









## Local resident's submissions to the Buckinghamshire County Council electoral review.

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<a href="#">Mr H Wilson--Bucks-CS-sub-20 10-11-20</a>	<a href="#">Mr J Herschel-Bucks-CS-su...</a>	<a href="#">Mr J Wiseman-Bucks-CS-s...</a>	<a href="#">Mr L Harte-Bucks-CS-sub-2...</a>
			
<a href="#">Mr P Morris-Bucks-CS-sub-2...</a>	<a href="#">Mr P Sheriff-Bucks-CS-sub-...</a>	<a href="#">Mr R Landells-Bucks-CS-su...</a>	<a href="#">Mr R Walker-Bucks-CS-sub-...</a>

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION

### ELECTORAL REVIEW OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Personal response to letter of 21 October 2010 from William Morrison, Review Officer.

#### **Introduction**

I write in my capacity as a resident of Beaconsfield for 45 years and have been a Town Councillor for almost twelve years out of the past twenty years. Here are some introductory thoughts:

1. For some time I have felt that the electoral system in Bucks and probably throughout much of the country produces results which are not truly representative of the electors. This applies at each of the three levels of local government. The first past the post voting system produces distorted patterns of elected members and leads to domination by one party over all others. We need a fairer voting system which will require that political parties will work together for the benefit of the communities they serve.
2. In Bucks I believe we should abolish the existing county and district councils and introduce two (?three) unitary authorities. This would, after reorganisation costs had been met, lead to considerable savings in administration costs e.g upwards of £500,000 in councillors's allowances alone.
3. There should be a review of parish and town boundaries so that continuous urban areas should not be split across parish/town boundaries and across district boundaries.

#### **Electoral review of Bucks C.C.**

1. Whilst we still have a County and four Districts, the relatively newly formed Local Area Forums (LAFs) should form the basis of the distribution of county councillors. There were 19 LAFs designated throughout the county consisting of groupings of parishes/towns, all strictly within District boundaries. Although not universally popular their significance would be enhanced if they were the basis of county electoral districts.
2. With schools becoming more independent of local education authorities and with delegation of some functions to parish/town councils the overall work load of a county council will decrease. This should be accompanied by a meaningful reduction in county councillors. I suggest an overall number of between 40 and 45. With an electorate of approximately 380,000 the average number of electors per county councillor would range from 9,500 for 40 councillors and 8,400 for 45 councillors.
3. If LAFs became the basis for electoral divisions the number of councillors per LAF would probably range between one (e.g. Beaconsfield) and five (e.g. Aylesbury). There might be a case for reviewing the LAF sizes in rural areas provided community of interest was not badly damaged.
4. My preference would be that the whole LAF is the electoral division with the Alternative Vote (AV) being the voting system for single member division (e.g. Beaconsfield) with a proportional voting system for a multiple member division e.g.(Beaconsfield). preferably using the Single Transferable Vote (STV).

5. If all LAFs have to have single member divisions then I hope that the voting will be done by AV but it will still produce an overall distorted representation of the electorate.
6. Finally, in anticipation of a later stage in your deliberations I suggest that the number of wards in Beaconsfield be increased from three to four with each ward returning four town councillors elected by STV. The whole town should be the electoral division for the district council election electing four district councillors by STV . This should help to reduce the overall number of district councillors, pending the coming of a unitary authority, and introduce a fairer representation of the electorate on the district council.

Henry Wilson 20 Nov 2010

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Electoral review of Bucks Nov 2010

**Gregory, Eleanor**

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**From:** Gregory, Eleanor  
**Sent:** 03 November 2010 17:11  
**To:** Morrison, William  
**Subject:** FW: Bucks County Councillors.....electoral review....

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**From:** Jeff & Denise Herschel [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 03 November 2010 16:06  
**To:** Reviews@  
**Subject:** Bucks County Councillors.....electoral review....

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

I am a parish councillor with some 10 years of service over the past 20 years, and currently chairman of what both our members and residents think is an active, forward-looking and successful council focussed on serving our residents and protecting and enhancing the environment in which we live.

I have been a district councillor and stood for the county council on a number of occasions. I would have no interest in doing so now.

As things stand I believe that the number of district and county councillors could be reduced dramatically with no significant effect on the impact on the electorate. Truth is that cabinet-style local government has meant that the majority of district and county councillors are powerless to represent those that elected them. Their presence has almost become a fig-leaf for participatory democracy.

It is disappointing to be told by both members of the public and by the county councillors that if you want something done about a local issue then speak to the parish council who will have significantly more 'clout' than the local county member. One is driven to ask 'Why have county councillors' if this is both what they believe and also so often appears to be the case?

So there must be a strong case for reducing the number and consequent cost of county councillors? Fewer might even mean more powerful?

I live in a division with two members. Only one of them has any interest in the community in which I live, for they have arbitrarily divided the division into two and look after only 'their' area. Makes a mockery of the idea of two members for the division? Seems we would be just as well off if the division was set up as two separate divisions from the outset?

As things happen our parish area is looked after by no less than four county councillors, two and two. But their divisions take in other local parishes and un-parished areas in High Wycombe. Not that this appears to give our communities any extra clout at a county level. Nor unfortunately does their presence and representation necessarily make for a better relationship with adjacent communities, which one could have hoped for? As it happens we are part of a successful 'parish cluster grouping' set up a number of years ago that has proven its value in being able to work together to achieve more than we could do individually. Yet the adjacent un-parished area on our boundary should be of some concern to us and there would be benefits to them and probably us if there were closer ties. I have often heard many of their residents and district councillors express a wish that they could be part of our parish. One is driven to ask why with common, over-lapping county councillors are we not working more closely together? Especially as the two individuals are in my opinion exceptional. If they cannot take the lead who will?

Which leads to an interesting issue: community identity. Are we part of High Wycombe or something else? There is little doubt that Wycombe District see us as part of semi-urban High Wycombe on the border with the Chilterns. Whereas our residents do not 'associate' themselves that strongly with High Wycombe. Many, if not the majority, see our communities as being Chiltern 'villages' on the edge of High Wycombe and protest strongly at any proposals that might diminish the dividing green space that separates us from High Wycombe. We look out into our countryside, not over our shoulders at a blighted town. For my neighbours Beaconsfield and Marlow 'attract' them as much as, if not more than, High Wycombe.

I hope these views will help you in your deliberations.

Sincerely

Jeff Herschel



11 November 2010

The Review Officer (Buckinghamshire)  
Local Government Boundary Commission for England  
Layden House 7  
6-86 Turnmill Street  
London EC1M 5LG



Dear Sir,

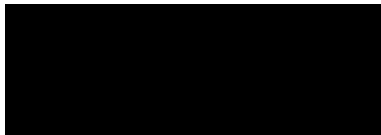
**Re: Future electoral arrangements for Buckinghamshire**

In response to your request for resident's views on the future size of the Bucks County Council, I write to express my views on the subject:

1. The present council comprises too many members resulting in unduly slow decision making and unnecessary costs.
2. I believe the ideal council size should comprise no more than ten members.
3. The composition of the council members should be as follows:
4. Four members elected from the rural Areas of Buckinghamshire (North, South, East and West) and up to six from the urban areas. (Aylesbury, Wycombe, Buckingham etc.)

Adoption of these suggestions would result in large cost savings in councillor costs and improved efficiency in decision making.

Yours faithfully,



John Wiseman

**Gregory, Eleanor**

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**From:** Gregory, Eleanor  
**Sent:** 15 November 2010 10:45  
**To:** Morrison, William  
**Subject:** FW: Custom Form Submission Received

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**From:** reviews@lgbce.org.uk [mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 12 November 2010 13:42  
**To:** Reviews@  
**Subject:** Custom Form Submission Received



- Custom Form Submission Notification

### Custom Form Submission Received

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Contact us Email,

A new custom form submission has been received. The details of the form submission are as follows:

#### Submission Information

Custom Form: Contact us (#212)  
 Form URL: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/about-us/contact-us>  
 Submission ID: 265  
 Time of Submission: Nov 12th 2010 at 1:41pm  
 IP Address: [REDACTED]

#### Form Answers

Your name: Lee Harte  
 Your email: [REDACTED]  
 I am: a member of the public  
 Comment/enquiry type: your local boundaries  
 Comments: It is obviously the case that each Local Government Councillor should represent a similar number of voters as each other Councillor.

It is even more important that Councillors in Bucks should recognise the view of their electorate that Local Government in Bucks should be re-arranged into a Unitary Authority which would result in an annual saving of +/- £35 million.

This communication is from **LGBCE** (<http://www.lgbce.org.uk>) - Sent to **Contact us Email**

**Gregory, Eleanor**

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**From:** Gregory, Eleanor  
**Sent:** 11 November 2010 15:26  
**To:** Morrison, William  
**Subject:** FW: Custom Form Submission Received  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

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**From:** reviews@lgbce.org.uk [mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 11 November 2010 13:12  
**To:** Reviews@  
**Subject:** Custom Form Submission Received



- Custom Form Submission Notification

**Custom Form Submission Received**

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Contact us Email,

A new custom form submission has been received. The details of the form submission are as follows:

Submission Information

**Custom Form:** Contact us (#212)  
**Form URL:** <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/about-us/contact-us>  
**Submission ID:** 260  
**Time of Submission:** Nov 11th 2010 at 1:11pm  
**IP Address:** [REDACTED]

Form Answers

**Your name:** Peter Morris CPA  
**Your email:** [REDACTED]  
**I am:** a candidate  
**Comment/enquiry type:** relating to a current review  
**Comments:**

I suggest that the number of councillors could be reduced by half without unduly affecting the way the council is run. Many wards are two member wards as it is. It would enable the more efficient running of council, committees, etc.

If the workload is expected to be higher, allowances could be adjusted to accommodate that.

I think that the county council should realistically examine developing a unitary authority model. Bucks CC and the other district councils in the area have been dodging the issue for years

and years and it is obvious that there would be efficiencies from reducing the number of senior officers and councillors in do that, or a similar model.

The trouble is that there are too many vested interests in existing councils maintaining the status quo in terms of local power, councillor allowances, etc. Why, I even saw the leader of Bucks CC at a Wycombe district council meeting (of which he is also a member) reading a book whilst the proceedings were going on, because although he was taking his councillor's allowance, he was only interested in the county.

This communication is from **LGBCE** (<http://www.lgbce.org.uk>) - Sent to **Contact us Email**

**Gregory, Eleanor**

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**From:** Christine [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 17 November 2010 17:07  
**To:** Morrison, William  
**Cc:** Bu ck, Richard  
**Subject:** Electoral Review of Buckinghamshire  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Re d  
**Attachments:** Pickles MP 16.09.10.pdf

Dear Sirs,

I am enclosing a letter sent to Mr Eric Pickles which will be self-explanatory.

I see no reason to change the electoral representation in the County as I am in the growing camp of electors who believe that Buckinghamshire County Council have had their day and we need desperately to streamline the whole bureaucratic system and to replace it with a new Unitary Authority. The Electoral Review is just tinkering in the short term without long term benefits, namely saving on cost. 75% of our rates go to County Council.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Sherriff

[REDACTED]  
The e-mail and any attachments are confidential and are intended for the named addressee(s) only. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify us immediately and do not disclose, distribute or retain this e-mail or any part of it. Whilst we have checked this e-mail and any attachments for viruses, we do not warrant that they are virus-free. You must therefore take full responsibility for virus checking.

[REDACTED]

28 September 2010



The Rt Hon Eric Pickles, MP  
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London, SW1E 5DU

Dear Mr Pickles,

**Re: *Buckinghamshire County Council***

I have been a resident of Burnham in South Buckinghamshire for some 60 years. I have also been a local businessman for nearly 30 years with a business in Burnham High Street. I am currently Chairman of our High Street Association.

Due to the economic climate, Buckinghamshire County Council are looking to save £21 million in 2010/2011 and a total of £90 million over the next 3 years. As a net result our rates will eventually increase and services, inevitably, will be reduced.

South Bucks District Council, on the other hand, are looking to increase car parking charges this December and abolish short term free parking which they cite as due to the economic crisis and the forthcoming increase in VAT in January 2011. This would be devastating for the businesses in Burnham village and will no doubt put the nail in the proverbial coffin for many of our struggling independent retailers.

I attended a recent road show, hosted by Bucks County Council, to debate and consult with the public over proposed cut backs and closure for some of our services. I asked the Deputy Leader, Councillor Bill Chappell, about consideration for a Unitary Authority combining South Bucks District Council with Chiltern and Wycombe and thereby abolishing Bucks County Council. This would result in reducing 4 Chief Executive posts (Mr Christopher Williams, CEO of Bucks County Council, is the 10<sup>th</sup> highest paid officer in the country) to 1 and streamlining services and cutting down on bureaucracy. I and others in the audience were told that the matter was debated some 4 years ago and would have saved, I quote, "between £20m to £40m".

Unfortunately the Councillors voted against this motion without, I hasten to add, consulting the people they represented.

We were also told at the meeting that the Coalition Government is not looking to create new unitary authorities during the course of this Parliament. Why not?

cont'd. 2/.

If, as suggested, that massive savings could have been made, why should we, as ratepayers, not benefit from such a more efficient streamlined system?

The present 2 tier system in Bucks has failed miserably over the years, with our rates increasing above inflation and services reduced accordingly.

I would ask you and your department to give me good reason on why this County should not look to being a Unitary Authority in light of the aforementioned. I have looked at positive examples of Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Council and Slough Borough Council and how well they have conducted themselves since breaking away from Berkshire County Council.

I await to receive your response with interest, particularly in light of Mr David Cameron's recent announcement of the, „Big Society’.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Sherriff

c.c Dominic Grieve, MP

**Gregory, Eleanor**

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**From:** Gregory, Eleanor  
**Sent:** 11 November 2010 15:25  
**To:** Morrison, William  
**Subject:** FW: Boundary Changes in Buckinghamshire  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 11 November 2010 12:40  
**To:** Reviews@  
**Subject:** Boundary Changes in Buckinghamshire

It is self evident that the average number of constituents within a division must be equal, or as near to equal as can be arranged. The number of members to be elected within the county is a matter of debate and no doubt there are reasoned arguments for reducing the number as proposed. I do not take issue with that.

However, to have both single and multiple member divisions within the county appears on the face of it to be undemocratic and likely to particularly act against the interests of candidates who are independent of party in multiple member divisions.

It is I suggest unlikely that the distribution of support for each party is homogeneous across a multiple member division of, say, 11,000 electors. A scan of the results at the last election suggest that almost invariably the positions in the poll of members of the same party are adjacent so if one is elected then so is the other.

So, to provide a simple example of the way in which true democracy is subverted by having a mixture of single and multiple member divisions. In a two member division if party A enjoys 50% support in, say, the western half of the division but only 35% support in the eastern half and the turnout is equal in both geographical sides of the division it is probable that both of Party A's candidates will be elected. If, however, in the east in the same poll a second party or an independent has 40% support but has no support in the west of the division then that candidate has little chance of being elected in a multiple division. But, if the east and west are separate divisions both electing a single member the result of the poll could be that Party A won in the west and another party or independent won in the east. This must more clearly represent the will of the people.

Can you please provide a rational explanation as to why this mixture of single and multiple divisions exists? It cannot be financial as polling stations exist across a division and every vote must be counted so the only additional cost will be printing of around 6000 voting papers.

[REDACTED]

**Gregory, Eleanor**

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**From:** Gregory, Eleanor  
**Sent:** 11 November 2010 15:51  
**To:** Morrison, William  
**Subject:** FW: Custom Form Submission Received

[Relating to Buckinghamshire](#)

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**From:** reviews@lgbce.org.uk [mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 11 November 2010 15:09  
**To:** Reviews@  
**Subject:** Custom Form Submission Received



- Custom Form Submission Notification

**Custom Form Submission Received**

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## Submission Information

Custom Form: Contact us (#212)  
 Form URL: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/about-us/contact-us>  
 Submission ID: 262  
 Time of Submission: Nov 11th 2010 at 3:08pm  
 IP Address: [REDACTED]

## Form Answers

Your name: Ronald Walker  
 Your email: [REDACTED]  
 I am: a member of the public  
 Comment/enquiry type: relating to a current review  
 Comments: I have, over 30 years residency in the area officiated at a number of local and national elections and have been astounded at the variation in population of electoral areas (wards). In central High Wycombe for instance we have a ward of c140 electors (mainly drawn from teachers in a large residential school) who apparently have the same power ultimately as rural and village areas of 2000 and over. This is not a map drawing exercise. It may even be about value adding as opposed to transient voters.

This communication is from **LGBCE** (<http://www.lgbce.org.uk>) - Sent to **Contact us Email**