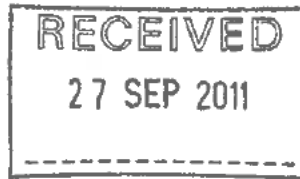


The Review Officer (Buckinghamshire)  
Local Government  
Boundary Commission for England  
Layden House  
76-86 Turnmill Street  
London  
EC1M 5LG

13 Harwood Road  
MARLOW  
Bucks  
SL7 2AR



26 September 2011

Dear Sir,

I have the following comments regarding this consultation insofar as it affects the electors of the Town of Marlow.

As you may be aware, Marlow is a vibrant Thames-side town with a strong sense of community. It is an urban settlement with a long and illustrious history and was classified as an Urban District before the local government reorganisation of 1973. A survey on the subject of "Community Identity in Buckinghamshire" conducted by MORI in 1993 on behalf of Local Authorities in the area showed that a much higher proportion of the residents of Wycombe District felt that they belonged to the Marlow Community than was signified by their actual address. Indeed, 19% of the residents of Wycombe District as a whole felt that they belonged to Marlow compared to the 9% of the population who actually lived in the town. (Comparable figures for High Wycombe were 23% and 40%). Looking at the attitudes of those who lived in the South of the District, the MORI survey of attitudes in the whole of "Wycombe South District", defined to include Marlow, Marlow Bottom, Little Marlow, Great Marlow, Hambleden Valley and Bourne End, showed that 68% of residents of these areas considered that they 'most belonged' to the Marlow community.

The proposal to create a new Marlow South East Parish Ward, whose area would be included in a newly created County Electoral Division along with Flackwell Heath, would still further jeopardise the sense of community that local representatives have been trying so hard to preserve over recent years. Residents of that part of Marlow will find it much more difficult to pursue at County level a united case for action on matters that affect all Marlow residents equally. It will also exacerbate the moves in the direction of blurring the sense of community identity that has already taken place with the redrawing of the parliamentary constituency boundaries to place Marlow alongside Beaconsfield, a town with which Marlow has no shared sense of community.

This proposed Procrustean solution ("if you can't fit the bed I've made, I'll cut your legs off") seems particularly inappropriate. Whilst I accept the desirability of having single member electoral divisions, could not that approach allow for the subdivision of an entity such as the historic parishes of Great and Little Marlow, with their historic boundaries, to achieve this objective and still meet the division size target?

Yours sincerely

  
Derek Bone