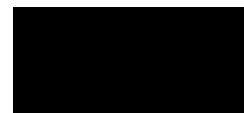


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21 AUG 2012



Jessica Metheringham-Owlett
Review Officer (Vale of White Horse DC)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG

18 August 2012

Dear Jessica Metheringham-Owlett

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF THE VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL

I am writing in response to the above in my capacity as an ordinary citizen. This is an individual response, separate from my roles as an elected councillor of North Hinksey Parish Council and Honorary Alderman of the VOWH District Council.

Currently the Vale's North Hinksey & Wytham Ward has approx 3700 electors and the two councillors reporting to both parish councils. By 2018, with current outline planning approvals and many applications for flat conversions, this could possibly reach 4,500. I understand the aim of the LGBC review is a reduction of 51 VOWH councillors to 38, with the creation of single member Wards of approx 2,600 electors.

During the Electoral Review of Oxfordshire I led discussions about Division boundaries, which NHPC adopted and sent to you on the 24 March 2011. The Commission agreed with the NHPC rationale and created a new County Council Ward for an enhanced North Hinksey Division of 8,709 electors, which included the remaining electors living in the Cumnor Hill A420 areas. Cumnor Village was moved to the new OCC Kingston Bagpuize Ward. The following comments were also included in the NHPC letter to the Commission:

"North Hinksey is a thriving community on the outskirts of Oxford serving a wide area that provides services to all the residential areas within or bordering the current parish council boundaries. The justification for this revised ward is based on the simple, but logical premise that all electors now shown within the revised ward(s) look to North Hinksey for their essential and every day services. As such they should be able to have a say in how those services are run and develop."

Essential Services provided include: - Doctors, schools, shops, library service, Post Office, Dentists, banks, mixed churches and petrol station. All local transport from the areas included run through North Hinksey. We would prefer a combined North Hinksey/Wytham & Cumnor enlarged Ward because of the essential services that many in the Cumnor area use in North Hinksey (Botley) area. Although this would have more than 10% higher numbers that currently being sought it would be a compact area for a County Councillor to represent and involve less travel than a spread out ward."

I think that the above rationale is applicable to this latest review about the Vale of White Horse reduction of councillors. By using a similar approach, I believe there is scope within the North East areas of the VOWH to reduce the current 5 councillors. Sadly though, with my poor

geographical knowledge, it is difficult for me to accurately put forward single Ward proposals. For example: currently electors in Hurst Rise Road are represented by different VOWH Wards with most of them within North Hinksey and the remainder falling into the Cumnor Ward. However, using the rationale quoted from the Oxfordshire Review in an attempt to keep cohesive communities together, I would like to propose a large area which could be divided into single Wards, but leaving the establishment of the actual breakdown of electoral numbers and demarcation lines to the LGBC to establish.

OCC Ward with North Hinksey/Wytham/Dean Court/Farmoor/
Cumnor Hill to A420 8,709

Plus potential numbers from:

Cumnor Village	709	
Appleton	742	
Besselsleigh	57	
Fyfield & Tubney (mops up all electors to the A415)	<u>412</u>	<u>1,920</u>
Approx total electors of		<u>10,629</u> *

10,629 electors would reduce councillors to 4 with approx 2,600 electors each. Perhaps though there is scope within the scenario above to increase numbers per Ward with other smaller communities/electors due to the fairly compact area and ease of transport. I have noted in the past that the Vale has a tendency to link North Hinksey with communities south of it, following the A34, although there are few public transport links from North Hinksey. This would allow South Hinksey, with approx 304 electors (currently covered by the Kennington councillor), being added to the above making a total of 10,933. Many people from South Hinksey use essential facilities located at North Hinksey.

One point I would like to make is that many of the students at the Westminster College Campus, Harcourt Hill in North Hinksey choose to register in the locality. As an elected VOWH District Councillor 1991-2007 I never found the College or students making many demands on my time, or have much interest in local community affairs. The numbers of students registering locally is unpredictable, perhaps between 200/250 individuals. Obviously living on the college site does mean they will have different issues from households in the wider community.

I appreciate that I have not met the requirements of the LGBC Review by defining individual Wards, due to my poor statistical/geographical abilities. I apologise for my limitations but hope my proposals are worth considering.

Yours sincerely



Briony Newport (Mrs)

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