
From: Keith Butler [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 September 2011 12:49
To: Metheringham-Owlett, Jessica
Subject: Electoral Review of Oxfordshire: Draft Recommendations; and Community Governance Review

Dear Jessica

Electoral Review of Oxfordshire

The Cabinet of the West Oxfordshire District Council at its meeting held on 24th August 2011 considered the Commission's draft recommendations for electoral arrangements in Oxfordshire County Council in so far as they affected the West Oxfordshire District.

With regard to the draft recommendations in respect of divisions in West Oxfordshire District set out in Table C1 on pages 43 and 44 of the report, Cabinet noted that the recommendations in respect of Divisions 54 (Charlbury & Wychwood); 55 (Chipping Norton) 56 (Eynsham); 57 (Hanborough & Minster Lovell); 58 (Witney North & East) and 61 (Woodstock) were as proposed by the District Council in its submission of March 2011.

However, with regard to the draft recommendations in respect of Divisions 52 (Burford & Carterton) and 53 (Carterton South & East), Cabinet considered that whilst the Commission had stated that the Council had failed to provide evidence to support its proposal to add Alvescot and Filkins Ward to the current Carterton South West Division (comprised of Carterton North West and Carterton South Wards), the rationale behind the Commission's draft recommendation that the Carterton North West Ward be combined with the Wards of Alvescot and Filkins, Brize Norton and Shilton, and Burford, rather than the Carterton South District Ward, predicated upon good community links and the existing road network, was flawed. The parishes which made up the Alvescot and Filkins Ward were not all to the north, nor were the roads into Carterton all from the North West.

Cabinet considered that its proposal to retain the existing Burford & North East Carterton Division retained existing community identity and provided for better transport links and better electoral variance by 2016 and that its proposal for a division containing Alvescot and Filkins Ward, Carterton South Ward and Carterton North West Ward gave better transport links from Alvescot and Filkins Ward to both Carterton South and Carterton North West Wards and also gave better electoral variance by 2016.

Cabinet decided that the Boundary Commission be advised that the Council wishes to support its original proposals in respect of Carterton as approved at its meeting held on 16th March 2011 for the reasons outlined above.

With regard to the draft recommendations in respect of Divisions 59 (Witney South & Central) and 60 (Witney West & Bampton), it was noted that the only difference between the Council proposals and the draft recommendations was the transfer of 500 electors from the proposed Witney South & Central Division into the proposed Witney West and Bampton Division, and the creation of a single member Witney Burwell Parish Ward to contain these 500 electors.

Members were advised that Witney Town Council had concerns over the proposal to create a Witney Burwell Parish Ward from an area currently within Witney South.

Cabinet Members did not feel that the Commission had made a compelling argument for the need to create a new Parish Council Ward, and felt that the creation of a new Parish Council Ward as a vehicle to balance the electorate of a County Council Division appeared disproportionate.

Cabinet expressed opposition to the creation of a new Witney Burwell Parish Council Ward on the grounds that it would cause unnecessary elector confusion.

Cabinet decided that the Boundary Commission be advised that the Council wishes to support its original proposals in respect of Witney as approved at its meeting held on 16th March 2011 for the reasons outlined above.

Community Governance Review

In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to update you with the current position regarding the Community Governance Review being undertaken by the Council and its possible impact on the Review of Oxfordshire County Council.

Following meetings of the Community Governance Review Working Group, it has agreed Recommendations to the Audit & General Purposes Committee. Two of these recommendations will impact on the Electoral Divisions set out in the LGBCE draft recommendations if approved by the Audit & General Purposes Committee at its meeting to be held on Thursday 29th September. These are as follows:

- (i) The transfer of 5 properties in High Street, Finstock from the Parish of Ramsden (Proposed Division 57) to the Parish of Finstock (Proposed Division 54). This proposal currently affects 10 electors.
- (ii) The transfer of land fronting A.40 from the Parish of Brize Norton (Proposed Division 52) to the Parish of Minster Lovell (Proposed Division 57). This proposal affects the Ting Tang Lane Caravan Site which has 22 properties with 4 electors currently registered.

In addition, there are two proposals which are not recommended for approval by the Working Group which, if the Audit & General Purposes Committee reject the recommendations, would impact on the LGBCE draft recommendations and these are:

- (i) Transfer of Kilkenny Lane County Park from the Parish of Brize Norton (Proposed Division 52) to the Parish of Carterton – District Ward of Carterton North East (Proposed Division 53). This proposal does not affect any electors.
- (ii) Transfer of Willow Meadows from the Parish of Alvescot (Proposed Division 52) to the Parish of Carterton – District Ward of Carterton South (Proposed Division 53). This proposal does not affect any electors.

As mentioned above, the Audit & General Purposes Committee will consider the proposals and the Working Group Recommendations at its meeting on 29th September, and I shall advise you of the final decisions as soon as possible after that meeting.

I trust that all is clear, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Regards

Keith

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