



The Review Officer
Central Bedfordshire Review
Local Government Boundary Commission
76-78 Turnmile Street
LONDON EC1M 5LG

7th July 2010

Dear Sir

RE: CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE REVIEW – Dunstable Central Ward

I am writing on behalf of Dunstable's Central Ward Conservative party committee to comment on the proposed boundary review. Our members comprise Central Bedfordshire Unitary Authority councillors, Dunstable Town councillors and residents within the ward and have been ward members for a number of years.

We discussed the proposed boundary changes at our ward meeting on 1st July and similarly considered the comments made by colleagues in Dunstable's Chiltern Ward who are concerned with the proposals to dissolve their ward and disperse residents into neighbouring wards yet again.

We are fully supportive of Chiltern Ward's submission to you dated 24th June containing the historical, geographical, practical reasons outlined and endorse their alternative proposal as being a workable alternative to that currently proposed. Central Ward is a very demanding ward in terms of resident issues relating to town centre traffic, increased areas of crime, housing pressures, employment, health and social care, parking, shops and the environment. Chiltern Ward residents' issues are not unsympathetic, being in close proximity and many consider themselves as 'town centre'.

There are significant projects in the pipeline for town centre regeneration including the proposed Dunstable Masterplan, major highway improvements A5/M1 link, housing growth, new Dunstable/Luton guided busway which all add to resident concerns and are likely to increase workloads in the coming years, especially to residents close to the town centre. Watling ward's issues we believe are rather different and there would be a distinct benefit to residents in Central Ward to increase the representation to 2 members to manage the projected increased workloads, and consequently reduce representation in Watling to 1 member. We understand the need for a statistical formula to the boundary work but it is not wholly representative of the ward casework in each area. The rebalancing of ward boundaries as proposed by Chiltern ward and member resources accordingly would we believe contribute greatly to a better service to the residents. We have also advised colleagues in Watling ward that we are supporting the Chiltern ward initiative.

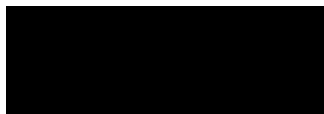
Our Ward members also commented that they believed the make up of Dunstable Town Council to be agreeable at 21 but that the representation per ward should be as follows:-

Central – 5, Ickniel – 5, Northfields – 5, Watling – 3, Manshead – 3

To increase support for members in the town centre areas for the reasons already outlined.

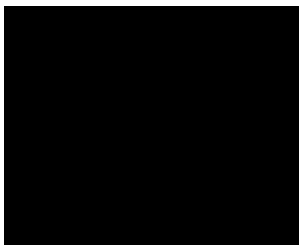
We would appreciate favourable consideration being given to support the amendments to Central & Watling ward representation as proposed.

Yours faithfully



Cllr Mrs P Staples
Ward Chairman and Dunstable Town Councillor

On behalf of
CBC Unitary Councillors A.Green, C.Hegley and N Young,
Dunstable Town Councillors P.Russell, A.Green,
Residents O.Read, T.Read, P.Simmonds, L. Bird, R. Staples, E.Vines



24th June, 2010

The Review Officer,
Central Bedfordshire Review,
Local Government Boundary Commission,
76-78, Turnmile Street,
London EC1M 5LG.

reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Dear Sir,

I am writing on behalf of Dunstable Chiltern Conservative Party Ward Committee. This consists of sitting Central Bedfordshire Unitary Authority and Dunstable Town Councillors, together with members who are residents of Chiltern Ward.

We wish to respond to the draft recommendations for Dunstable, which were discussed at our recent committee meeting. In particular, we are very concerned to see that the proposal is to dissolve Chiltern Ward.

The history of the Ward is as follows :-

- Chiltern Ward was established at the 2002 Electoral Boundary Review when mainly Central Ward electors were divided into a "new" Central Ward and a "new" Chiltern Ward. (Appendix 1)
- In 2008 when agreement had been reached that there would be a Central Bedfordshire Unitary Authority, Dunstable Central, Dunstable Chiltern and Dunstable Manshead Wards were amalgamated into Dunstable Downs Ward for Unitary Elections. Chiltern Ward remained as a single ward for town Council Elections. (Appendix 2)
- Now in 2010 the proposal is to amalgamate the current Watling Ward with a large part of Chiltern Ward into a two member Watling Ward. The remaining Chiltern Ward electors would vote in Central Ward.

We believe that the above proposal is very unfair to Chiltern Ward electors and if it goes ahead will mean that many of the electors will have been subjected to three changes of Wards in eight years. Building up a Ward so that electors feel part of their neighbourhood takes time and this has been constantly interrupted by them having to change Wards.

Our aim has always been to build a cohesive community and these constant changes make this more difficult to achieve. It also deters electors from voting or becoming more active in their local communities.

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- The proposed merger of Watling Ward with part of Chiltern Ward brings with it two diverse communities with different lifestyles. Some examples are :-
- Chiltern Ward electors shop at the large supermarkets and the Town Centre for most of their needs, but do on the odd occasion use the Langdale Road and West Street shopping parades for one-off items. They go no further than this, i.e. Langdale Road/Lowther Road junction.
- When they take a walk Chiltern Ward electors choose to go to Dunstable Downs or along Green Lanes. If they have young children they either take them to Bennetts Recreation Ground or Grove House Gardens in the centre of Dunstable. They do not use Watling Ward facilities.
- When they attend Church the majority of Chiltern Ward electors use the main Churches in the Town Centre and some worship at Totternhoe Parish and Langdale Road Churches.

In essence, Watling and Chiltern Wards have little in common. There is much more affinity between Central and Chiltern Wards.

We therefore wish to put forward an alternative proposal as follows :-

1. Make Watling Ward into a one member ward.
2. Accept the proposal as it stands for Central Ward in the draft review, and then amalgamate part of Watling Ward into Central Ward to make a two member ward.

We suggest that this could be done by :-

- (a) Adding together the projected numbers for Central and Watling Wards i.e.

Central	3712	(These figures include the current Chiltern Ward)
Watling	<u>7755</u>	
Total	<u>11467</u>	

- (b) Making Watling Ward a one member ward by taking all of the electors in W1, W4 and W5 polling stations and part of W3 polling station. All of these are in Watling Ward. (Appendix 3 for streets and Appendix 4 for map)

We believe this would give a total of approximately 3936 electors. Although this is higher than the ideal 3500 electors per Councillor, we believe it is manageable given that Watling Ward's lower super output

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areas are all in the least deprived 30% in England. (DCLG Indices of Deprivation – Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007)

- (c) Subtracting Watling Ward's one councillor number from the total electorate :

Total electorate	11467
Watling electors	<u>3936</u>
Total	<u>7531</u>

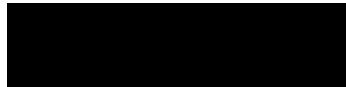
- (d) It follows that there would be 7531 electors to form a two member enlarged Central Ward, as proposed above, i.e. 3765 electors per Councillor.

We believe that this would be a much better outcome for the current electors of Chiltern Ward, especially as they are already working with Central Ward as part of Downs Ward for Unitary Elections.

We would like to inform you that we have consulted Central Ward colleagues and that they and that they are in agreement with our proposal.

We look forward to hearing the final decision.

Yours faithfully,



Cllr. Mrs. S. Newton,
Ward Chairman and Dunstable Town Councillor
On behalf of –
CBC Unitary Councillors, A.Green, N. Young and C. Hegley,
Dunstable Town Councillors, J. Anklesaria and E. Jones,
Residents, Ms. J. Cawdell, Mrs. E. Linsey and Mrs. J. Puddefoot