

# Folkestone Town Council



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4<sup>th</sup> September 2013

FAO: William Morrison, Review Officer  
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Layden House  
76-86 Turnmill Street  
London  
EC1M 5LG

Dear Mr Morrison

## **ELECTORAL REVIEW OF SHEPWAY: DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

I am writing further to your correspondence dated 18<sup>th</sup> June 2013 formally announcing the next stage of the electoral review of Shepway District Council, which was received together with the draft recommendation report and a selection of maps.

As Folkestone Town Council is directly affected by the electoral review, members discussed the draft recommendations at its meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> July 2013 and unanimously resolved:

**That an extra-ordinary Council Meeting be called to fully discuss the proposals put forward by LGBCE on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2013 at 7pm.**

Proposed: Councillor P Gane  
Seconded: Councillor G Bunting  
Voting: F:14, Ag:0, Ab:0

After much debate at the extra-ordinary meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> August, the following were resolved:

**That Folkestone Town Council have closely considered the report of the LGBCE concerning their proposals for the rewording of Shepway District Council as they have an effect on our town. Folkestone Town Council believes that the LGBCE's suggestions would be greatly improved if they adopted all the amendments called for by Shepway District Council extra-ordinary meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013, as they effect the Folkestone Parish Area, namely:**



QUALITY  
TOWN  
COUNCIL

- a) A single member Sandgate ward be created on the borders shown on the map attached to Shepway District Council reply to the LGBCE's suggested warding for the district.
- b) A two member Folkestone Harvey Ward be created on the borders shown on the map attached to Shepway District Council reply to the LGBCE's suggested warding for the district.
- c) A two member Folkestone Central Ward be created on the borders shown on the map attached to Shepway District Council reply to the LGBCE's suggested warding for the district.
- d) The area of Hill Road which includes Dallas Brett Crescent and Keyes Place be included in the proposed Folkestone East Ward.

and that following the end of Folkestone Town Council's discussions tonight a group including the Mayor and two other members, supported by the Town Clerk, compile a letter to the LGBCE that includes the recommendations and as many statements supporting them as the can.

Proposed: Councillor P Marsh  
Seconded: Councillor G Bunting  
Voting: F:14, Ag:1, Ab:1

That Folkestone Town Council having debated the LGBCE's proposals for the town council:

- a) Totally reject the LGCBE's proposed scheme for the reorganisation of Folkestone Town Council's electoral arrangements, this is based on the fact that the LGCBE have abandoned all three of its main rules as applied to the Shepway District Council rewording, namely:

- 1. Electoral Equality
- 2. Supporting Communities
- 3. Promoting Efficient Government

Folkestone Town Council respectfully asks only that the LGBCE applies these three rules as consistently as it has across the Shepway District.

- b) That following the end of Folkestone Town Council's discussions tonight a group including the Mayor and two other members, supported by the Town Clerk, compile a letter to the LGBCE that includes the recommendations and as many statements supporting them as the can.

Proposed: Councillor P Marsh  
Seconded: Councillor E Arnold  
Voting: F:16, Ag:0, Ab:0

**To remain co-terminus and maintain an 18 member council, that Folkestone Town Council recommends the following ward names and numbers of councillors for the Folkestone Parish Area:**

<b>Parish ward name</b>	<b>Number of Councillors</b>
Cheriton & Morehall	4
Folkestone East	4
Folkestone Harbour	3
Folkestone Central	3
Folkestone Harvey	2
Folkestone Park	2

**That the Town Mayor, Councillors P Marsh, E Arnold and G Bunting and the Town Clerk meet at 9am on 4<sup>th</sup> September at the councils offices to compile a letter to the LGBCE that includes the recommendations and as many statements supporting them as the can.**

Proposed: Councillor S Wallace  
Seconded: Councillor B Copping  
Voting: F:16, Ag:0, Ab:0

The resolutions above are based on a total of 36628 electors, split as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{36628 \text{ electorate}}{2035} \\ & = 18 \text{ councillors} \end{aligned}$$

<b>Parish ward name</b>	<b>Electorate</b>
Cheriton & Morehall	8690
Folkestone East	9353
Folkestone Harbour	5424
Folkestone Central	5411
Folkestone Harvey	4601
Folkestone Park	3149

This letter has been compiled in line with the resolutions above together with the following supporting statements:

- During the initial stage of the review, the LGBCE visited Shepway District Council and met with members and officers, yet when the LGBCE was invited to visit Folkestone Town Council which represents the largest settlement in the district the invitation was declined.
- The draft proposal states that the three main considerations of the LGBCE are equalising the number of electors each councillor represents; reflecting community identity; and providing for effective and convenient local government as set out in legislation, and the draft proposal states all of the proposed wards have electoral variances of less than 10% so the LGBCE is satisfied that it has achieved good levels of electoral fairness throughout Shepway, yet five out of the seven proposed Folkestone wards have a variance greater than 10% with Harvey West, North East and Park being significantly greater.
- Folkestone Town Council rejects the draft proposal by the LGBCE because the main aim of an electoral review is to ensure "electoral equality"; the recommendations in the draft proposal do not meet this main objective.
- Since its formation in 2004 Folkestone Town Council has had co-terminus wards with Shepway District Council. Folkestone Town Council wishes to remain coterminous thus keeping communities together.
- Councillors are local people with local knowledge of the town and its communities, Folkestone Town Council therefore believe the recommendations in this letter provide a simplified warding structure that reflects the elector's communities rather than just focusing on natural boundaries such as rail lines or major roads ensuring boundaries are easily identifiable and do not break any local ties.
- Folkestone Town Council does not support the creation of a North East ward as it bears no resemblance to the community and it worsens the electoral balance.
- Folkestone Town Council supports Shepway District Councils proposal for Sandgate because the north part of Sandgate associates itself more with Folkestone than Sandgate village.
- Folkestone Town Council supports Shepway District Councils proposal to move the boundary of Folkestone Harvey towards Folkestone Central creating a smaller central ward based around the commercial centre of the town whilst leaving the Harvey ward more residential.
- Folkestone Town Council supports Shepway District Councils proposal to transfer Dallas Brett Crescent from Harbour into Folkestone East.

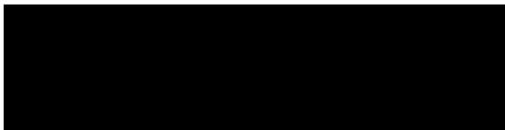
- Although Folkestone Town Council did not specifically wish to become a 25 member council, it believes it was the nearest scenario that could be foreseen that would achieve an equality of electors in line with the LGBCE rulings.

Folkestone Town Council would like to take this opportunity to re-invite the LGBCE to visit as members believe the issues are too complicated to properly address without a proper face-to-face discussion.

In conclusion, Folkestone Town Council would like to remain coterminous and supports the six names for the district wards; it also believes that the recommendations outlined above fulfil the criteria as laid down in statute as closely as possible, whilst remaining an 18 member council; as most wards represent electoral equality and where there are separate communities in the same ward, they have been put together to create a harmonious ward pattern.

Folkestone Town Council therefore commends its resolutions and proposals by 9 September 2013 for the wards of Folkestone town, to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, for consideration during the remainder of the electoral review of Shepway District Council.

Yours sincerely



**Jennifer Childs**  
Town Clerk