Dear Mr Lawrence

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

Thank you for your email dated 25 September 2012 acknowledging the Golborne Forum’s submission of 25 July 2012 on the Council size for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and seeking our views on warding arrangements.

As you are aware from our letter of 25 July, the Golborne Forum, which is open to everyone living or working in the Golborne ward of North Kensington, aims to:

- give local people a voice on the big issues affecting the community;
- make the case for Golborne to help bring funding into the area;
- consult and communicate with Golborne people about what’s going on.

In view of this remit, our views on warding arrangements are confined to Golborne ward and any consequential impact on the wards immediately adjacent to Golborne,

In our submission of 25 July 2012, the Golborne Forum argued strongly that Golborne must retain three ward councillors and we wish to re-iterate that argument in relation to warding arrangements. Golborne is one of the most deprived wards in London, in one of the richest Boroughs. The relative socio-economic deprivation in Golborne ward compared to more affluent wards in the south of the Borough generates a large amount of casework for local Councillors and effective representation of the population of the ward would suffer if there were fewer than three.

The Golborne Forum is pleased to see the Commission’s emphasis on the need to develop an understanding of areas that communities identify with. In the case of Golborne, the area of identity is, in our experience, the current ward boundary, with
the exception of a small area which crosses Ladbroke Grove at the north west. This used to be part of St. Charles ward. It was moved into Golborne at the last review despite local protests, notably from residents of Kensal House and it has never felt part of Golborne. Ladbroke Grove is a key psychological as well as physical boundary and we submit that it should revert to being the ward boundary between Golborne and St. Charles wards.

We understand that there may be proposals to move the south-eastern corner of Golborne ward into Colville ward. If the Commission is indeed considering this, then we oppose it. In our experience, people in the south-east part of Golborne strongly identify with the area and certainly do not feel themselves to be part of Colville. The Westway is an important psychological as well as physical boundary and in our submission it should continue to be the ward boundary between Golborne and Colville.

We are very proud of Golborne. Despite its relative deprivation and poverty, it is one of the most vibrant places in London, with its much-loved street market, funky shops, wide choice of restaurants and cafés, iconic Trellick Tower and peaceful canalside walk through Meanwhile Gardens. If you or any of the Commission would like to visit our neighbourhood and see its community boundaries and identity for yourselves we would be delighted to show you around.

Yours sincerely

cc Robert Sheppard, Head of Governance Services, RBKC