



Shipley Parish Council

Chairman: [REDACTED]
Tel: [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

Clerk: [REDACTED]
Tel: [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

19th August 2015

Local Government Boundary Commission England
14th Floor
Millbank Tower
London
SW1P 4QP

Dear Sirs

Re: Shipley Parish Council, West Sussex

I write on behalf of Shipley Parish Council regarding the recent recommendations for the Boundary Review within Horsham District.

Whilst the Parish Council understands that numbers of electoral voters needed to be juggled to even the split of electorate between members, it strongly opposes the recommendation to split the Parish between the member for Billingshurst and the member for Southwater.

The Parish Council understands that the three criteria considered by the panel for this decision were Delivering Electoral Equality For Local Voters, Keeping The Interests & Identity Of Local Communities and Effective & Convenient Local Government. In the decision to split Shipley Parish, the first criteria has been met but the second and third criteria have been ignored.

With regards to safeguarding the interests and identity of the local community, a split of areas between members would be extremely detrimental to a rural parish such as Shipley. The Parish has a strong unity and the community is very much involved in all areas and projects across the Parish. Residents are currently working with the Parish Council to fund raise for improved facilities in the Coolham area of the Parish. The proportion of volunteers is equally split between the two villages of Shipley and Coolham and the surrounding hamlets. Having two members overseeing just over 1000 people on the electoral role seems an overkill in resources and may cause a divide in a very cohesive community. We currently have one member as a point of contact and they are well known in the community for their work on behalf of the Parish.

From a Parish Council perspective, the practicality of dealing with two members who may have differing opinions may cause a stalemate in decision making and potentially a rift within the Parish Council and parishioners. The Parish Council also sees this as a waste of resources as at times there may be two County Councillors

attending Parish meetings. This manpower would surely be better utilised within Horsham District.

Operating a Parish which is split between two members will also increase administration of the Clerk to the Council. There will be additional correspondence and communication as there are two members working within the Parish and then thought will need to be given during decision making as to which member deals with which boundary area, rather than simply speaking to the member for the whole Parish.

It would be better for a member to work with Shipley Parish (in its entirety) and Billingshurst Parish and a different member to work with Southwater. Although the electoral numbers for Southwater would be smaller, Southwater is a very busy Parish with many amenities and an area targeted for further housing development within Horsham District.

The Parish Council sincerely hopes that the LGBCE reviews the recommendations and considers our fears with the proposals.

Yours sincerely

Fiona McNeile
Clerk to the Council