

Cambridgeshire County

Personal Details:

Name: Linda Miller
E-mail: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: Swavesey Parish Council

Comment text:

Swavesey Parish Council wishes to propose to move Swavesey parish from its existing division (Papworth and Swavesey) into an altered Willingham Division that involves replacing Longstanton with Swavesey and Fen Drayton. We have consulted with our neighbouring new parishes. Our full proposal and details as to why we consider this proposal should be considered will be uploaded.

Uploaded Documents:

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Cambridgeshire County Council Review

Moving Swavesey Parish into a new

Re-shaped Willingham Division

1 Introduction

This document summarises Swavesey parish council's proposal to move Swavesey parish into an altered Willingham Division that involves replacing Longstanton with Swavesey and Fen Drayton. The case draws on data published on the Boundary Commission's website that was supplied by Cambridgeshire County Council. It shows that the new grouping would yield an almost 'perfect' division, and one that would also reflect strong community links.

2 Background

Prior to the last boundary review in 2004, Swavesey parish was part of the Cambridgeshire County Council division of Willingham, together with our neighbouring parishes of Longstanton and Over. In the 2004 review Swavesey parish council objected to the proposal to be grouped within the new Papworth & Swavesey division, which would include parishes the other side of the A14 to Swavesey. We understand that Fen Drayton parish also objected to their proposed move.

The A14 is our parish boundary and provides a natural and obvious division boundary. Very shortly the A14 is to be improved and will become an 8-10 lane highway barrier between Swavesey and parishes to the south of it.

In our daily working lives, Swavesey parish has far more in common and in contact with the neighbouring parishes of Fen Drayton, Over and Willingham. Not so much with Longstanton, but certainly more than with Boxworth, Elsworth, Papworth and the other smaller parishes with which we are currently grouped.

Swavesey shares geographical concerns with the parishes of Fen Drayton and Over. Our communities share flooding and drainage concerns, highway and transport issues, agricultural land, community projects and facilities, shared public transport links and District Council links. Some examples are:

- Local bus service to/from Cambridge (Citi 5) links the group of villages to the north of the A14 (not those south of it)
- OWLS Community Car Scheme serves the group villages north of the A14
- Swavesey Post Office provides a service for Fen Drayton and Over residents
- Doctors Surgeries in Swavesey, Over and Willingham serve residents in all three villages plus Fen Drayton
- Swavesey and Willingham Libraries are used by residents in the villages north of the A14
- Over Day Centre caters for elderly residents of our neighbouring villages
- Our Neighbourhood policing area is the Histon and Swavesey Neighbourhood, covering the villages north of the A14 and including Willingham, Over, Swavesey and Fen Drayton (not villages south of the A14).

Community identity – we have strong community links with voluntary projects such as community car share, community wardens for elderly residents (the District Council sheltered housing warden jointly covers schemes in this area), recreational and sports groups.

We have very little if any contact with parishes south of the A14.

Longstanton has had much new development in recent years, increasing its population and will be greatly affected by the new development at Northstowe. Papworth has also seen a huge amount of development and will continue to, once the Hospital moves to the Addenbrookes site in Cambridge and the land in Papworth becomes more housing. Looking at the figures for the electorate of Swavesey and the proposed new Willingham division, it would make obvious sense to re-group the Willingham division as Fen Drayton, Swavesey, Over and Willingham.

3 Conclusion

Swavesey Parish Council wishes to recommend that a new Willingham division be created, replacing Longstanton parish with Swavesey and Fen Drayton parishes. Thereby removing Swavesey and Fen Drayton from the current Papworth Division. This would correct the predicted excess variance in the electorate and moving forward would provide a division in 2020 which would almost exactly fit the electoral requirements.

The communities of Fen Drayton, Swavesey, Over and Willingham share many facilities and community clubs and have historical and geographical community identity and links.

Please see detailed figures in support of the recommendation, below.

Swavesey Parish Council 08-01-2015

Contact: Mrs Linda Miller [REDACTED]

Cambridgeshire County Council Review

Re-shaping the Willingham Division

1 Summary

This document proposes an alteration to the Willingham Division, of Cambridgeshire County Council, that involves replacing Longstanton with Swavesey and Fen Drayton. The case draws on data published on the Boundaries Commission's website that was supplied by Cambridgeshire County Council. It shows that the new grouping would yield an almost 'perfect' division, and one that would also reflect strong community links (as will be argued separately by the parishes involved).

2 Background

Longstanton is going to become increasingly obsessed with the development of the new town of Northstowe on its borders, and it is inevitable (and entirely understandable) that Northstowe-related issues will dominate its thoughts and actions as the town develops.

"Forecasting Methodology" shows (Pages 10-11) that Northstowe's predicted new housing stock has been divided equally between the Cottenham/Histon/Impington and Willingham divisions, giving 782 dwellings to each division. This conflicts with the District Council's well documented intention to establish a new parish of Northstowe from 2016.

The "electoral figures (XLS)" spreadsheet gives the 2014 and 2020 electorates for each parish, but makes no separate mention of Northstowe. However the figures for Oakington and Westwick show that the electors from the 782 Northstowe dwellings that were allocated to Cottenham/Histon/Impington division have all been added to its electoral roll – and its population increases from 1204 to 2820 (+1616) without any new housing being identified in the Local Plan. However the other 782 houses that were allocated to Willingham division have been treated very differently, with the three constituent parishes being given ~540 electors each. The rationale (if any) for giving new residents of Northstowe full voting rights in Willingham and Over is unclear, and in any case the different treatment of the two halves of its housing stock has not been justified. This fragmentation of the Northstowe community seems likely to be entirely counter-productive.

The table below summarises the projected electorates for the five parishes involved in this proposal:

	2014	2020	Change	'Pipeline' properties
Willingham	3,167	3,900	+733	+69 }
Over	2,323	2 860	+537	0 } (+782 Northstowe)
Longstanton	2,361	2 910	+549	+46 }
Swavesey	1,923	1 920	-3	0
Fen Drayton	690	690	0	0

The 2020 figures for the first three parishes (comprising the current Willingham division) are clearly inflated by the addition of Northstowe electors, so any proposal for re-grouping the parishes must work with the (estimated) true figures.

The table below shows the average number of electors per county councillor (63):

	2014	2020
Cambridgeshire County electorate	478,860	521,340
So Electors per County Councillor	7,601	8,275
And, just using SCDC area figures	7,365	8,470

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The 2020 figures reflect the growing SCDC electorate due to Northstowe, a trend that is set to continue throughout the following decade – and a growth that would accelerate if recent Government proposals come to fruition.

The table below shows the variances for the current and proposed division (removing the Northstowe electors from Willingham and Over for the re-grouped division):

	2014	Variance	2020	Variance
Willingham, Over, Longstanton (as now)	7,851	+3%	9,670	+17%
Just using SCDC figures		+7%		+14%
Willingham, Over, Swavesey, Fen Drayton	8,103	+7%	8,310	0
Just using SCDC figures		+10%		-2%

It is clear that the current Willingham Division will be far from ideal going forward, and that a new grouping of Willingham, Over, Swavesey and Fen Drayton would yield an almost ‘perfect’ Division.

3 Implications

To complete the picture it would only be fair to consider the fate of Longstanton if it were to be removed from the Willingham division. Logically it should probably be grouped with Northstowe and with Oakington and Westwick on Northstowe’s other flank. Initially this would be a very small division, though this shortage of electors could perhaps be addressed by adding in Rampton. However it is likely that the county councillor’s casework would be far higher than usual due to Northstowe’s rapid growth and its inevitable impact on the existing communities alongside.

	2014	Variance	2020	Variance
Northstowe, Longstanton, Oakington, Rampton	3,945	-48%	7,266	-13%
Just using SCDC figures		-46%		-14%

Although these figures seem to be quite low, there is every indication that Northstowe will grow more rapidly than recent projections have suggested, so the apparent shortfall may well be resolved by 2020.

The impact on the current Papworth & Swavesey division is harder to assess, but the proposed housing development on the soon-to-be-vacated Papworth Hospital site would go a long way to address any shortfall. The neighbouring divisions south of the A14 are due to be regrouped anyway, so a little more juggling should be able to distribute the electorates more equitably. That is a process that we have neither the information nor the expertise to carry out within the timescale allowed.

4 Conclusion

This proposed re-shaping of the Willingham division would correct the predicted excess variance and would produce a near-perfect division by 2020.

But this proposal is born out of far wider considerations of community cohesion that are best expounded by the parishes themselves. (This document concentrates solely on the numerical aspects of the proposal.)