

Cooper, Mark

From: Philip Burford [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 June 2017 22:22
To: reviews
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Boundary Review - Forest of Dean District Council

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Dear Sirs

At a meeting of the Full Council last Thursday the Forest of Dean District Council was unable to agree on a submission regarding the future warding pattern for the district.

We respectfully ask that you review the meeting documents produced for that evening and review both the minutes of the meeting and the audio recording before recommending a new warding pattern for the district. It is particularly important that you review the amendments tabled on the night.

After doing this we hope you will be able to conclude that the issues on which the council was unable to reach a consensus related to only a small part of the overall proposal and that for the majority of the district the tabled proposal was well received.

We are particularly keen that you recognise that the proposals for the northern and eastern sections of the district, which are for single member wards, are within the recommended tolerances and meet the criteria in the guidelines published on your web site.

The thrust of the areas of disagreement centred on the issue of the appropriateness of multiple member wards in particular parts of the district. We take the view that it is generally more desirable to have a single member representing a ward but recognise that it is not always easy to split parts of the district in this way. We further take the view that it is far better to accept a two member ward than to artificially split a community where there are no obvious physical or cultural divides.

For the record the published proposal for council to consider on the 15th June was the result of many long and sometimes difficult hours of work by both members and officers of the council. The meeting would not have taken place had the group doing this work not felt that the final version was an acceptable solution for the district. This was a view which had cross party support from all seven political groups in the council. It was very disappointing to see that this agreement did not continue through to Full Council, we can only surmise as to the motivation of this change of heart.

We ask that in reaching your conclusions for the way ahead the opportunity to build on the good work which has been done and for which there is a consensus view is used as a starting point. In the areas where the council was not in agreement we hope your view can be guided by the opinion of the communities who live in those areas.

Our apologies for this submission being sent right at the end of the consultation period and ask that you confirm its receipt and that it will receive your full consideration.

Yours faithfully

Philip Burford

Leader, Independent Group
Forest of Dean District Council

