

By Email:
reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Our ref: JN/SAF
Your ref:
Date: 18 August 2016

Dear Sirs

Electoral Review of Harrogate Borough Council – Draft Recommendations Consultation Response from Harrogate Borough Council

At the meeting of full Council on 20 July 2016 Harrogate Borough Council considered the Commission's draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements for the Harrogate district.

Council members were pleased that the draft recommendations broadly aligned with the Council's earlier submission regarding warding patterns across the District. More specifically Council members' views as demonstrated by the resolutions made at the meeting on 20 July 2016 were as follows:

1. Council members were happy to accept the draft recommendations for warding patterns in the Harrogate urban area which reflected the Council's original proposals with the exception of a small variation to the boundary between the proposed High Harrogate and Harrogate Kingsley wards. Council members were happy to accept this small variation between these two proposed wards.
2. Council members noted that the draft recommendations for Knaresborough represented a major variation to the Council's original proposals by redrawing the boundary between the two Knaresborough wards in the north and west of the town along with a minor boundary changes to include the whole of Manor Road in the Eastfield ward. Council members expressed a unanimous preference to reject this variation and to revert to the Council's original proposals for warding patterns for Knaresborough. This was on the basis that Council members, including the Knaresborough ward members, were of the view that the Council's original proposals better reflected the identities and interests of the Knaresborough communities for the Western and Central areas of the town.
3. Council members noted that as a result of the draft recommendations the Commission is proposing revised parish electoral arrangements for Killinghall Parish Council, Knaresborough Town Council and Ripon City Council. Members were unable to accept the proposals in relation to the intended Killinghall Oakdale ward, which proposed to return two parish councillors. This is because there are currently no electors in the area of that

proposed parish ward and indeed there will be none in advance of the housing development in that area. Having spoken to officers in the Council's planning department it is projected that there will be only 10 completed dwellings in that area by 2018 when the draft recommendations would take effect. The draft recommendations for parish electoral arrangements for Killinghall Parish Council will therefore represent a significant imbalance in equality of representation at parish council level. Council officers have previously raised this issue with the Commission and sought guidance as to what will happen in these circumstances.

4. Council members requested that there be a change the proposed ward name of Bishop Monkton and Newby to Newby and Bishop Monkton.
5. Finally and only in the event that the Commission declines to amend its draft recommendations in respect of the Knaresborough wards, some members of the Council had indicated that they would wish to see that the Commission's names for Scriven Ward be changed to Scriven Park and the name of Tentergate Ward be changed to Castle Ward. This is because the Tentergate housing estate falls wholly within the proposed Knaresborough Scriven ward. Whilst it is understood that this represents the views of several members, a vote was not taken on this issue given the unanimous decision to reject the draft recommendations for Knaresborough ward patterns.

Council officers have considered item 2 above and can see that the Council's original submission better retained the integrity of Knaresborough town centre which has an affinity of interest in common with all market towns. Council officers can also see that the Council's proposals looked to group together the communities accessing the town centre and its facilities from a common direction whereas the Commission's proposals for Knaresborough Tentergate only encapsulate part of the western settlements and they also egress into the eastern communities. Council officers can see that the direction of approach to the town centre impacts on the perspective and interest of community groups.

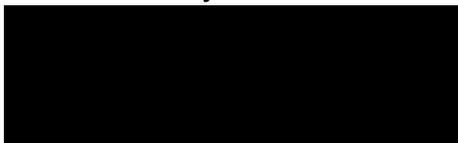
Subsequent to the meeting of the Council and on closer examination of the Commission's report, Councillor Broadbank, a Member of the Council (and of the working group established to oversee the Council's submission), noticed what may be an error in the Commission's boundary or projected electorate figures for High Harrogate and Kingsley wards. The submission from the Council gave growth figures in these wards of 259 voters in High Harrogate and 201 in the proposed Kingsley ward. The Commission's figures show an increase of 478 in High Harrogate and none in Kingsley ward. This is questioned by Councillor Broadbank because three sites in those areas have already have planning permission to develop and the Rugby Club site (126 homes) is now under construction. The other two sites, Kingsley Farm (61 houses) and the Highways depot at Station View (55 homes) are due to commence development before the end of the year. According to the draft proposals from the

Commission all these sites would now be in the new Kingsley ward and where no growth is shown. Conversely, no major development is forecast for the new High Harrogate ward, whereas the Commission is showing growth of 478 electors. The Commission may wish to re-examine its electorate projections and/or confirm the boundary line at this point between the two wards.

In this context Councillor Broadbank has also offered a potential solution, which would be to include the Rugby club site into the new High Harrogate ward along with Granby Park and so all roads off Claro Road would be placed in the new High Harrogate ward. Further, all properties off Granby Road (including Granby Court, Granby Gardens and Highgate Park) would be placed in the new Kingsley ward - along with the Kingsley Farm development and Station View site. Similarly, Councillor Broadbank has suggested that it would also make sense to include all of the High Harrogate Stray in the new High Harrogate ward. The revised boundary on the enclosed map prepared by Councillor Broadbank would start from between Granby Park and Granby Court, move southwards along Granby Road to the Junction of Knaresborough Road. Then the Boundary would progress westwards along Knaresborough Road to the Empress Roundabout then westwards along York Place until it meets up with the junction of Park Parade. From that junction the boundary would move northwards along Park Parade until it meets Walkers Passage. These proposals are from Councillor Broadbank and due to their timing have not been put before full Council for consideration.

Should the Commission require any further information please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Andy West (Andy.West-res@harrogate.gov.uk).

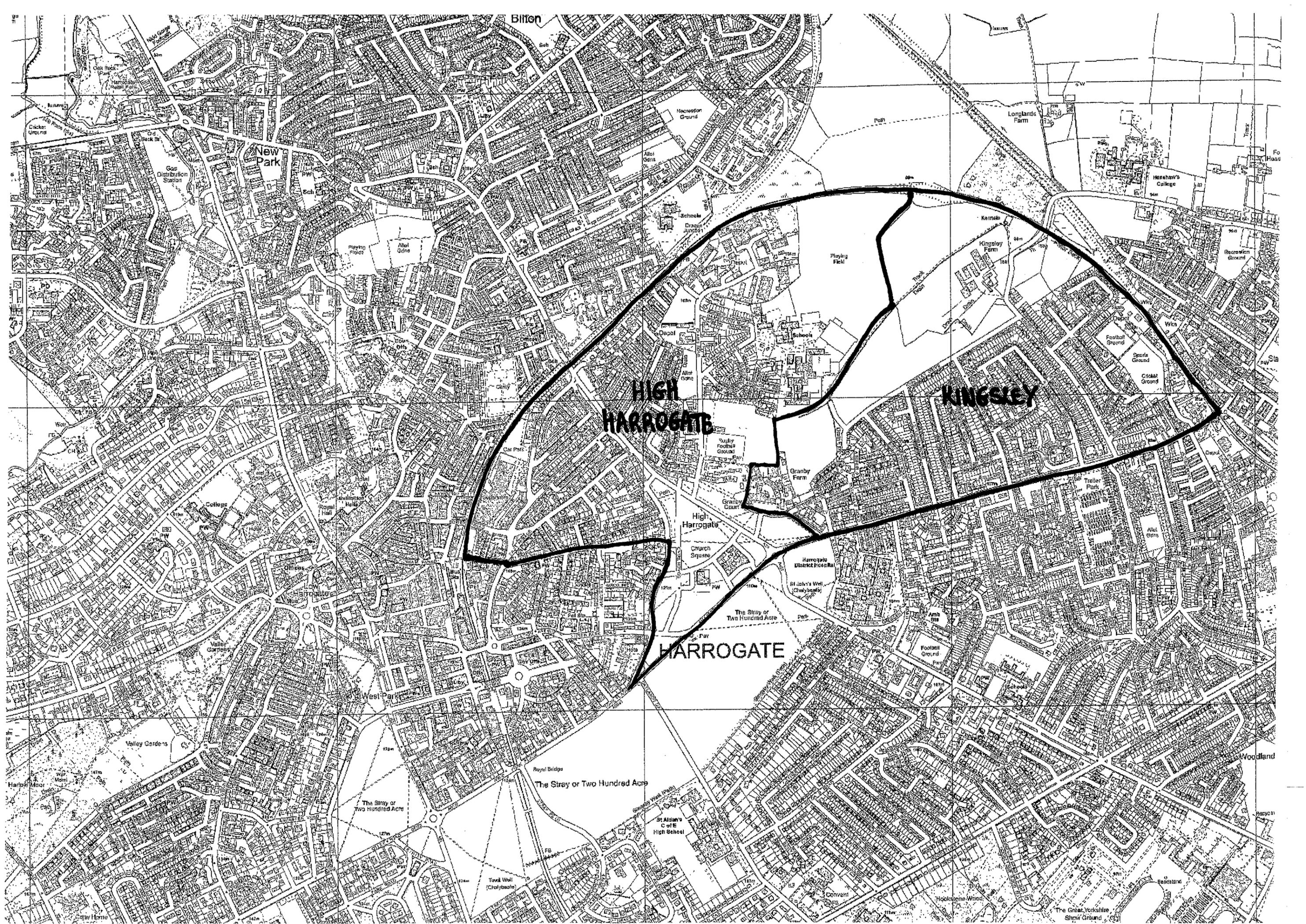
Yours faithfully



JENNIFER NORTON
Head of Legal & Governance
Harrogate Borough Council



If you are replying to this communication by post, please ensure that you use the address at the bottom of the letter



Bilton

New Park

HIGH HARROGATE

KINGSLEY

HARROGATE

The Stray or Two Hundred Acre

St Aldwin's C of E High School

The Great Yorkshire Show Ground

Woodland