

# Corston Parish Council

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**Chair:** John Twist OBE

**Clerk:** John V May

14<sup>th</sup> February 2018

The Review Officer  
(Bath and North East Somerset)  
Local Government Boundary Commission for England  
14<sup>th</sup> floor  
Millbank Tower  
London SW1P 4QP

Dear LGBC's Review Officer,

**THE CONSULTATION RESPONSE BY CORSTON PARISH COUNCIL TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION'S (LGBC) REVIEW OF WARD BOUNDARIES IN BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

1. At their meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018 the Corston Parish Council discussed the Ward boundary changes proposed by the LGBC in December 2017. In particular, the Council examined the LGBC's recommendation that the Civil Parish of Corston should be included in the revised new Saltford Ward.

After consultation and further discussion, the Parish Council disagreed with the LGBC's recommendation and strongly concluded that Corston should be part of the proposed Clutton and Farmborough Ward that includes our neighbouring Marksbury Civil Parish.

The reasons for this are described below:

- a) Corston is essentially a small rural civil parish with currently only 423 registered electors whereas Saltford is a medium sized urban community with more than ten times the number of registered electors and each community has very different community needs and objectives. There is great concern being expressed by Corston residents that because our village community will consistently be seen as having a minority view this will result in their needs and views never being properly considered. Past experience has shown this to be the case when dealing with our Unitary Authority. Even with a reasonable request for local improvements, the limited footfall in Corston has worked against the village's best interest and has been used as the deciding factor against making improvements that other larger communities take for granted.
- b) Corston children of infant and junior school age attend the village school in Marksbury. The Corston Parish Council believes that it is essential for the education and welfare of the children, including the out-of-school activities and the continuing support of the school by the children's parents that both civil parishes should share a common Ward Councillor.
- c) Corston civil parish has several working farms and the current arrangement with Corston being part of the Farmborough Ward works exceptionally well at all levels with the Ward and Parish Councillors understanding and supporting the needs of their farming communities. Being mainly an urban community the new Saltford Ward will not have the same degree of understanding to support this important local rural industry and may not have the inclination or priority to effectively support Corston's farming community. In the area contained by the new Clutton and Farmborough Ward these aspects of local government will be much better represented and better aligned to satisfy Corston's local farming interests.

2. A significant concern was also expressed that since the Review of Ward Boundaries in Bath and North East Somerset commenced in July 2017 the formation of the West of England Joint Authority (WoE) has occurred and in December 2017 the WoE Joint Authority published its Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) containing the housing development proposals for the local area. Seen for the first time in such detail in the December 2017 consultation document included was the proposed JSP Policy 7.1 for about 1,400 new homes designated as North Keynsham.

The concern here is that to ensure sufficient longevity when considering the new Ward Boundaries, due consideration should be given to the housing developments now proposed by the WoE Joint Authority that extends to 2036. As this information was not widely available in the public domain until December 2017, there is a concern that the initial consultation on Ward Boundary changes held between 25/07/17 - 02/10/17 could not be based on all relevant facts.

3. With this long-term housing development information now available the LBGC is asked to consider an alternative proposal for the Saltford Ward. The proposed WoE housing development designated North Keynsham is adjacent to the Saltford civil parish boundary and could equally be named as Saltford West. There could be benefit in examining the proposed new Ward of Keynsham East, and combining it with the Saltford civil parish and the proposed housing development known as North Keynsham, all to become the Saltford Ward. (Consideration of aligning where appropriate the names of the proposed WoE housing developments and the names of the revised Wards is recommended).

4. A realignment of the new Ward structure, outlined at paragraph 3 above, could allow rural communities located in the environs of Bath and Keynsham to be located in a single Ward that is more appropriate and enjoys the effective stewardship of a Ward Councillor whose responsibilities are not stretched between urban and rural priorities.

5. In conclusion when considering the proposals contained in the latest LGBC draft recommendations for Bath and North East Somerset, the Corston Parish Council proposes for the reasons given, that the Civil Parish of Corston should not be include in the proposed Saltford Ward but included in the proposed Clutton and Farmborough Ward.

Yours sincerely  
John Twist  
Chair Corston Parish Council