndown and Ogmore by Sea. They added that if the area had to be split, they would prefer to stay with St. Bride's Major.

A resident of St. Bride's Major wrote in response to the Draft Proposals report and having read the letters contained therein was writing to object, and to add his comments and observations to the discussion.

Points were raised about discord and troubles in the community council meetings. Prior to the 2004 elections it was a pleasure to attend community council meetings in the village. It was also from 2004 onwards that the St. Bride's Major Community Council was effectively frozen, plagued with disputes and disruptions which resulted in suspended meetings and many complaints to the Monitoring Officer. The disruptive and aggressive behaviours started immediately following the 2004 election resulting in allegations and counter allegations, the loss of a wealth of local knowledge and skills in experienced councillors and the loss of numerous clerks.

He took particular issue with the representation published in respect of the discord within the community council and as someone who had attended many council meetings, going back a long time, he believes that the author is misguided in his understanding of the causes of the problems within the council and the relationships between the people of the two wards. He confirms that such disruptive behaviours and animosity as seen in council meetings since 2004 were not evident in any of the meetings he attended prior to the 2004 election. He admits there were disagreements from time to time, as is natural in any body of people, but certainly not of the nature seen and published in the press in the last 5 years. It is precisely because of such behaviours that seasoned and experienced councillors stood down in 2008 and new people did not come forward to stand for election. He was asked by a number of villagers and councillors to stand and declined for the same reasons. Moreover, the problems continued and they have since lost a further 2 councillors. Instead of encouraging the break-up of the community council, he believes these councillors' efforts should be put into healing any perceived rifts and pulling the villages together.

He also believes this appears to be a concerted and deliberate method by which a few people are working to achieve a separate community council in Ogmore by Sea.

There is much made of the lack of action by "the Authorities" and perceived lack of amenities for Ogmore by Sea. Perhaps if those councillors who saw fit to disrupt the council workings from 2004 onwards had worked with the other councillors instead of against them, all of which was widely publicised in the local press, they may have put up a united, more persistent front to these "authorities" and won some much needed action and facilities.

As regards amenities, Ogmore by Sea already has many within the proposed new area that many other communities across the UK would be only too delighted to boast: village shop and Post Office, Church, tapas bar, the sea and beach complete with Lifeguard Station, common land to walk with many new public seats built during the term of the previous council (2004-2008), children's playground, bus service with bus shelters maintained by the community council, golf club, historic castle, 2 pubs, horse riding and pony trekking centre, antiques shop, garden decking & shed centre.

Add to this the many other amenities available within 3 miles of Ogmore by Sea including: Primary School, Priory, Parish Church and Graveyard, cricket club with pavilion, football field with pavilion, village hall, scout hall, a variety of small shops, another Post Office, 3 more pubs, 2 cafes, another garden centre, historic potteries, plus B&Bs, hotel at Ewenny and retail parks on the A48. He states that it is a village rich in amenities and the truth is far from the claim.

He agreed that the children's playground is poorly equipped and there is a problem with traffic and parking in Ogmore by Sea but a larger community council, all pulling together, has more power to its elbow to raise funds and deal with them. With regards to Ogmore by Sea, needing its own village hall, the question is what has the Village Hall Committee and its trustees done in the last 10 years. How much and where are the funds they hold to this end and what are they doing now?

As regards private businesses closing such as pubs, hotel, shops etc, this is no different to any other small community where local support is insufficient to keep them financially viable and passing or seasonable trade is insufficient to make up the difference. This is the result of the economic climate, changing lifestyles and perhaps changes in personal circumstances of some of the proprietors.

All of this is no good reason to split the community council. The existing council area means a larger overall income and an ability to provide better facilities and services so long as councillors work in harmony with each other. However, following a recent open meeting of the St Bride's Major Community Council and after considering all the troubles in the community council since 2004, although he believes it to be a wrong course of action, the only reason he could give in favour would be that perhaps then the St. Bride's Major Community Council can return to common sense and concentrate on serving the St. Bride's Major and Southerndown community, instead of infighting with councillors who it appears never had any intention of serving the larger community properly from the start

A resident of Ogmore by Sea welcomed the opportunity to place a duly considered viewpoint on the suggestion that Ogmore by Sea should have its own Community Council. He heartily disagrees with the split. He believed that the idea had been thought up in recent years and is without foundation, promoted by a tiny minority of people which was never an issue in the village over several years.

The entity of the 3 villages of St. Bride's Major, Southerndown and Ogmore by Sea have co-existed as a Community Council since 1974 and was fair and harmonious as a council unit at least until 2004, when what can only be described as minority disruptive elements with their own agendas infiltrated the Council both from within and without. This has persisted over the past 5 years to the point we find ourselves in today.

His personal involvement with Ogmore by Sea includes living in the village since 1970, standing for election in 1974, being elected in 1979 and remaining a councillor on the Community Council until 2008. With a period of 29 years unbroken service, he concluded his service as the most senior member of the outgoing Ogmore by Sea Councillors. During his tenure, he served as chairman for 5 individual years. He states that he has also served widely elsewhere in local government with 8 years on Mid Glamorgan County Council, 20 Years on Ogwr Borough Council, 25 years on Bridgend Town Council, 3 years on Bridgend County Borough Council and a year on Merthyr Mawr Community Council, so has a good idea of how local government works.

Subsequent to the community election in 2004 the ensuing 4 year period was a constant round of upheaval and rancour caused by a minority of individuals. In that short time the council sustained the loss of no less than 4 Community Clerks who could not stand the unpleasantness within the Council. One new Councillor resigned for the same reason. At the 2008 elections, no less than 7 out of the 11 councillors decided not to stand again and a wealth of knowledge and experience was lost to the Council at a stroke, the situation had become intolerable. Since the election, a further 2 Councillors and a Clerk have resigned. Testimony to the rancour that continues to surround the Council.

During the period 2004-08 countless alleged matters were directed to the Monitoring Officer at the Vale Council and to the Local Government Ombudsman. The majority of complaints were rejected and those that were upheld were of a minor nature. St. Bride's Major Council tops the 'league' of approaches to the authorities and has needlessly cost the taxpayer many thousands of pounds in the process. The Council has been destabilised with no good purpose served.

As a resident of 40 years he knew nothing of the 'consultation period last year' when it is said that 300 residents of Ogmore by Sea wrote in support of the division. If it was arranged locally, it was very selective in who was asked their opinion, he states that he was not asked. He also wanted to question whether residents of Southerndown and St. Bride's were similarly consulted, as any change would affect them directly. If not, then why not? He only learned of the consultation when a leaflet was posted through his door and he takes the following views on points quoted as the 'need' for a division of villages:

- 'Residents have reported problems but very little has been done' – he assures the Commission that every time any resident has reported a matter to the Council over the past 30 years it has been taken up by the authority concerned. Most problems raised at Community level cannot be cured by the Community Council being out with their scope and responsibility. To suggest anything has been brushed aside is absurd.
- 'Noise and nuisance from car parks, dogs mess and litter on the common' – These are matters in the realm of the County Borough. No Community Council has the powers or means to stop them.
- 'During summer months our streets are clogged with parked cars' – Again a matter for the highway authority and the police, not the Community Council. Ogmore by Sea is an attractive coastal village. You would expect nothing else than visitors in good weather and anybody living in such an area understands fully that it attracts extra traffic.
- 'Speeding vehicles remain a constant threat' – Again a police matter and nothing unique to the village.
- 'Sewage frequently pours onto the common' – This matter relates to one isolated area that has been problematic for a period of years and which the relevant authorities seem unable to cure. The Community Council certainly cannot cure it.
- 'Locals have to travel outside the village to access facilities' – Yes, indeed they do and it has been so for decades. There were two shops but the village can barely sustain one. There were 4 pubs but the village would not or could not sustain them so now there are none. The main primary school and church is outside the village, a matter of geography and not unusual. No meeting hall – the villagers are very mobile and travel to outlying facilities.
- 'More residential development' – Yes possibly, but numbers are unclear and any change in population is taken into account after the event, not on projections.
- 'Properly run Council could secure grants etc.' – The Council has been properly run over past decades, to say otherwise is untrue and what grants have been available over the years have been secured.
- 'Community needs strong independent voice etc.' – The community is the three villages and has always made itself heard in the right places.

Turning to the future, it is his long held view that current Community Councils need to amalgamate, not fragment. What was a correct structure in 1974 when the present Community Councils were established may not be right now. This is in view of the welter of legislation and bureaucracy which has been steadily imposed on Councils at the lowest tier which they are all expected to enforce to the highest level with no extra funding.

In order to attract the best qualified clerk and offer good value for money, Councils need to amalgamate so that costs can be spread more widely. The days are gone when local residents with a community sense of duty would take on the task of Clerk at little recompense to themselves. Current legislation demands a higher level of expertise and such persons are few and far between. This leads to the fact that nowhere in all the protestations about forming yet another council, are the public told how much it is going to cost them for a dilution of the current situation and where the extra qualified Clerk is to be found.

It is simple economics that if you force an extra council on an area, you immediately double the cost of bureaucracy. Rather than spread the total costs around three villages, you can cause each to stump up more money to achieve either the present level of service, or possibly a lesser service. He questions whether anyone who may be in favour of the split has properly costed the proposal or looked at future consequences. It will be too late after the event. All that appears to be on offer in general terms is some better utopia.

As a villager of 40 years he urges the Commission to stand back from the situation and take a long hard look at the background to the proposal. In his view, any fragmentation will be a backward step for local democracy, whereas we should be looking to build on what we have at present with the prospect of further local amalgamations.

He concludes that the current Council consisting of 11 members with very little collective experience has seen fit to put the Community Tax up by 124% this year, at a time of the worst economic climate in living memory, a poor indicator for the future of the area.

A resident of St. Bride's Major wrote as former chairman of St. Bride's Community Council to tell of his disappointment that some members of the current Community Council are still pursuing a scheme to establish, after over 100 years, a separate Council for Ogmore by Sea.

He feels that the way it appears to be carried out is undemocratic, with a claim being made that 300 people in Ogmore by Sea are in favour of the separation, while there is no apparent record of numbers of individuals against the proposal. He understands that certain people in two villages have received letters about the proposal, and states that his household had not received anything. He had been made aware that some notices had been put on lamp posts in St. Bride's Major with a deadline to respond by and does not think that it constitutes proper consultation.

He is against the splitting of the communities into separate Councils for the following reasons:

- From Welsh Assembly guidelines in recent years it is clear that they wish communities to work closer together for the common good. Current Welsh Assembly Government proposals to reduce the number of Community Health Councils from 22 to 7, supported by 23 new 'Community Associations' re-affirms this thinking.
- During his term as Councillor, the 'guidelines' were raised and subsequent dialogue took place with 3 neighbouring Community Councils. The possible joining of the 4 Councils (with which he is in favour) was raised by one or two Councillors. It was agreed that the 'Western Vale' Liaison Group be formed to provide a stronger voice regarding issues common to the 4 Councils. Subsequent meetings included the presence of the local MP and AM who both supported the principle of the new liaison group.
- St. Bride's has a village school which is attended by children from the 3 villages in the community, and from neighbouring villages outside the community.

- St. Bridget's church, whose graveyard is the responsibility of St. Bride's Community Council, serves 3 communities. Under current rules, if Ogmore by Sea became separate burial charges would double for that community. In addition, the precept would have to be raised to pay for a separate clerk. St. Bride's would also have less people to pay for their clerk and maintenance of the churchyard.
- Current community groups regularly bring people together from the 3 villages such as Friends of the Heritage Coast Project Committee, Church Saturday morning coffee club and the Women's Institute.
- St. Bride's Major Community Council currently represents 2300 electors, and there are other Councils in the Vale of Glamorgan which represent similar or larger numbers such as St. Athan, Wenvoe and Sully.

He understood that there had been comments made about discord and animosity between villages and that Ogmore by Sea has been poorly represented. He thought it important to examine the proposal by re-visiting the experiences of the Community Council of 2004-08. The subject of splitting was first raised at the inaugural meeting of the new Council in 2004 by 3 of the 5 Councillors representing Ogmore by Sea. The 3 Councillors were elected as 'independents' with no mention of their intention to separate Ogmore by Sea on the manifesto they circulated.

By the end of the 4 year term of the Council, one Councillor and 4 Clerks had resigned. In addition 7 Councillors decided not to put their names forward for re-election, 5 of those with a total of over 100 years service. The existing Council of 11 members is made up of 8 new Councillors and since May 2008 has lost 2 who also resigned.

Since its inauguration in 2008, the Council has not taken part in any Western Vale Liaison Group meetings, and has discontinued membership of One Voice Wales, which provided advice and a link with all other first tier Councils in the Vale of Glamorgan and other parts of Wales, which had been established over 15 years or so.

As Vice-Chairman of the area committee he was advised by One Voice Wales that the type of problems St. Bride's Major Community Council had been experiencing had resulted in 2 Community Councils in south Wales being disbanded. As a Councillor for about 20 years he was concerned about the feasibility and motives behind such a scheme and he requested that the Commission consider the points he had raised and requested a properly constituted referendum take place so that everyone gets to vote on the matter.

A resident of Ogmore by Sea wanted to make representation against the boundary change that would split Ogmore by Sea and St. Bride's. He believed that both Ogmore and St. Bride's benefit from the wider community, particularly given that the school, church and graveyard are situated in St. Bride's.

A resident of Ogmore by Sea wrote to say that she in emphatically opposed to the division of the Community Council.

A resident of Heol y Mynydd, Southerndown wrote to say that the proposal that Southerndown might prefer to be linked to the proposed new community council would not be acceptable to him as a charge payer. The reasons for this being:

- The hamlet of Heol y Mynydd has always been linked to Southerndown but has historical ties and looks to St. Bride's Major for its services such as Post Office, shops, church, church hall, school, sports fields, children's play area and war memorial.

- As a resident of Heol y Mynydd for some 40 years, he found it sad that Ogmores by Sea wishes to form its own community, but as a past community councillor, he was not surprised as for some twenty years, councillors in St. Bride's and Ogmores found it difficult to work together for the benefit of the community.

A resident of St. Bride's Major wrote to say that he has lived in Southerndown for over 40 years with his wife and two children who enjoyed the village and surrounding area. He has been aware of the limited but vital role that local councils play in trying to maintain the social fabric and the local council has done the thankless task for a very long time, with many people of outstanding character/ professional lives / voluntary work etc.

He goes on to say that there has undoubtedly been an 'orchestrated' campaign of disruption in past years which has unfortunately had an effect of the community council losing a great number of highly qualified committed councillors. He believes that this is at the bottom of the current campaign to split the council up, which would be sad as there is no reason why the combined council cannot work to the advantage of all concerned.

He has always been suspicious of 'campaign' groups organising petitions and is sure that before any separation of Ogmores by Sea from St. Bride's Major / Southerndown is concerned, it would require a completely independent sounding of opinions from all voters with full financial/administrative/ beneficial impact study and proposals being placed before voters.

He concludes that it is his personal opinion that local councils should be given more powers and responsibilities over day to day issues such as grass cutting/street cleaning/graffiti etc and that splitting and reducing council sizes would not help in this matter.

A resident of Southerndown suggested that Southerndown be linked to St. Bride's and not Ogmores by Sea, the reason being that residents of Southerndown are more closely aligned to St. Bride's for the following reasons:

- School children attend the school in St. Bride's
- Toddlers attend nursery in St. Bride's
- Many churchgoers attend the church in St. Bride's
- The shop and Post Office in St. Bride's is closer to Southerndown and most residents go there rather than Ogmores by Sea

He believes that the suggestion that Ogmores and St. Bride's have more in common as they are 'coastal villages' has little merit and it should be noted that the suggested planning developments for Ogmores would significantly increase its size, dwarfing Southerndown.

Finally he adds that the orchestrated campaigning of a few individuals, targeting Ogmores and Southerndown residents, through house to house visits and delivery of documents as opposed to the posting of documents in St. Bride's has resulted in a biased response to the proposals.

3 residents of Ogmores by Sea and 4 residents of St. Bride's Major requested that the Commission recommend not to divide the parish into two separate community councils. They believed that it would benefit the wider community to keep the status quo and that a split would increase the council tax for all villagers in St. Bride's and Ogmores. They also mentioned retaining the existing school and the church.

They state that the community already has a strong voice regarding any planning issues that may arise in either St. Bride's or Ogmores and that the villages are closely linked regarding access issues and the use of joint facilities. They would rather see the combined community

ranked higher in the Vale of Glamorgan communities and benefit from the resources that everyone should enjoy given that size, without incurring any more council tax increase.

A combined council with the right members elected should be able to have a strong voice and work closely with the Vale Council in a productive relationship as opposed to the historical conflict experienced, partly due to the Ogmores members of the council.

4 residents of Ogmores by Sea wrote the same letter outlining that they agree with the views expressed to divide the current Community Council and wanted to add that the villages of St. Bride's Major and Ogmores by Sea have very little in common. The former being essentially a rural village and the latter a seaside village, with the village of Southerndown having much more in common with Ogmores by Sea.

They supported the option of splitting the Ogmores by Sea ward from St. Bride's Major and forming a new Community Council in Ogmores by Sea. Should the residents of Southerndown wish to join Ogmores by Sea, they were sure that they would be most welcome to. If Southerndown did not wish to join Ogmores by Sea then they were certain that Ogmores by Sea could stand alone as a Community Council.

258 residents of Ogmores by Sea by individual pro-forma, supported provision of a new Community Council to be set up for Ogmores by Sea based on the Ogmores by Sea ward of St. Bride's Major Community Council. The pro-forma outlined the basis for their request as follows:

I request that you recommend to the Welsh Assembly Government that the existing community council areas of St. Bride's Major be divided to create a new community council area coterminous with the existing Ogmores by Sea ward boundaries.

I believe Southerndown shares many of the problems faced by Ogmores and would welcome its inclusion in the new area if its residents are in support.

I believe that such arrangements would enhance the provision of effective and convenient local government in the area.

A new council area based on the Ogmores by Sea ward would be viable with around 800 electors or 920 if joined with Southerndown. Of the 25 Vale of Glamorgan communities the new area would rank 12th or 11th in size and could act as an equal partner with neighbouring communities in working to secure effective services and facilities in the rural western Vale.

Our community needs a strong independent voice to make sure that local concerns are effectively heard at all levels of government.

With Ogmores by Sea and Southerndown earmarked by the Vale Council as suitable for additional residential development, both villages could more than double in size in the next 15 years. A new community area would give local people a stronger, more focussed say in the planning process.

Ogmores by Sea, Southerndown and St. Bride's Major villages each have their own distinct community identities and issues. Under the requested changes I believe social ties with our neighbours would remain strong and local democracy would be improved. The new community could better focus on local issues and provide an additional voice where there are interests in common with nearby communities.

Please take the necessary steps to provide effective and convenient local government for our communities.