

1.	I support the wish of Broadhembury Council to increase the number of councillors.
2.	This is to confirm that, as a member of Broadhembury Parish, I support the Parish Council's plan to increase the number of Councillors from 9 to 12.
3.	Many thanks for your email regarding Broadhembury Parish Council number from 9 to 12. Could I log my support for the council becoming 12 members Could I also log my wifes supports
4.	I support the desire of Broadhembury Parish Council to increase the legal number of councillors from nine to twelve.
5.	I support the increase of parish councillors for Broadhembury Parish Council.
6.	Thank you for your letter dated 23rd August informing me that my Parish Council are requesting an increase in the number of councillors permitted. I've looked at some documentation and would support the increase to twelve from the current nine.
7.	I am writing in response to the consultation letter about increasing the number of parish councillors. We fully support this given the highly dispersed nature of the parish, and the importance of good local governance.
8.	Many thanks for your letter regarding Broadhembury Parish Council members. Can I add my support to the council moving from 9x to 12x members. Can I also add my wife's support for the move from 9x to 12x.
9.	I am in support of additional Parish councillors for Broadhembury to ensure democracy and quality of representation.
10.	I support the parish council in their wish to increase the number of parish councillors.
11.	I write in regard of the "Community Governance Review" currently underway for Broadhembury Parish Council. I am happy to support the democratic will of the council and their request to increase the number of councillors from nine to twelve. I will continue to support the council as they undertake their important work for the community.
12.	I am writing in response to your consultation regarding increasing the size of Broadhembury Parish Council. I live in Dulford, one of the outlying hamlets

	<p>in the parish mentioned in the Council's proposal and I would like to express strong support for increasing the number of councillors to twelve.</p> <p>Our parish councillors work very hard on our behalf and there is far too much work for nine people to accomplish. In addition, in Dulford we have one parish councillor. He has worked very hard for us on the two issues that most affect this village/ hamlet: dangerous speeding traffic (the 30mph speed limit is frequently ignored by people driving at 50+ mph) and very poor broadband provision. If Dulford and the other hamlets could have increased representation on a larger parish council, then it would be easier for our councillors to do the work and they would probably be more successful in their work for us.</p> <p>I hope the parish council's proposal will succeed.</p>
13.	<p>It is my belief that the number of councillors on Broadhembury Parish Council should be increased from 9 to 12. In light of the ever-increasing demands on councillors' time, I believe that the number on the Parish Council must be increased if all action, representation and support to the parish is to be fulfilled.</p>
14.	<p>With reference to increasing the number of councillors from nine to twelve this is a move as a parishioner and councillor I would support as being very beneficial to the Parish.</p> <p>In an era where resources are clearly limited, having more councillors will enable us to engage the community more to help in the parish, and to seek grant and crowd funding as appropriate to help with initiatives.</p> <p>Councillors work for free, so this move will enable councillors to lead valuable community work, at little if any extra cost.</p> <p>Both myself and my wife support this increase.</p>
15.	<p>I confirm my support</p>
16.	<p>With reference to your recent letter I support the increase of parish councillors for Broadhembury Parish Council.</p>
17.	<p>As requested by you and also our Parish Council Chairman, this household has no problem with the number of Parish Councillors being increased to 12.</p> <p>The P.C. Chairman's reasons look sound, and he has our respect and support.</p> <p>Please consider this as YES.</p>
18.	<p>I am in favour of an increase of three in the Broadhembury Parish Council. This would lessen the load for the remaining members and if areas of the parish are not fully represented then they should be with a preference for more youthful candidates</p>

Summary of my view

At a recent BPC meeting, the councillors referred to themselves as being “elected-unopposed”. From the EDDC records, the current nine councillors have been co-opted - and hence not put forward to be actively voted for by parishioners - for at least the last 13 years (at least 4 election opportunities). This ongoing practice of co-option demonstrates – contrary to the assertion of BPC - a difficulty in attracting candidates. It therefore seems unreasonable to assume that a sufficient number of candidates would be attracted to enable the quantity to be increased to 12 councillors. Furthermore, more than 1 candidate for each 48 parishioners (at least 13 candidates, and ideally 24) on the electoral register would need to put their name forward to trigger an election. Given that more than 1 in 64 have not put their name forward over at least the last 13 years, it seems unreasonable to expect that more than 1 in 48 would do so in the future. Thus, the democratic expectation that our local arm of Government – which is what a Parish Council is - will be voted for would become even further diminished.

Conclusion

I recognise that the activity level expected from a Parish Council has increased. I also recognise that the role of the Parish Council is an important one. Indeed, it is sufficiently important that they should actively be elected every four years by parishioners (not “co-opted” and then becoming “elected-unopposed”). **Therefore, I do not support the increase from 9 to 12 Parish Councillors within Broadhembury Parish Council.** The rationale for not providing my support is that the public's democratic expectation of elections being held will be even further reduced.

Recommendations

Alternative ways forward are:

- Reduce the expectations, and therefore the workload, being placed upon Parish Councils.
- Parish Councils to better encourage voluntary groups, societies, and trusts within the Parish to undertake tasks that are not statutory requirements of the Parish Council.
- To introduce regulation that ensures voting for parish councillors takes place on a four yearly cycle. Thus removing the practice of co-opted councillors from becoming “elected un-opposed”.