

The Stafford Borough Labour Group's Submission on the Local  
Government Boundary Commission's Draft Recommendation on New  
Electoral Arrangements for Stafford Borough Council.

The Stafford Borough Labour Group accepts the Commission's draft recommendations for all the proposed wards in the Stafford Borough area, even though we felt that Church Eaton and Seighford wards should have been single member wards.

However the Stafford Borough Labour Group wish to make known their objections to the Council's response to your Draft recommendations as passed by the Conservative majority on the Borough Council at the Special Council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

Again the Council split politically as all the opposition Councillors, with one exception who abstained, voted against the Conservative group's proposal to make representations on your recommendations in respect of Holmcroft, Common, Coton, Littleworth and Highfields and Western Downs Wards.

**1. We disagree with the Council's representation on your recommendations for Holmcroft because:**

The Tory led Council's proposal for the Holmcroft ward is exactly the same as their original proposal which you have considered and deemed unsatisfactory.

The LGBF has already said in para. 63, "We consider that the boundary proposed by the Council that would run along Holmcroft Road appeared to divide the community in that area". That division of the community remains the same under their new proposal.

Their proposal to move Old Balfour Road, Old School Drive and Coppice Way, plus the Sir Graham Balfour High School into Holmcroft goes against the community identity. They should remain in Common Ward because they are adjacent to the Common and to the east of the A34 (a recognised boundary accepted by the LGBC).

We accept that the number of electors is slightly higher than in other wards, but this should be over-ridden by the importance of the community cohesion.

However, we consider that Parkside Primary school should be in Holmcroft ward as its main entrance is in the Parkside estate.

**Therefore we disagree with the Council's representation to you and instead concur with the proposals for the Holmcroft Ward put forward by the LGBF.**

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**2. We disagree with the Council's representation on your recommendations for Common because:**

Their new proposal for the Common Ward will split the community around Astonfields Road.

We agree with the LGBC that the Sandon Road is a clear boundary and the area around Common Road should run to the south end of the Sandon Road in its entirety.

We consider that the change to the boundary on the south side of the Common Road in the Council's new proposal is in order to adjust numbers caused by their proposed changes the Holmcroft Ward.

**Therefore we disagree with the Council's representation to you and instead concur with the proposals for the Common Ward put forward by the LGBF.**

**3. We disagree with the Council's representation on your recommendations for Coton because:**

The Council's new proposal for Coton is a result of the changes they propose for Holmcroft and Common Wards.

Their representation suggest that former St George's Hospital site should be moved from Coton to Littleworth, because it has no links to Coton is incorrect. The St George's site was in Coton Ward until recently and the asylum was built on part of the ancient Coton Open Field.

There is a vehicle access onto Crooked Bridge Road and footpath links onto Corporation Street. Many of the children from that new estate attend the John Wheeldon Primary school in Corporation Street.

The Sandon Road boundary between Common and Coton is a clear boundary as accepted by the LGBC and is totally disregard in the Council's representation against your recommendation.

**Therefore we disagree with the Council's representation to you and instead concur with the proposals for the Coton Ward put forward by the LGBF.**

**4. We disagree with the Council's representation on your recommendations for Littleworth because:**

The Council's new proposal for Littleworth is a result of the changes they propose for Holmcroft, Common and Coton Wards, and the proposed boundary changes for the Littleworth ward conflict with need for clear and identifiable boundaries. This will cause artificial constructs, for example one side of Tithe Barn Road will be in Coton Ward and the other side in Littleworth Ward.

Whereas if the boundary remains at Cambridge Street, there is only one house alongside the allotment fence on the Coton Ward side of the road up to Smallman Street, all the houses on the east side of Cambridge Street would as now be in Littleworth.

We accept the number of electors per Councillor is slightly lower than in other wards, but this should be over-ridden by the importance of community cohesion.

**Therefore we disagree with the Council's representation to you and instead concur with the proposals for the Littleworth Ward put forward by the LGBF.**

**5. We disagree with the Council's representation on your recommendations for Highfields and Western Downs because:**

Their "new" proposal is a re-hash of their original proposal for two single member wards, in which they alleged the areas of Highfields and Western Downs are separate communities, but as we indicated in our original submission, the people from Highfields and Western Downs use the same shops and the same schools. We agree with your recommendation that a two member seat at Highfields and Western Downs better reflect your statutory criteria and the community identity in this area.

**Therefore we disagree with the Council's representation to you and instead concur with the proposals for the Highfields and Western Downs Ward put forward by the LGBF.**

Yours sincerely,

Jack Kemp

(Councillor W.J.Kemp)

Leader of Stafford Borough Labour Group.

