

Reigate & Banstead Conservative Association

Boundary Review of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

Consultation response regarding draft warding patterns

Thank you for the work the LGBCE has undertaken so far on this important review for the Borough.

Our main concerns relating to the draft proposals, along with suggested measures to address them, submitted for your consideration, are as follows:

Splitting Kingswood along the railway line, detaching Waterhouse Lane (and Burgh Heath) from the rest of Kingswood

We believe this is a significant shortcoming of the draft proposals, as the community to the north of the railway line and east of the A217 fully consider themselves to be part of Kingswood Village, therefore to put this area in a different ward would be detrimental.

To a lesser extent the same goes for Burgh Heath, which whilst distinct from Kingswood has had a long association with it, not only in relation to ward composition but in other ways, eg community organisations. Therefore it is highly desirable to include Burgh Heath with the rest of Kingswood too, if a suitable formulation can be found.

Through our local councillors we have received strong representations from local residents and residents' associations on the above points (and we have asked that they too make their own submissions).

Leaving Queen Elizabeth Drive with Kingswood

Since being redeveloped for housing (which occurred since the last review), Queen Elizabeth Drive has been a difficult area to represent by its councillors, being physically isolated, especially in relation to Kingswood, where it currently sits and where the draft proposes it to remain.

We would strongly propose that this area be moved into the Banstead Village ward, since (given its road access) it is to Banstead to which local residents relate, and are closest to in terms of travel time.

Splitting Woodmansterne between two wards

It is regrettable that Woodmansterne is proposed in the draft to be split between two wards. Although Woodmansterne does not have easily definable boundaries, we would request that

this be reconsidered, taking into account the submissions of local councillors and residents' association, to find a more suitable boundary.

Putting St Margaret's Church in with Hooley, rather than in Chipstead

St Margaret's Church, although physically separated from the village, is very clearly part of the Chipstead community more than it is of the Hooley community, and therefore we propose that the boundary be varied slightly to achieve this.

Attempted creation of a "Redhill Town" ward (and consequent splitting the Cromwell Road estate in Redhill between two wards)

We do not believe the proposal to create a ward which includes Redhill town centre is workable, given the difficulty in defining such a boundary (and any reasonable such boundary would need to take in more to the west, and hence be much larger, to the detriment of the equality objective).

Specifically the resulting proposed boundary along Fairfax Avenue and Holland Close would divide the Cromwell Road estate, which is a clearly identifiable local community, and which has been the focus of ward-based community initiatives by the Borough Council. Splitting this area in two would therefore be detrimental to this community. Retaining the clear, understandable boundary along the A23 would overcome both of these issues.

Concluding comments

The Association supports the rest of the Council's own submission, including the proposed ward names, which we believe aids continuity and residents' identity with the new wards (including those which are relatively similar to the existing wards).

Thank you once more for your work to date and best wishes for your remaining deliberations.

12 August 2018