West Berkshire

Personal Details:

Name: James Cole
E-mail: [email protected]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: West Berkshire Council

Comment text:

I am one of the current ward members for Kintbury Ward; one of the parishes presently included in Kintbury Ward is Inkpen, and Inkpen Parish Council tells me that it has put in a request for a variation to the proposal put in by West Berkshire Council, that “Hungerford, Kintbury, Inkpen and West Woodhay, Hamstead Marshall and Enborne be combined and have three councillors”. Whilst I voted in favour of the formal WBC proposal for new wards at the recent Council meeting, it was after discussion with the Acting Leader who accepts that I may support Inkpen’s proposal. I am aware that WBC has already spent time trying to ensure that the numbers work for electoral equality; this option does not change the numbers as far as other proposed wards are concerned, so there is no negative in respect of the first bullet on page 2 of your guidance document.

Inkpen’s reasoning is correct as far as community interest and boundaries are concerned – Inkpen, West Woodhay and Combe look to Kintbury more than they do to Hungerford; the existing grouping of rural parishes in Kintbury Ward is in fact a relatively homogenous grouping as far as the second bullet is concerned. I see no negatives in allowing these parishes to stay together as far as possible (I accept that one parish has to move to another ward, but at least it goes with other rural parishes). For the third bullet, Kintbury Ward has 2 councillors at present, and in general terms this has meant that if one councillor has been unavailable the other has usually been on call, and this would not be a realistic option for the remaining parishes of an amended Kintbury Ward if the West Berkshire proposal should be accepted. The Inkpen proposal would mean that Kintbury, Hamstead Marshall and Enborne would retain some backup cover, and overall this is in line with your third bullet. At present I can see no downside as far as the town of Hungerford is concerned. Looking at the names of the existing wards it would appear acceptable to use “Hungerford and Kintbury”.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded