

Hinds, Alex

From: Fuller, Heather
Sent: 06 July 2015 14:44
To: Hinds, Alex
Subject: FW: Cambridgeshire County Council Electoral Review

From: Chris Boden [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 July 2015 14:51
To: reviews
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Cambridgeshire County Council Electoral Review

Dear Sir,

SUBMISSION TO THE LGBCE BY THE NORTH EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION IN RESPONSE TO THE LGBCE'S DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS REVIEWING ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The North East Cambridgeshire Conservative Association [NECCA] opposes the draft recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) in respect of its current review of electoral arrangements for Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC).

NECCA opposes the LGBCE's draft recommendation to decrease the Council size of CCC from 69 to 61. NECCA supports the proposal to reduce the Council size of CCC from 69 to 63, as proposed by CCC and in accordance with the number that the LGBCE was minded to propose earlier in the consultation process of this review. A Council size of 63 provides cost savings by reducing the number of County Councillors without negatively impacting upon the effectiveness of the County's Councillors. A reduction of Council size below 63 may threaten the effective discharge by County Councillors of their varied administrative, representative and case-work functions, as indicated in the original submission to the LGBCE from CCC on the subject of Council size.

NECCA believes that it will promote effective and convenient local government if each County Councillor were to represent a different single-member division. The creation of two-member divisions (such as that proposed by the LGBCE for "March North and Waldersey" and for "Littleport East") significantly increases the distance between electors and their County Council representatives. Increasing population and a reduced Council size will both increase the average number of electors per County Councillor, so the average division size will increase even if single-member divisions are used throughout the County. The proposal by the LGBCE to include the Parishes of Christchurch, Elm and most of Wisbech St. Mary with almost two-thirds of the electors in the Town of March will create a massive division with relatively little commonality between the interests of the Town electors and of the rural elements of the proposed division, most of whom look to Wisbech rather than to March as their main centre for shopping, entertainment and other amenities. The proposal by the LGBCE to include the parishes of Stretham, Thetford and Wilburton with part of Littleport in its proposed Littleport East Division similarly joins together communities which share few if any commonalities of interest. This does not satisfy the statutory criteria which the LGBCE must seek to achieve.

NECCA supports the creation of a Chatteris Division which is entirely co-terminous with the Town of Chatteris, as this clearly reflects the identity of the local community.

NECCA does not agree that convenient and effective local government will be promoted, nor that common community interests will be recognised, by creating divisions in Wisbech which split Octavia Hill Ward from Staithe Ward. There are many longstanding community links between Octavia Hill Ward and Staithe Ward, not the least of which being the number of children living in Octavia Hill Ward who attend Meadowgate School in Staithe Ward. NECCA welcomes, however, the LGBCE's proposal to combine Kirkgate Ward and Staithe Ward within a single division, as this will unite the Walsoken village area which has a strong sense of local community identity and which is currently split between the existing Wisbech North and Wisbech South Divisions. NECCA therefore supports the inclusion of Octavia Hill, Kirkgate and Staithe Wards in a single division ("Wisbech East"). The other three wards each of the river are all riverside wards which are linked by the B198.

NECCA does not support the recommendation by the LGBCE to split St Mary's Town Ward in Whittlesey between the two Whittlesey divisions. This will not be conducive to efficient and effective local government and would create a very weak and highly arbitrary boundary between these two divisions.

NECCA does not support the recommendation by the LGBCE that electors from almost half of the land area of March Town should be included in the Whittlesey South Division. Whilst only a few hundred electors would be involved, these electors in Westry, Ranson Moor and the western parts of Gaul Road, Burrowmoor Road and Knight's End Road live in an integral part of March Town and look overwhelmingly towards March rather than towards Whittlesey for all of their shopping, recreational and educational needs. Including electors from March Town in the Whittlesey South Division would not reflect the local community of interest, nor would it promote convenient and effective local government, as it is unlikely that a Councillor for Whittlesey South Division would have the time or opportunity to fully engage with March Town Council in addition to the Parish Councils in Benwick and Doddington and the Town Council in Whittlesey.

In accordance with these observations, NECCA therefore proposes that, in a County Council with 63 Councillors, of whom ten would represent divisions wholly within Fenland District, the scheme of divisions within Fenland should be as follows:

FDC1 Chatteris Town of Chatteris

FDC2	Fenland North	Roman Bank Ward; Peckover Ward
FDC3	Waldersey	Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary Ward; Elm Parish; the Town Wards of March Rural South and March Rural North (as proposed in the LGBCE's draft recommendations).
FDC4	Wisbech Riverside	Medworth, Clarkson & Waterlees Village Wards
FDC5	Wisbech East	Octavia Hill, Staithe & Kirkgate Wards
FDC6	March North East	March North Ward (less the proposed "Rural North" Town Ward); that part of Polling District BA1 north of Creek Road; that part of Polling District BC1 East of the A141 and west of Waveney Drive/Pentland Way
FDC7	March Central	that part of PD BA1 south of (and including) Creek Road; that part of PD BC1 East of Waveney Drive/Pentland Way Polling Districts BA2 and BA4; Polling District BC2_3 between Wimblington Rd and the A141 Polling District BC4 east of the A141
FDC8	March South East & Rural	Manea Ward; Christchurch Parish; Wimblington Parish; Polling District BC2_3 east of Wimblington Road Polling District BA3
FDC9	Whittlesey	The District Wards of Bassenhally and Stonald; the St Andrews Town Ward in Whittlesey
FDC10	South West Fenland	The St Marys Town Ward in Whittlesey Lattersey Ward and Benwick, Coates & Eastrea Ward the Parish of Doddington

In the event that the LGBCE decides (despite the evidence provided by CCC to the contrary) upon a County Council size of 62 or of 61 for CCC, of whom nine would represent divisions wholly within Fenland District, the scheme of divisions within Fenland should be as follows in the opinion of NECCA:

FDC1	Chatteris	Town of Chatteris
FDC2	Fenland North	Roman Bank Ward; Peckover Ward; Parson Drove Parish
FDC3	Waldersey	Wisbech St Mary Parish; Manea and Elm & Christchurch Wards;
FDC4	Wisbech Riverside	Medworth, Clarkson & Waterlees Village Wards

- FDC5 Wisbech East Octavia Hill, Staithe & Kirkgate Wards
- FDC6 March South-East March EastWard ;
from March North Ward:
Polling District BB1
PD BB3 (east of Norwood Road)
- FDC7 March North-WestMarchWestWard ;
from March North Ward:
PollingDistrictBB2
PD BB3 (west of Norwood Road)
- FDC8 Whittlesey Bassenhally, Stonald & St Andrews Wards
- FDC9 South West Fenland Doddington & Wimblington; Benwick, Coates & Eastrea and Lattersey Wards

[nb - all polling district references in March Town refer to the polling districts which existed prior to May 2015, since these are the polling districts used throughout this electoral review by the LGBCE]

In the opinion of NECCA, the schemes of divisions listed above both provide greater adherence to the statutory criteria than the LGBCE's draft recommendations, as both schemes (a) better reflect community identities, (b) adhere more closely to existing town council, town ward and parish council boundaries thus promoting convenient and effective local government and (c) achieve much greater co-terminosity with the newly redrawn Fenland District Council Ward boundaries (which is a criterion to which the LGBCE should have regard pursuant to Paragraph 2 (3) (d) of Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009).

NECCA opposes the split of the natural community of Littleport between two different divisions, especially given that the LGBCE is recommending that each half of Littleport be included with areas (such as Soham and Stretham) which share very little commonality of interest with Littleport. NECCA supports retaining the well-established community of Littleport within a single division by including neighbouring communities within that division.

NECCA supports the submissions made by East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) and by the South East Cambridgeshire Conservative Association (SECCA) in respect of alternative schemes of divisions for CCC within the East Cambridgeshire District, as these alternative schemes more closely reflect local communities and promote better and more effective local government for the reasons given in the submissions made by both ECDC and by SECCA.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Boden
Organising Secretary
North East Cambridgeshire Conservative Association


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