

Starkie, Emily

From: reviews
Sent: 26 May 2016 12:09
To: Starkie, Emily
Subject: FW: Electoral Review of ward Boundaries

Wealden submission (I think) – I passed the last one on to Lucy also as it referenced both East Sussex and Wealden?

Thanks,

Laura

From: Pam Doodes
Sent: 26 May 2016 09:48
To: reviews <reviews@lgbce.org.uk>
Subject: Electoral Review of ward Boundaries

Wealden District Council - Ward Boundary Review Proposed Ward: Pevensey and Westham

I am writing to object strongly to the proposal to include the parish of Hooe in the Commission's new ward of Pevensey and Westham, for the following reasons:

The Commission's first criteria:

To deliver electoral equality where each Councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the district.

My objection:

The figures presented by the Commission are being questioned by Wealden District Council, who find the variance is much smaller than stated. I know that Wealden checked and rechecked the figures and their findings are correct.

But representation is not only about numbers, it is also about reasonable access to electors. The proposed ward is made up of two distinct geographical areas. Pevensey and Westham is one closely formed urban area, Hooe is a rural community separated and remote from the other area. The new proposed ward is divided by a busy main road which runs across the Pevensey Levels, an area of Special Scientific Interest (SSI) As it is protected no development will take place there and so these communities can not be joined together by house building or other development.

The Commission's second criteria:

That the pattern of wards and electoral divisions should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of the local communities.

My objection:

There is absolutely no connection or similarity at all between Pevensey and Westham and Hooe. The Communities have totally different characteristics. In fact they have no community contact whatsoever. Hooe is a small cohesive traditional Sussex rural farming village; Pevensey and Westham are larger, coastal villages which run into each other, identified by the Commissions own words 'urban'. There is little or no farming connection, they have a strong seaside tourism trade.

The two communities are physically divided by the busy A 259 coastal road and the large expanse of Pevensey Levels, the important nature reserve with the status of SSI. This area is protected and of a very high scientific interest, building there is out of the question. These communities will remain remote from each other. So they are separated not only by character but also geographically.

The interest of the residents of the parish of Hooe naturally gravitate towards Ninfield, their close neighbours. Hooe children attend Ninfield pre-school and Ninfield Church of England Primary School; residents use the closest Post Office and village shop which is in Ninfield; the Doctor's surgery is in Ninfield; St Mary's Church Ninfield and St Oswald's Church Hooe share the same incumbent. Public transport, such as it is, serves and joins both villages. Clubs and groups share members from each community and so residents habitually, and have always, regularly interact and socialise.

The physical boundaries of Ninfield and Hooe 'flow' into each other.

The concerns, problems and challenges of the two are similar which helps to ensure good representation as the Councillor can meet each parishes needs.

The Commission's proposed ward does not meet the Commission's own criteria.

The Commission's third criteria:

That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government

My objection:

The geographical nature, the distinctly separated two communities, the vastly differing concerns, problems and challenges experienced by these two very different communities would make effective and convenient local government arrangements almost impossible. It is not an exaggeration to say that they have nothing whatsoever in common and have no natural contact of any shape or form

I ask that the Commission takes another look at the proposed new ward of Pevensey and Westham taking into account the local knowledge which has formed my objections. I would ask that the figures are rechecked and that the comments of Wealden District Council, formed after much discussion and deliberations are taken onto account. Please reconnect Ninfield and Hooe

Cllr Mrs Pam Doodes

Sitting Wealden District Councillor for Ninfield and Hooe with Wartling

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