

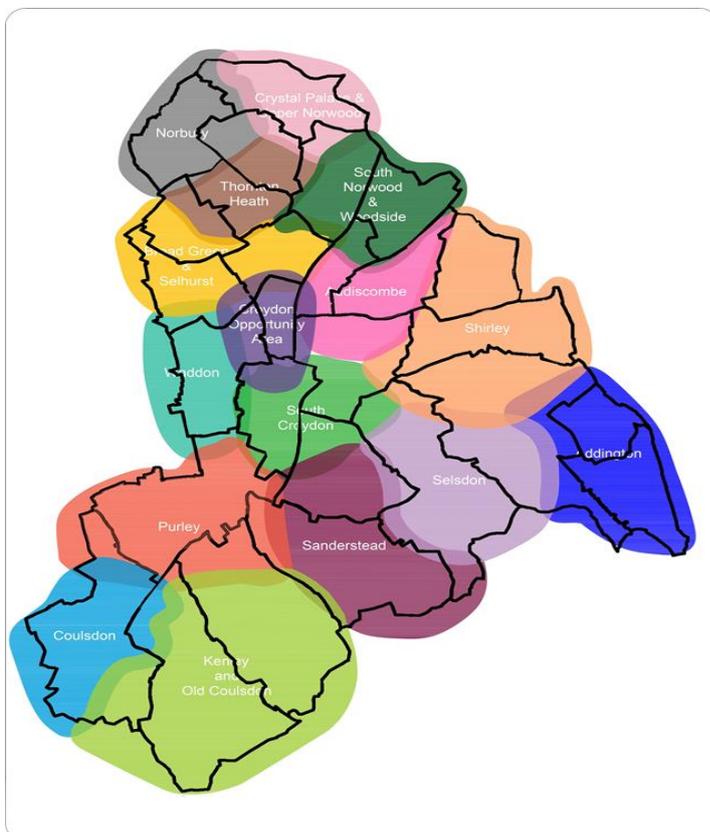
Councillor Michael Neal / Croham Ward

I would like to support the Conservative group proposals. It is my opinion the Council's submission as approved has a number of significant weaknesses:

1. Its variances are relatively high (comparing each ward to average), and we believe that a more equal warding pattern is achievable.
2. It is relatively unsuccessful at keeping defined communities together within one ward, as evidenced by the significant differences between the warding pattern and the council's long-approved 'places of Croydon' map (which forms the bedrock of its Local Development Framework, currently in the last stages of adoption).
3. It creates a number of new 'places' which do not correspond to real communities.
4. It appears to be loosely based on residents' association territories, whilst omitting many large and well-established RAs.
5. Although positioned as a council submission, only the controlling group were consulted on the thinking as it developed and the opposition had no opportunity to input into the direction being taken until the day before papers were published, at which point nothing substantive could be changed.

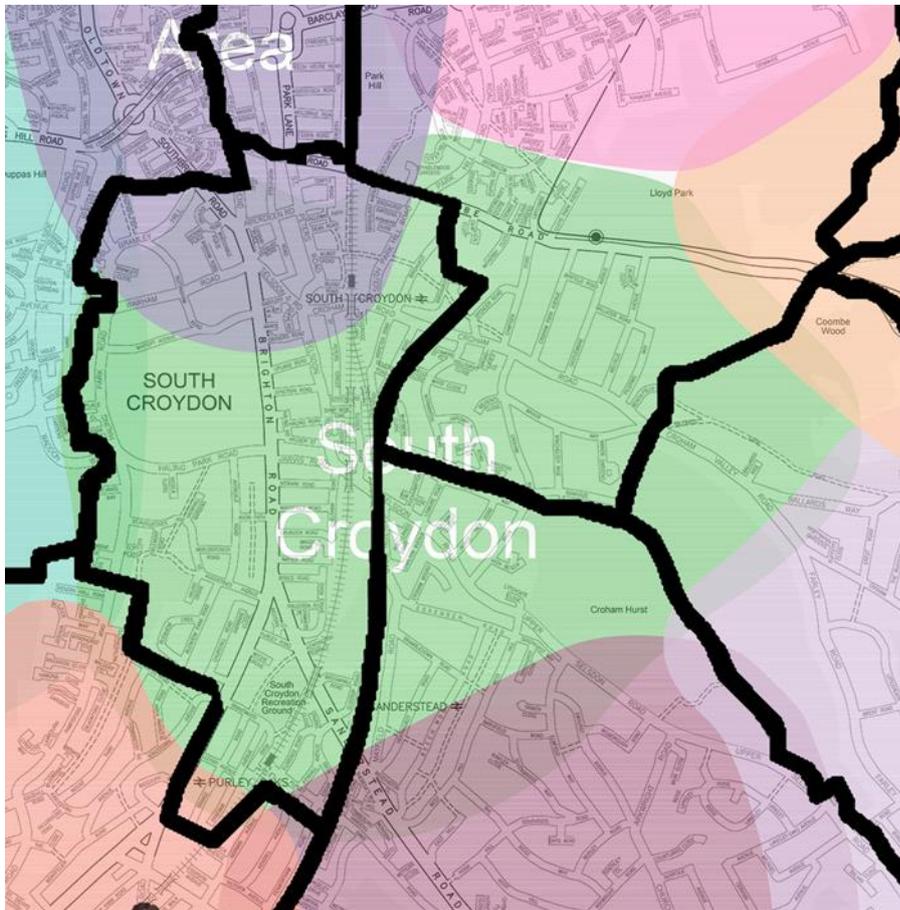
It is my opinion that an alternative warding pattern which is closely based on the council's 'places of Croydon' map is both a better respecter of criteria 2 (community identity) and criteria 3 (convenient local government) and results in lower variances and therefore better achieves criteria 1 (electoral equality).

Council Submission



For me as the Croham ward Councillor, there are 3 major areas of concern,

- Substantially splits the place of Sanderstead into two along a very eccentric lines
- Defines a South Croydon ward which bears little resemblance to the place
- creates a ward of Croham Hurst which is not a recognised place by virtually all the residents who would live there (most of whom would say they live in Sanderstead)



I would like to concentrate on the South Croydon ward.

South Croydon is shown in the place strategy as running both sides of Brighton Road but extending much further eastwards than the council's ward. As a result, the place of South Croydon is split into three roughly equally sized chunks.

The Council's proposals based on "places" has not taken into consideration the roads which are naturally affiliated with South Croydon and are near South Croydon railway station

The Council fails to recognise that residents of Campden road, Croham Park Ave, Castlemaine and Melville Avenue all consider themselves residents of South Croydon, they would not as the Council suggests associate themselves with a ward named Coombe.

Although I agree that Coombe Road makes a sensible natural boundary but regret that it is only followed on the Council's plan for a short distance, a large area of the place of South Croydon ending up in the made-up place of Coombe.

Following on from that the residents of Essenden road and Brambledown road form a natural boundary to the South Croydon ward with Sanderstead.

In the Council's proposal Brighton Road looks as though it is at the heart of this community. In fact, Brighton Road is so congested that it forms more of a barrier than a unifier.

Brighton road does not have a natural community, many of the pubs have closed and are now supermarkets.

Many local residents travel by bus into Croydon or Purley to shop as parking for families around the Brighton Road has become increasingly difficult for all families.

Many residents I speak to are looking to move further South e.g. Purley, Kenley to avoid congestion

A new Lidl having been proposed on Brighton Road will lead to further congestion and more segregation.

The housing types also differ strikingly – to the west of Brighton Road the development is largely post war flat development, whereas to the east it is uniformly terraced housing between the main road and the railway lines. As a result, there is very little community crossover.

As indicated in the Conservative proposals I think the Council misses the opportunity to create a proper South Croydon ward incorporating most of the residents who would say they live there.

In Conclusion,

It is my and the Conservative Group opinion that the alternative warding pattern laid out in our submission, and which is closely based on the council's 'places of Croydon' map:

- Is a better respecter of criteria 2 (community identity) through its close match to the already agreed 'places'
- Is a better match for criteria 3 (convenient local government) through creating wards with convenient transport links and of appropriate sizes
- Results in lower ward variances and therefore better achieves criteria 1 (electoral equality).

Councillor Michael Neal

Croham Ward

