

## Starkie, Emily

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**From:** Martin Evans [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 11 December 2017 12:25  
**To:** reviews  
**Subject:** FW: District Council boundary review URGENT RESPONSE

**Importance:** High

Dear Sir/Madam

Sorry to say we missed the importance of these issues, partially due to the way they were presented. We have now reviewed and comment as follows:

The first and perhaps most critical issue is that the presentation of the issues makes it all sound like low key issue and appears to make it based on a 'current position' which is not of course the actual status quo. I hope this is not intentional but its difficult to see how this can have been done accidentally.

The issue that those of us wholly or mainly within the SDNP has is that the sensitive issues that relate to the most sensitive areas of the park get lost in the large volumes of issues that apply to non-park and particularly built up areas and therefore we are not able to give Park issues the attention they deserve. Suggesting that Colemore & Priors Dean join the Ropley PC could of course have a further massively detrimental effect on our ability to get Park issues properly prioritised.

We are therefore writing to object to four aspects of the draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for East Hampshire District Council, October 2017 and to highlight that we do not believe the full intent of these proposals has been communicated properly to Parishes.

First, the recommendations do not consider the position of the South Downs National Park Authority, the sole Local Planning Authority for about 57% of the area covered by East Hampshire District. This is currently of limited significance as there is a common Local Plan in the form of a Joint Core Strategy which is administered in the Park areas of the District by EHDC under an agency agreement with SDNPA. However, both EHDC and SDNPA are well-advanced in preparing separate local plans, with a new South Downs plan heading for adoption in 2018. Given the significance of planning issues in local government, it would have been helpful if the report had identified the Park boundary in order to show which wards were wholly or partly inside the Park. **This is an essential piece of information to demonstrate the impacts of the proposals and the presented impacts of the proposals are misleading without this.**

Some consideration should also have been given to the impact on individual councillors of representing wards with two different local plans, and on the Council as a whole in being composed of a mixture of representatives (wholly in, wholly out and part in/out). Does such division meet the Commission's objective of "effective and convenient local government"? Has EHDC consulted SDNPA on this matter under its duty to cooperate? Has the LGBC consulted directly with SDNPA?

Secondly, the document fails to include a clear statement of the impact of the recommendations on the composition of the council in terms of single-councillor and multi-councillor wards. Using the information in paragraph 55 of the report and information on EHDC's website, the recommendations are **very significant** in this regard:

	Before	After	Change
Single-councillor wards	33	12	-21
Two-councillor wards	3	11	+8
Three-councillor wards	1	3	+2
Total number of wards	38	26	-12

Total number of councillors	44	43	-1
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**The recommendations should be much more open about the magnitude of the changes it is proposing so that they may be properly understood and assessed by Parishes and members of the public.** The recommendations should also explain how these changes meet the Commission’s primary objective of delivering the fundamental democratic principle that any elector’s vote is worth the same as another’s. On the contrary, it seems that the changes will increase the likelihood that larger political parties will secure more seats at the expense of smaller parties. In the absence of a power to allocate votes proportionately in multi-member wards, it would be fairer to maintain or even increase the number of single-councillor wards, thereby reducing the chances that minority-party candidates will be swamped within majority-party strongholds. Does “good electoral quality” really outweigh voter fairness?

Thirdly, the recommended inclusion of the parishes of Hawkley and Colemore & Priors Dean within an enlarged ward of Ropley & Tisted fails to meet the Commission’s objective of community identity. What analysis has been undertaken by the Commission in reaching its recommendation?

In our view, the Parish of Colemore & Priors Dean has only a very limited identity with the Parish of Ropley and a much greater identity with the Parish of Froxfield & Privett. For example:

	Ropley	Colemore & Priors Dean	Froxfield & Privett
Landscape	Western Downs	Froxfield Plateau, Scarp Slopes	
Population	Strong village centre	Dispersed rural, no major centres	
Facilities	Sports grounds, Village Halls, Local Societies, Church, Community Shop	Two Churches (one redundant)	Village Hall, Three Churches (one redundant), Shop
Main shopping centres	Alresford and Alton	Petersfield	
Bus service	Alton/Winchester – regular daily	Petersfield – one return journey on two days only	
Local Planning Authority.	East Hampshire District Council	South Downs National Park Authority	
Anglican Diocese	Winchester	Portsmouth (mainly)	
History	Kingdom of Wessex	Kingdom of Sussex	

There is no common identity with Ropley in school catchment or NHS areas, or even in administrative matters such as post codes or telephone exchanges. The name of the enlarged ward itself shows no regard for the identity of the imported parishes. For these reasons, Colemore & Priors Dean should remain linked with Froxfield & Privett, as at present.

Finally, we do not believe that the Commission’s changes have been sufficiently advertised within the District, particularly in view of proposed increase in the use of multi-member wards.

**This consultation has not been properly summarised to ensure it gets the attention it deserves. It requires to be properly introduced so PC’s and PM’s understand the sweeping changes and impacts that will result. The Commission should extend or re-consult to allow further and properly informed comments to be made.**

We’d be very pleased to meet up and discuss further but due to this large time delay and today’s deadline, we have had to respond in writing first.

Best regards

Martin  
Chairman  
Colemore & Priors Dean Parish Meeting

