I am Cornwall Councillor for the St Austell Bethel Division. I also chaired the Cornwall Council Electoral Review Panel during this stage of the review. However, I am making these comments as an individual. I consider that Cornwall Council went to great trouble to involve all Cornwall Councillors in the process by which it developed its proposals. As a result it was pleasing that all the recommendations in its report were approved by Council. If you study the names of those who proposed and seconded proposals at the Panel you will see that they came from all political groups represented and many decisions were unanimous. I think you should give weight to that. Cornwall Council's submission is likely to be one of very few making proposals for the whole of Cornwall and we can claim legitimately to be speaking for Cornwall. We also engaged with Parish Councils and individuals through meetings and emails. We tried to take their views into account but, even more importantly, to encourage them to engage with you. We were aware of the criteria you are obliged to follow and sought to respect them all. Community identity is very important although impossible to reflect completely because of the need for electoral equality. We tried to secure a very high level of electoral equality while moderating that in some areas because of our wish to avoid dividing parishes between divisions unnecessarily, creating very small polling districts, especially in towns, which we feared would create significant problems with arrangement for parish elections and practical considerations about where suitable polling stations were. We know that in the debate about council size earlier in the process, one reason for your preference for 87 was the hope that this would allow Community Networks to be respected fairly well. That was appreciated and we hope that will still be part of your thinking. However, in practice we found it difficult in some areas to propose suitable divisions which matched community networks precisely. Where that occurs, the main practical implication will be that a Cornwall Councillor will have to serve 2 Community Networks, not just one. 88 COUNCILLORS Your guidance makes clear that you can consider proposals for 86 or 88 as well as 87 councillors. Cornwall Council only entered this debate late in the process after Councillor Sam Tamlin asked me a question at the Council meeting on 23 January which is on the webcam. Subsequently officers did some work which was reported to the Electoral Review Panel. This demonstrated to me that, if the Council were 88, the adjustment should be in South East Cornwall, that it would improve electoral equality even further compared with our 87 scheme, and that the strengths in terms of community identity would also be greater. The Council report is part of the papers submitted to the Electoral Review Panel and I understand that an individual proposal is being made to you by Councillor Tamlin. I hope that as a result you will give serious consideration to an 88 member Council, which now is my personal preference, and that you will discuss this fully in your report so that a further debate can take place in the next round of the consultation. ST AUSTELL As a St Austell councillor, I want to observe that I support the proposals for the St Austell and Mevagissey Community Network including placing Gorran parish in the new Roseland division; that was bound to be large geographically and it seems more logical to extend it along the coast rather than go possibly right up to the A30. That makes possible a division for the other coastal parishes bordering St Austell Bay, bringing together communities with much in common. St Austell
parish has the right number of electors for 3 divisions and it seems sensible to have a western, middle and eastern one. My own current Bethel division has at its heart the post office, chapel, chapel hall, social club and doctors’ surgery all at or close to the Bethel Roundabout. The new boundary would bring in residential areas to the south of Bethel Road which also look to there as the focal point of their neighbourhood. There seems to be a strong wish on the part of the rural parishes close to St Austell not to share a Cornwall Councillor with part of the town. That’s fully understandable because the character of the different settlements varies so much. The adjacent areas with which St Austell has most in common are the southern parts of the parish of Treverbyn which are now urban extensions. NEWQUAY The only part of the Cornwall Council submitted scheme for 87 which I disagree with strongly relates to Newquay. In hindsight options there were not discussed in sufficient detail early enough. Newquay is complicated because of where growth is likely to occur up to and beyond 2023 and the wish to respect the traditional inland centre of St Columb Minor. I think you are receiving a submission from Councillor Kenny, supported by 2 other Cornwall Councillors which I hope you will study thoughtfully. I think that on balance it has more strength than the Cornwall Council scheme promoted by other less experienced councillors. URBAN AND RURAL AREAS Finally I want to comment on what I think is the majority view in both towns and rural areas that, other things being equal, it is preferable to keep the main built up area of towns separate from the rural areas around them because the interests of the two can differ significantly which makes clear representation more difficult. That view is probably held strongest in rural areas but, as a councillor who has represented part of a large town for 30 years, I think the towns, especially the medium size ones, also feel that and want to have their own representative or representatives where numbers allow. I think this is the logic behind the proposals for Penzance, St Ives, Hayle, Helston, Wadebridge, Bodmin, Launceston, Liskeard and Saltash. So there is a consistent methodology. Two exceptions are Looe and Bude. In Looe the river and the bridge have worked well as clear, strong boundaries and I wish to perpetuate that. In Bude the geography is so restrictive in that there is only a narrow belt of land between the sea and the border with Devon. So I see no way of coming up with manageable single member divisions much different from what Cornwall Council is proposing. ..

**Uploaded Documents:**

None Uploaded