

## West Northamptonshire Council

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### Comment text:

Northampton North Local Government Boundary Review General points: Divisional/ward boundaries should not cross constituency boundaries - The redrawing of division/ward boundaries pre-empt the decision due shortly on the constituency boundary review for Northampton North and Northampton South. Depending on that decision, some of the existing division/ward boundaries will cut across the constituency boundary, including Abington and Talavera/Billing Rectory Farm. The decision about the number of councillors for West Northamptonshire, and the distribution of them, should be reviewed. Northampton is the largest town in the country not to have its own local government. With the abolition of the former borough, it now has a town council, the equivalent of a parish council, and even that does not cover the entire town area. The reduction in councillor numbers leaves a considerable democratic deficit in a large, complex urban area. Current boundaries divide up some existing communities, especially in the more disadvantaged areas, including in the east of Northampton and in the St Davids/Kingsthorpe South areas, and in Kingsley. It's especially important to support community cohesion in these areas. This should include consideration of community facilities and eg school catchment areas. Some existing divisions have no focal point, either geographically or in terms of community cohesion. For example the existing St Georges division covers a wide range of disparate estates and residential areas. Casework comprises a substantial amount of the work of a local councillor, and areas which are more disadvantaged and which experience greater social and environmental pressures generally generate more casework. This should be taken into account in deciding the ratio of people to councillors, with the more disadvantaged and pressured communities have a smaller number of people per councillor. Whilst there is a general recognition of growth areas in West Northamptonshire, there is not sufficient recognition of the amount of development and increasing housing densities in Northampton, for example with the redevelopment of the former university sites in Northampton North, the expected development of Dallington Grange, continuing development of former school sites, and the possibility of development of former recreational sites in the town. It is important that allowance is made for these in the new boundaries so that the new divisions/wards are sustainable over time. Detail In Talavera and Billing and Rectory Farm – Linkages are strong east-west, rather than north-south. Past local government boundaries respected this. At present the division of Billing and Rectory farm running north-south across the Wellingborough Road cuts across a major road which forms a natural boundary, separates up some estate communities that have previously worked together, and in some instances the boundary runs along a footpath through an estate. It's also important that the new divisional boundary follows whatever boundary is decided for the constituencies. St Georges comprises a number of housing areas that were previously in different divisions or wards. They are very different in character, and bisected by a number of major roads. Several of the communities are very disadvantaged and would benefit from greater focus.

### Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded