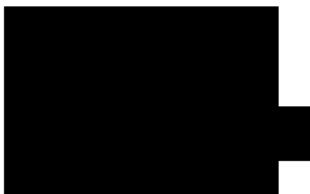


Councillor David Hilton

Ascot and Cheapside Ward



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29th November 2017.

Local Government Boundary Commission of England review of ward boundaries for Windsor and Maidenhead.

Recommendations from Ascot area Councillors and Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council 29th November 2017.

Summary

The Borough Councillors who represent the wards of Ascot and Cheapside, Sunninghill and South Ascot, Sunningdale and Sunninghill & Ascot Parish Council make the following representations on the proposed ward boundary changes for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

We respectfully suggest that we, as the Councillors who represent the Ascot area, are best qualified to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and the need to secure effective and convenient local government. We ask the Boundary Commission to accept these proposals submitted by RBWM's Ascot area ward councillors and Ascot and Sunninghill Parish Council.

Reasons

In the interests of good local government, it is important that borough councillors work in partnership with the Parish Councils of Sunningdale and Sunninghill and South Ascot.

Parish and Ward boundaries are coterminous at present with two councillors representing the Sunningdale ward and Sunningdale Parish Council and five representing the wards of Ascot and Cheapside and Sunninghill and South Ascot and collectively Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council. The Borough Council will make a recommendation that there should be two wards with three councillors in each but this would mean boundaries would be split. This is undesirable and unnecessarily complicated:

- 1) Sunningdale and South Ascot councillors would deal with two parish councils.
- 2) With 2 wards, each would have three councillors; with three wards each would have 2 councillors.
With 2 wards:
 - a) Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council would have to communicate and deal with 6 councillors (3 of whom would also be responsible for Sunningdale); with 3 wards, the Parish Council would have 4 dedicated borough councillors (today they have 5).

- b) Sunningdale Parish Council would deal with 3 councillors who would also be responsible for South Ascot; with 3 wards the Parish Council would have 2 dedicated borough councillors as is the case today.
- 3) Devolution: As more activities are devolved to Parish Councils, including 25% of CIL, the need for Borough and Parish Councillors to work together will increase. Borough councillors dedicated to Parish Councils would reduce complication, facilitate decision taking and improve local governance.
- 4) Geography: South Ascot is closer to the centre of Sunninghill than the centre of Sunningdale (the proposed change is not logical and would cause confusion for South Ascot residents). The fact that 15 years ago there were two wards as is now proposed is not an argument for going back to that arrangement. Changed working practice and good governance should take precedence.
- 5) Neighbourhood Plan: A key objective is to protect the identity of the three villages. With 2 wards, Sunninghill would be part of the Ascot ward. Considerable development is planned for Ascot and the interests of Sunninghill would be best served were the current 3-ward arrangement continue.
- 6) The New Council: 2 councillor wards would be the norm.
- 7) Electorate/ councillor ratio: three wards would mean one ward would be marginally below the minimum.

Electorate per councillor.

The emerging Borough Local Plan (BLP) projects the number of dwellings per ward over the plan period to 2033 as shown in the following table.

developments	number of dwellings			
	Ascot & Cheapside	Sunningdale.	Sunninghill and South Ascot	
Heatherwood	230			
Silwood Park	75			
Ascot High Street	250			
Shorts	80			
Englemere	10			
Sunningdale Park		230		
Broomhall		28		
White House		10		
Station Car Park	30			
Gas Holder site			81	
totals	675	268	81	1024
% Of total new dwellings	65.9%	26.2%	7.9%	

Table 1

No one can know with certainty when the proposed developments will come forward, what we do know is that developers are very active in the Ascot area and a number have sought pre-application advice. One application for 230 dwellings has been approved, another for 81 dwellings has been lodged and a third for more than 140 dwellings will be made in the New Year. In two cases the numbers are above those indicated on the BLP proformas. Councillors in the area take the view that this uncertainty is best managed by assigning projected new development to 2023 in the same proportion as the total projected development in the area, over time this will prove to be the most accurate process.

The following table 1. shows the distribution of 15,375 electors predicted for 2023 by RBWM Officers. Line 1 shows the electorate from the June 27th Council paper. In Line 2 this is adjusted to reflect the fact that it was decided to standardise the electorate per dwelling to 1.79, this makes a significant difference to Sunningdale and increases the total electorate. Line 4 shows the difference between the adjusted total and the predicted total electors. That increase in electors is then apportioned to the three wards in the ratio of the total development shown in Table 1 and Line 5. Line 6 shows the number of additional electors and Line 7 shows the total electors per ward. Alongside the total electorate is the percentage deviation from the 2764 electors per councillor.

The ward of Sunningdale falls outside the +/- 10% limit by 1.22%. We believe that this minor deviation is warranted given the benefits that three 2-councillor wards will bring to the local electorate.

It is worth mentioning that the proposal of three 2 councillor wards has the support of Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council, who were presented with the proposal and that Sunningdale will also be supportive. Sunningdale Parish Council will be making a separate submission to the Boundary Commission along these lines.

Table 1

		Ascot & Cheapside	% from 2764 per Cllr.	electors per unit	Sunningdale	% from 2764 per Cllr.	electors per unit	Sunninghill and SA	% from 2764 per Cllr.	electors per unit	total electors
1	from report to Council 27th June	4109		1.74	4059		1.59	5108		1.73	13276
2	number adjusted for change in electors per unit.	4227		1.79	4570		1.79	5285		1.79	14082
3	Electorate projected by M Llewelyn										15735
4	difference to be apportioned across 3 wards.										1293
5	% of development projected by BLP	65.90			26.20			7.90			

6	distribution of projected development	852			338			102			electors per Cllr.
7	Electorate per two councillors	5080	- 8.11 %		4908	- 11.22 %	1.79	5387	- 2.54%		2764
											per 2 Cllrs.
											5528
8	RBWM distribution	4711			5111			5553			15735

The following paragraph from the guidance supports our view as the need to secure equality of representation is balanced by local community interests and effective and convenient local government.

What must we take into consideration as part of an electoral review?

3.5 Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act sets out the statutory criteria to which we are required to have regard in conducting electoral reviews. In broad terms, in making recommendations, we are required to have regard to:

- the need to secure equality of representation;
- the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- the need to secure effective and convenient local government.

For completeness the following table reflects the methodology used by RBWM Officers and estimates, made by the Boroughs Planning Officers, of future housing development to 2023 in the three wards.

Table 2

		Ascot & Cheapside	% from 2764 per Cllr.	electors per unit	Sunningdale	% from 2764 per Cllr.	electors per unit	Sunninghill and SA	% from 2764 per Cllr.	electors per unit	total electors
1	Data from RBWM submission	4711	-14.78%	1.79	5111	-7.54%	1.79	5553	0.45%	1.79	15375
2	average electorate for two councillors	5528									

This shows a more significant departure in electorate per Councillor in Ascot and Cheapside of -14.8% than table 2. The councillors making this submission have greater faith in table 1 which reflects the fact that nearly ²/₃ of development amounting to 674 dwellings and 1147 electorate will be in Ascot and Cheapside.

Having made that statement it remains the view of the Ward Councillors and Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council that the proposal for three 2-councillor wards meets the criteria defined in paragraph 3.5 of the Commission's guidance and is a much superior solution to a two ward 3-councillor proposal.

Cllr. David Hilton

For and on behalf of;

Cllr. Christine Bateson	Sunningdale Ward
Cllr. Sayonara Luxton	Sunningdale Ward
Cllr. Lilly Evans.	Ascot and Cheapside Ward
Cllr. Julian Sharpe	Sunninghill & South Ascot Ward.
Cllr. John Story	Sunninghill & South Ascot Ward.
Cllr. Lynda Yong	Sunninghill & South Ascot Ward.
Cllr. Allison Sharpe	Chairman, Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council