

Lindsey Taber

From: Jim.Doyle@dacorum.gov.uk
Sent: 26 September 2006 10:49
To: Implementation Inbox
Cc: Lindsey Taber
Subject: Boundary Review of Dacorum Borough

RE: Boundary Review of Dacorum Borough - Boundary Committee's Final Recommendations to the Electoral Commission

Dear Secretary,

The Electoral Review Committee of Dacorum Borough council met on 20 September 2006 to consider responses to the Boundary Committee's Final Recommendations to the Electoral Commission. Set out below are some points that the committee felt the Commission should take into account when considering the conduct of the Review.

Ward Names

Grove Hill and Piccotts-end Ward. The members of the committee felt that the name given to this ward displayed a certain inconsistency in the Boundary Committee's approach. Within the Borough there are a great many small, but significant hamlets (e.g. Flaunden, Flamstead, Markyate, Potten End, etc) whose existence is not alluded to in the Ward name. In addition it was felt that inclusion of Piccotts End in the ward name somehow emphasised the 'separateness' of this community from the rest of the proposed ward. Consequently the committee felt that it would be more appropriate to leave out the name of the small hamlet, not lay any stress on its discreteness, and simply name this ward 'Grovehill'.

Hemel Central Ward. The general consensus among the Committee was that the effect of the Boundary Committee's proposals is to change the current Hemel Hempstead Central ward beyond all recognition. The committee felt that in this case it would be more appropriate to dispense with the old name altogether and to adopt a new name - for example, in line with the County Council Divisions, 'Hemel Hempstead Town'.

Proposed Boundaries

Proposed Chaulden and Warners End / Boxmoor Boundary. The proposed boundary between these wards contains two anomalous instances. These are kinks in the proposed boundary running up Northridge Way:

- § that divide the properties in Whitehill between the two wards; and
- § a little further north that juts westward into Chaulden and Warners End to include the six properties adjacent to Green End Lane.

As far as the Dacorum Borough Council is concerned these two instances appear to be at odds with the Boundary Committee's acceptance of the validity of the Labour Group proposal (and the consultation that confirmed their acceptability to the local populace) as set out in sections 110 - 114 of the Final Recommendations. In addition these two anomalies appear to conflict with the Boundary committee's stated aim of adhering where possible, to obvious divisions, roads and natural boundaries. The committee suggests that the Electoral Commission rectify these anomalies by restricting the boundary to Northridge Way, in line with the DBC Labour Group proposal.

The leader of the Council was at pains to point out that the proposal to include the two historically separate and very distinct areas of Chaulden and Warners End in one ward is, for the Conservative Group, the biggest anomaly of the whole process and he wished this message to be conveyed to the Electoral Commission. In his Group's opinion the issues and concerns of the much larger Warners End area of the town will swamp those of Chaulden.

Leverstock Green / Bennetts End Boundary: Dacorum Borough Council is dismayed that its proposals for this part of the Borough appears to have been ignored. In its proposals during Stage One of the review there was a general cross-party consensus that the

representational difficulties in this area could be resolved by the creation of a One-Member Ward in the Tile Kiln area between Bennetts End and Leverstock Green. While this proposal did appear on the Boundary Committee's Website, no consultation (akin to that which was carried out in the North West of the town) took place with the local residents. It is the opinion of the Borough Council that the assertion in section 122 of the Final Recommendation that it is 'difficult to incorporate their proposals' is evasive and avoided the issues.

If you have any comments on the above or would like any further clarification of the points raised, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Doyle (on behalf of the Further Electoral Review committee) Members Support Services Chief Executives Directorate Dacorum Borough Council

(A hard copy of this document will follow)

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