

## **Submission by Peterborough City Council on warding arrangements to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England**

### **1. Introduction and Background**

This document sets out Peterborough City Council's (PCC) submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) for new warding arrangements following the Commission's decision on "Council size" to increase the number of councillors to represent Peterborough from 57 to 60 members.

The last Review of the electoral arrangements for the PCC area was carried out by the Boundary Committee for England (BCFE) and completed in July 2002. At that time, the BCFE identified in their final report that "the city of Peterborough can be divided into four distinct urban areas; the southern area (the area south of the River Nene, the western area (the area north of the River Nene and west of the railway line), the eastern area (the area north of the River Nene, east of the railway line and south of Soke Parkway) and the northern area (the area east of the railway line and north of Soke Parkway)". Clearly, these physical barriers still exist and the Council believes that the principles applied then ought to form the basis of the current review of electoral arrangements (warding).

In reaching its proposals, the Council's cross-party Electoral Review Group's (ERG) members have considered firstly, the need to give effect to the LGBCE's guidelines for three-member wards for councils that elect by thirds, as against the existing one, two and three member wards, and secondly, the effects of proposals for new warding arrangements in order to address both the current imbalances in the existing elector: councillor ratios across a number of wards in the City.

On the basis of 60 councillors, the average cllr: elector ratio in 2019 will be 1: 2,501 with 20 wards, as against the existing number of 24 wards. However, in order to achieve a simply numeric solution by adopting this approach it would create a severe imbalance in the Western rural area of 36% above the average for the whole of PCC.

From the outset, the Council received a number of representations from individual members and the parish councils within the existing Barnack ward for it to remain as a single-member ward. Both the Council and the ERG concluded that the only sensible approach would be to divide the Western rural area into one three-member ward by merging the existing wards of Glinton & Wittering and Northborough, and for the existing ward of Barnack to remain as a single-member ward. The case for a single-member ward will be set out later in this submission.

This conclusion has been reached having considered but discarded alternative solutions. In view of this, the Council's submission has been prepared on the basis of a council consisting of 61 councillors and the average cllr: elector ratio of 1: 2,460 with 21 wards.

The table below shows the current wards with the projected 2019 electorate.

**Western rural wards**

Barnack	2,570
Glington & Wittering	5,260
Northborough	2,360
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	10,190

**Eastern rural wards**

Eye & Thorney	5,350
Newborough	2,330
	<hr/>
	7,680

**Northern urban wards**

Paston	8,010
Walton	4,490
Werrington North	5,930
Werrington South	5,560
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	23,990

**Eastern urban wards**

Central	8,110
Dogsthorpe	7,180
East	8,590
North	4,110
Park	7,370
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	35,360

**Western urban wards**

Bretton North	7,280
Bretton South	2,380
Ravensthorpe	5,430
West	7,160
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	22,250

**Southern urban wards**

Fletton & Woodston	8,700
Orton Longueville	7,300
Orton Waterville	7,620
Orton with Hampton	15,630
Stanground Central	9,140
Stanground East	2,180
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	50,570

Total electorate	<hr/> <hr/>
	150,040

As a consequence of the decision to base these proposals on a membership of 61 with 21 wards, the new warding arrangements are set out in the tables below.

These figures are based upon the principle that the new patterns of wards should result in each councillor representing roughly the same number of voters across the Council's area. Variances to the average ratio are explained in the submission following this table on a ward by ward basis.

#### **Western rural wards**

Ward Name	Electorate 2019	Variance
Barnack	2,570	4.5%
Glington, Northborough & Wittering	7,620	3.3%

#### **Eastern rural wards**

Ward Name	Electorate 2019	Variance
Eye, Newborough & Thorney	7,680	4.1%

#### **Northern urban wards**

Ward Name	Electorate 2019	Variance
Gunthorpe	8,000	8.4%
Paston & Walton	7,810	5.8%
Werrington	8,086	9.5%

#### **Eastern urban wards**

Ward Name	Electorate 2019	Variance
Central	6,749	-8.5%
Dogsthorpe	7,180	-2.7%
East	6,590	-10.7%
North	7,471	1.2%
Park	7,370	0%

#### **Western urban areas**

Ward Name	Electorate 2019	Variance
Bretton	7,280	-1.4%
Ravensthorpe	7,782	5.4%
West	7,188	-2.6%

#### **Southern urban wards**

Ward Name	Electorate 2019	Variance
Fletton & Stanground	7,030	-4.7%
Fletton & Woodston	7,866	6.6%
Hampton Vale	6,670	-9.9%
Hargate & Hempstead	7,035	-4.7%
Orton Longueville	8,083	9.5%
Orton Waterville	7,856	6.4%
Stanground South	6,030	-18.3%

## **New Ward Descriptions and Explanations**

### **Western rural wards**

#### **Barnack Ward:**

The proposal is for a single-member ward on the same boundaries as the existing ward. The justification for this based on the electorate is set out on page 1 of this submission. The Council recognises that by asking for a single-member ward it needs to make a case not just in respect of numbers but also why it is important to maintain its community identity.

The Barnack Ward consists of six villages and a number of smaller settlements together with isolated farms. There is no likelihood of any further growth in housing in this area in the foreseeable future and it is entirely a rural ward with specific interests and traditions that differ from other wards. The ward has a long history formally as Barnack Rural District Council and subsequently as a single-member ward within Peterborough District Council and more recently, Peterborough City Council. In its day, Barnack Rural District Council sat in Stamford Town Hall. Village children go to one of the two local primary schools, although some students have their secondary education in Glinton. However, a number go to King's School, Peterborough, Stamford Endowed Schools and Oundle. Also, there are plans for a new Free School in Stamford that aims to recruit from the ward's villages.

Stamford is seen by the many of villagers as their main shopping centre.

The ward is bordered by the railway in the east, A47 to the north, A1 in the west and an area of woods, agricultural land and part of another ward to the south. The B1443 runs across the middle of the ward. There is an hourly bus service to Stamford and Peterborough along this road and it is very well used.

Local groups such as the Helpston Tennis Club, Play Groups, Ufford Cricket Club and Barnack Bowls club all provide a focus for the local community and are in part financially supported by the parish councils that form the Barnack ward group.

#### **Glinton, Northborough & Wittering Ward:**

The proposal is for a merging of the two existing wards of Glinton & Wittering (currently a two-member ward) and the single-member ward of Northborough. Glinton and Wittering are already situated in separate geographical locations but have worked well as a ward unit for many years. The addition of Northborough making up a three-member ward is considered to be the best solution.

Having recognised that a single three-member ward for the western rural area was not sustainable, given the location of Barnack to the west with its own strong community ties, it is logical that the existing ward of Glinton & Wittering be merged with Northborough, which adjoins it to the north to give good electoral equality across the proposed western rural wards.

This would also retain the same number of councillors for the ward as already exists.

## **Eastern rural wards**

The proposal is to merge the two existing wards of Eye & Thorney with the ward of Newborough. Whilst this will create a single three-member ward covering a large rural area, the same number of councillors would represent that electorate and given the total number of electors in the eastern rural area, there are no alternative proposals that would meet the Commission's criteria of electoral equality.

## **Northern urban wards**

In order to achieve the primary objective of creating 3-member wards, it is proposed to reduce the number of wards to three as against the existing four wards of Paston, Walton, Werrington North and Werrington South. These four wards currently include one two-member ward and have variances of 14%, 8%, 16% and 23% respectively. Clearly, to retain four wards in this area would not meet the LGBCE's guidance. These proposals will reduce the existing number of councillors from 11 down to 9 to make 3 new three-member wards.

With the projected development on what is known as Paston Reserve, which lies to the east of Paston Parkway, there needs to be a re-adjustment of the neighbouring wards to reflect the above issues.

### Gunthorpe Ward:

The proposal is to create a new ward from the existing Paston ward (polling districts PAS1, PAS2 and PAS4 (that part lying to the east of Paston Parkway) and polling districts SWE2 and SWE3 from the existing Werrington South ward. There are strong links between these areas in relation to the schools that serve both existing wards. The proposed name of the ward is merely to reflect the central area of Gunthorpe.

### Paston & Walton Ward:

The Existing Paston ward broadly contains the communities of Paston, Gunthorpe and Paston Reserve. The proposal is to create a new ward is to include the polling districts PAS3 and PAS4 (that part lying to the west of Paston Parkway) from the existing Paston ward, and merge them with the existing Walton ward (polling districts WAL1 and WAL2), plus that area of land including the mobile home park from polling district SWE1 (South Werrington). At present the existing Walton ward boundary in this particular location follows a stream which cuts through the park and it is therefore proposed that the boundary be altered to encompass the whole of the mobile home site within the new ward, rather than it being split between two wards as it currently is.

### Werrington Ward:

The proposal is to create a new ward from the existing Werrington North ward (polling districts NWE1, NWE2 and NWE3) and including that part of the existing Werrington South ward (polling district SWE1), which lies to the south west of the existing Werrington North ward (excluding that part of the mobile home park to be transferred to the new Paston & Walton ward).

## **Eastern urban wards**

The existing wards of Central, Dogsthorpe, East, North and Park currently have variances of 14%, 5%, 8%, 11% and 2.5%. As this is made up of 4 three-member wards and one two-member ward, it is proposed to adjust the electoral boundaries to facilitate 5 three-member wards. In order to increase the electorate for the new North ward, there has been a need to adjust both the Central and East ward boundaries to effect this change. The difficulty in finding an electoral balance in this block of wards is that the wards proposed to be changed all have variances below the average electoral average. Alternatively, if it had been proposed to reduce the number of wards from five to four, the opposite would have happened, resulting in far higher than acceptable variances above the average.

### Central Ward:

The proposal is to create a new ward from the existing ward polling districts of CEN3 and CEN4 and Silverwoods Road, Summerfields Road and that of Lincoln Road (west side) up to the junction of Cambridge Avenue, plus part of polling district EAS2 of the existing East ward (west of the Frank Perkins Parkway), which lies naturally within the centre of Peterborough ward.

### Dogsthorpe Ward:

It is proposed that there should be no change to the existing Dogsthorpe ward, which contains polling districts DOG1, DOG2, DOG3, DOG4 and DOG5.

### East Ward:

The proposal is to use the existing East ward polling districts of EAS1, EAS3, EAS4 and EAS5, but to only retain a small part of EAS2 (east of the Frank Perkins Parkway). Whilst this will result in a variance of 10% below the average as the potential for further development exists in this area.

### North Ward:

On its own the existing North ward boundary is unsustainable in respect of the electorate and the proposal is to create a new ward from the existing North ward polling districts of NTH1 and NTH2, plus polling districts CEN1 and CEN2 (excluding Lincoln Road, part of Silverwood Road and Summerfield Road) from the existing Central ward.

### Park Ward:

It is proposed no change to the existing Park ward, which contains polling districts PAR1, PAR2 and PAR3.

## **Western urban wards**

The existing wards of Bretton North, Bretton South, Ravensthorpe and West are all within a range of less than 10% variance but are currently served by two three-member wards, one two-member ward and one single-member ward. It is therefore, proposed to create 3 three-member wards. However, this cannot be achieved by a simple merger of the two wards that have a single member and the other two-member ward as their respective boundaries do not adjoin each other.

### Bretton Ward:

The proposal is to retain the existing Bretton North, which contains polling districts BRN1, BRN2, BRN3 and BRN4, but to rename it Bretton ward.

### Ravensthorpe Ward:

The proposal is to retain the existing Ravensthorpe ward, which contains polling districts RAV1, RAV2 and RAV3, plus polling district WES1 from the existing West ward and Charlotte Way from polling district WES3.

### West Ward:

The proposal is to create a new ward from polling districts WES2, WES3 (less Charlotte Way) and WES4 from the existing West ward, plus the current Bretton South ward (polling district BRS).

## **Southern urban wards**

By 2019, 30% of the PCC electorate will be within the southern urban area. The current six wards of Fletton & Woodston, Orton Longueville, Orton Waterville, Orton with Hampton, Stanground Central and Stanground East have variances of 15.8%, 4.6%, 5%, 33.3%, 0.6% and 3.7%. The proposal is now to increase the number of wards in this area from six to seven. Notwithstanding the current high imbalance, this area is subject to extensive growth not only over the next five year but beyond. Ideally, it would have been preferable to simply create new wards with the specific development areas just to accommodate both the current and future growth. However, this would potential create 'ghost' wards in the short term and it would be difficult to elect councillors where very few electors would exist. Therefore, this has led to a proposal to adjust the boundaries of all the wards within this urban grouping.

### Fletton & Stanground Ward:

The proposal is to create a new ward from polling districts FLE1 (which lies to the east of the railway line from the existing Fletton & Woodston ward, plus polling districts STC1, STC2 and STC4 of the existing Stanground Central ward. This would create a more appropriate geographical ward, whereby the existing Fletton & Woodston ward is divided by the railway line and will also absorb the new development within Stanground.

### Fletton & Woodston Ward:

The proposal is to retain the existing ward polling districts FLE2, FLE3 and FLE4, but to include part of ORH1 (north of Oundle Road) from the existing Orton with Hampton ward. This area sits adjacent to the existing Fletton & Woodston ward.

### Hampton Vale Ward:

The proposal is to create a new ward from polling districts ORH3 (part of, including Bank Avenue; Braymere Road; Delves Way; Harn Road; Osier Avenue and Torold Drive), ORH4 and ORH5 (part from the existing Orton with Hampton ward).

### Hargate & Hempstead Ward:

The proposal is to create a new ward from polling districts ORH1 (part of, including Landsdowne Walk and Shewsbury Avenue), ORH2, ORH3 (part of, excluding Bank Avenue; Braymere Road; Delves Way; Harn Road; Osier Avenue; Torold Drive).

### Orton Longueville Ward:

The proposal is to retain the existing polling districts of ORL1, ORL2, ORL3 and ORL4 (part of, excluding Kinnears Walk; Osprey and Sayer Court), plus ORH1 (part of, excluding Barford Close; Boltoph Green; Burwell Reach; Catherine Close; Chippenham Mews; Farriers Court; Glemsford Rise; Gretton Close; Landsdowne Walk; Lavenham Court; Lidgate Close; Oundle Road (part); Robert Rayner Close; Rothwell Way; Shewsbury Avenue; Wakerley Drive).

### Orton Waterville Ward:

The proposal is to retain the existing polling districts ORW1, ORW2, ORW3 and ORW4, plus ORL4 (part of, including Kinnears Walk; Osprey and Sayer Court).

### Stanground South Ward:

The proposal is to create a new ward from polling districts STC3 from the existing Standground Central ward (including the Cardea development) and the existing ward of Standground East (polling district STE), which naturally links to two areas together.

### Appendices

Included with this submission are the relevant maps showing the proposed wards and their existing polling district boundaries.

### Conclusion

This submission is based upon consideration of the LGBCE's guidance for warding arrangements. Peterborough City Council elects its Councillors three years out of every four where a third of Councillors are elected at each election, therefore this submission sets out proposals that seek to deliver three member wards to best fit that election cycle. The Council is requesting that the LGBCE consider the Barnack ward as a specific exception to this principle as it is justified on grounds of community

interests and identities. All other wards are proposed as three member wards whose electorate is within the proposed acceptable ratio of member to electorate. In some areas the variances in the number of electors is justified on predicted growth of the City (where the variance has a negative value) or on the basis of retaining existing community identities (where the variance has a positive value).

The Council submits that these proposals will achieve an effective and convenient local government with a ward pattern that reflects its electoral cycle.