

WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL



CLERK:

Mrs S J Bell



Review Officer (East Cambridgeshire)
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor Millbank Tower
Millbank
LONDON SW1P 4QP

25 August 2015

Dear Sirs

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Further to your letter of 23 June 2015 regarding the above, Witcham Parish Council has given a great deal of consideration to the proposals and makes the following response.

Witcham has an electorate of approximately 350 and is in the District Ward of Downham villages with Little Downham, Pymore, Mepal, Wardy Hill and Coveney

Witcham Parish Council has no objection to the principle of reducing the number of District Councillors down to around 27. However it is very concerned as to the pattern of Wards. There are proposals under the Cambridgeshire County Council Electoral boundary review to include Witcham with a part of Ely and a part of Littleport and call it Littleport West. Witcham Parish Council has objected to this as we do not believe we share the same interests (copy attached).

Witcham should stay with neighbouring villages, such as Sutton and Mepal, as historically we have always shared a common interest with regards to schools, doctors, hospitals, policing, transport, shops, churches, youth funding, various community sport, recreational, interest groups etc. We are a rural community and our interests differ from those of the more urban areas of Ely and Littleport.

We are seeking the views of our neighbouring villages, Sutton, Mepal, Haddenham, the Downham villages, Witchford as to their thoughts on this matter and may make a further submission.

Yours faithfully

Susan J Bell
Clerk/RFO



CHAIRMAN
Mr M Housden
Tel [REDACTED]

WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL



CLERK:

Mrs S J Bell



1 July 2015

Dear Sirs

Proposed Littleport West – County Councillor District

Witcham Parish Council objects to the proposal to enlarge and combine Sutton and Haddenham Districts with parts of Littleport and Ely

The Council is concerned that the interests and identity of the existing villages in the Sutton Division will be lost in a group containing Littleport, a large developing village, and Ely, a fast growing City. Each has its own interests and demanding needs. We feel that the interests within the proposed new District will be diverse and the voice and concerns of the smaller rural villages in the area will be lost to the needs of the larger parishes and the city.

The prospect of 2 representatives covering the new District also raises concern. The two representatives will cover 19 parishes (or parts) and we cannot see how a Councillor can effectively know and understand the needs of such a large number of diverse areas, How could this be split to ensure each Councillor has regular and good contact with each parish/town/city council and its residents? We are concerned that the relationship between Councillor and the communities represented will become weaker and more distant, and lack uniformity.

The name of the Division, Littleport West, suggests this will be the key area of focus but it is only a part of Littleport that has been removed from the main Littleport area. We do not understand why Littleport should be divided up in this way. Similarly a small part of Ely has been removed from the main body of the population.

Witcham Parish Council has no objection to reducing the number of members of the County Council from 69 to 61 but further consideration is required as to how to achieve this, especially in the East Cambridgeshire area which is designated one of the fastest growing areas in the country. We believe the split and designation of two members for one 'super' area should be carefully reconsidered to ensure sustainability and fair representational support for our communities.

Yours faithfully

Susan J Bell
CLERK/RFO



CHAIRMAN
Mr M Housden
Tel [REDACTED]