

Mayers, Mishka

From: Kathryn Gale [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 March 2018 07:43
To: reviews
Subject: Submission regarding electoral arrangements for Dartford Borough Council

This submission is from this council in response to the proposed borough warding arrangements for Dartford Borough Council, specifically the South-Western area.

This council cannot agree with the statements made in the review document:

Criteria 1 states that any new pattern of wards should mean each councillor represents the same number of voted as elected members elsewhere in the authority.

This should not be considered the most important reason to change the arrangements. The proposed new wards have greatly varying proposed values for both the number of elected members AND the number of electorate and therefore does not achieve this criteria. The current ward of Sutton at Hone & Hawley is perfectly within tolerance but the proposal is to change it just to balance areas elsewhere.

Criteria 2 states that ward patterns should, as far as possible, reflect a community's interests and identities and boundaries should be identifiable.

The ward of Sutton at Hone & Hawley has existed for many years, certainly since the 12th century. The residents are closely linked because of their geographical positioning and established facilities that have existed historically. There are many social groups sharing a common interest and membership across the two villages such as the active retirement group, a scout group, community hub with coffee shop, library, public houses and restaurant. There are other established facilities including various shops, a bus route, an infant and primary school, two preschools, places of worship serving varying denominations, GP surgery, public recreation grounds, village halls and sports grounds. None of this exists connecting the villages of Wilmington & Hawley as proposed.

The review proposals also state that physical barriers should NOT be an easy way of establishing new boundaries where residents on each side of the boundary identify as a community but this is at odds with the proposal under point 100 to use the M25 as a strong physical boundary to divide the existing ward of Sutton at Hone & Hawley.

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