

# BOROUGH OF COVINGTON

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## MUNICIPAL ELECTION

1st NOVEMBER, 1946

Polling 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Your Voting Number is 542

### To the Electors

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

On 11th December last, you did me the honour of electing me to a seat on the Borough Council.

This seat became vacant on the elevation of Councillor D. C. Watts to the Aldermanic Bench. As this was a Bye-Election, it now becomes necessary for me to offer myself for re-election on 1st November, 1946. I, therefore, respectfully solicit your votes again, on that date.

In accordance with the sentiments expressed in my last election address, I immediately devoted my earnest attention to a study of the general situation of the Borough, with regard to the development policy of the Central Government, and came to the conclusion that the Borough Council, with its very slender financial resources (1d. rate produces £22), is incapable of carrying out the ever-increasing demands imposed on local authorities by the legislation of recent years, and the post-war problems. A pronounced increase in the expenditure of local authorities is inevitable in the conditions now prevailing. Higher costs of materials, wages, and salaries will make the maintenance of public services, at even a pre-war standard, more onerous than before. New duties in respect of education, housing, planning, public health, and other services will result from legislation already passed, or foreshadowed. Even though new or increased Government grants are given, some part of the added cost is bound to fall upon Local Funds.

burden of rates, which I visualised, in connection with the preceding paragraph, I tabled the following resolution for the consideration of the Borough Council :

“That in view of the provisions of the Local Government (Boundary Commission) Act, 1945, repealing sections 140, 143, and 146, and amending Section 141, of the Local Government Act, 1933 (these sections refer to the powers vested in County Councils), this Council shall approach the Cowbridge Rural District Council with a view to joint representation being made to the Boundary Commission under paragraphs 6 (2), and 9, of the *Commissioners' Practice Notes, First Series*”.

The following is a brief outline of the Boundary Commission Act, 1945, as applicable to the case of the Borough :

(a) “The Government intend to deal with the question of Local Government Re-organisation, by establishing a Local Government Boundary Commission, and investing this body with the powers embracing those of the County Council and the Ministry of Health, relating to County Reviews under the Local Government Act, 1933.”

(b) **Powers of the Commission.**

“The Commission shall have power to unite a county with another county, or a county borough with another county borough, or to unite a non-county borough with another non-county borough, or an urban or rural district council with another district, whether urban or rural, or **to include an urban or rural district in a non-county borough.**”

*Extract from the Report on the White Paper, “Local Government in England and Wales”.*

The following statement contained on page 13, under the heading “Linking Town and Country” (second para.) is generally taken to be reassuring to the small towns with ancient charters :

“It is widely felt that the time has come for a different approach to this subject, and for a recognition of the fact that the interests of the country town and its surrounding countryside are not diverse, but complementary, and the Government contemplate that in a number of cases, the enlargements of the limits of a country town to include some surrounding territory **may** be desirable. **Such an enlargement would not affect the status or charter of a borough.**”

**This statement can be misleading if it is not read very carefully, as it does not, of course, mean that the status or charter of a borough that is not enlarged will not be affected.**”

Commissioners Practice Notes, First Series, para. 6 (2) reads :—“The Commission would be prepared exceptionally to give early consideration to any other case which appeared to them, by reason of special circumstances, to be really urgent, provided that the case could be dealt with as part of an ordered review of any other Local Government areas which might be affected.” These cases will be known as “**Exceptional Priority Cases**”.

Para. 9 reads :—

**Exceptional Priority Cases.**—“Applications can be made by county councils in respect of alterations of county districts, or **representations can be made by Councils of Non-County Boroughs, Urban and Rural districts.**”

The Borough Council could have taken independent action in the matter, but my reasons for the resolution were threefold.

Firstly, under the terms of the Boundary Commission Act, any other authority concerned has the right of appeal. A Public Inquiry would follow, the costs of which would be borne by the authorities concerned, and the Borough Council are not well placed, financially, to do this.

Secondly, much valuable time, probably well over a year, is saved by the joint application.

Thirdly, as the application affects the Rural District Council, it was a matter of common courtesy that they be consulted beforehand.

This resolution was unanimously adopted by the Council, and submitted to the Rural District Council. I had the honour of being selected by your Council to present the case on their behalf. The Rural District Council agreed that joint representation should be made to the Boundary Commission under the terms of my resolution. The formal application was jointly submitted to the Boundary Commission on 25th July, 1946, and both authorities have been officially informed that this case for amalgamation will be dealt with about the middle of the year 1947.

I should here, like to express my appreciation of the very willing co-operation and industry shown by the members of the Cowbridge Rural District Council, and by the officers of both authorities, in carrying the scheme to a successful conclusion, which is a happy augury for the future.

I submit the following observations in support of the scheme :—

- (1) The combined areas contain an all-in population of about 25,000, and have a rateable value of £81,464
- (2) The product of a 1d. rate is £350 as compared to £22 in the present Borough.
- (3) **SEWERAGE.**—A joint application has been made by the two authorities, under the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1944, for grants towards the cost of a joint scheme for the Borough and the Villages of Aberthin and Llanbleddian, which has now been approved by the Ministry of Health. After giving credit for the grant which the Ministry have indicated will be made available, the proportion of the cost remaining to be borne by the Borough (£5,000) with the subsequent future liability for the annual maintenance costs will impose a very heavy strain on the financial resources of the Borough. On the other hand, the financial resources of the Rural District Council enables them to contemplate proceeding with the scheme, as the incidents of the cost is spread over the whole of the Rural District. The suggested amalgamation of areas would solve this problem, which is one of importance and urgency.

On two previous occasions a sewerage scheme for the Borough has been designed and submitted for Departmental approval, only to be ultimately abandoned for the sole reason that the cost was beyond the financial capacity of the Borough. The product of a penny rate remains the same.

#### (4) **HOUSING**

Plans are completed and awaiting final approval by the Ministry for the erection of 32 houses within the Borough. To meet the demand, the full programme envisages the erection of a further 50 houses. It should be realised that the building of houses is a serious liability on the Rates.

**Each House** that is built will cost the Ratepayers £5/10/ **per year** for the next forty years, and if the full programme were carried out, under present conditions, of building over eighty houses, there is no need to stress the intolerable burden on the ratepayer which would ensue.

The practical effects of extending the Borough Boundary to include the Rural District, are as follows :—

- (A) The whole area with some possible further territory would be known as The Borough of Cowbridge and from the present records would become the largest Non-County Borough in the Country. It is now one of the smallest.
- (B) The present Borough will become a Parish or Ward in the greater one, and the present Council would be dissolved.
- (C) You would be required to elect two, or a possible maximum of three, members to represent you on the new authority.
- (D) The beautiful green belt which surrounds the present Borough would become available for the building of houses for the benefit of those now living under unsatisfactory conditions in the present Borough.
- (E) Ground would become available for acquisition by the Local Authority for the purpose of providing a Playing Field for your children. No grant towards the cost of providing this can be made available by the National Playing Fields Association unless the ground is owned by the Local Authority.

I have, Ladies and Gentlemen, endeavoured to give you, herewith, an outline of the situation, and an account of my activities on your behalf, during my short period of service on the Council which, I trust, will meet with your approval, and your further confidence at the polling booth, on 1st November, next.

I regret that time will not permit me to make a House-to-house canvas.

Yours faithfully,

58 HIGH STREET  
COWBRIDGE.

G. F. WESTCOTT.

20th October, 1946.

**There are FOUR VACANCIES and Electors are entitled to cast up to FOUR VOTES.**