

Coventry

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Comment text:

Related subject: Coventry South constituency

Contained within attached file

Attached Documents:

- 2023-07-31 boundary review submission.pdf

Coventry South

As the Member of Parliament for Coventry South, I am writing in support of the boundary proposal submitted by Coventry City Council and Coventry Labour Party. I believe that this is a balanced proposal which minimises change to well-established ward patterns across Coventry. I note that the proposed wards are all within the quota for electoral equality and are geographically coherent. I feel that the proposal reflects the views and feelings of my constituents and how they perceive their neighbourhoods and communities. I believe from correspondence and casework that these proposals reflect both strong links in wards and historic ties which were altered by the previous boundary changes.

I offer the following comments regarding the wards which currently make up Coventry South constituency:

Binley and Willenhall: This ward does not change under the proposal and I believe this is a fair reflection of the well-established communities which make up the ward. Geographically, the ward is contained neatly between a number of major roads.

Cheylesmore: I believe that the best way to ensure Cheylesmore is within electoral equality is to add Box LE from St. Michael's ward. Many residents in this polling district already assume they are in Cheylesmore. Given the proximity of the area to the rest of Cheylesmore, this is understandable. I am also not convinced that there are viable alternative solutions, without crossing major roads or breaking up other well-defined communities. Primarily, I think it would be wrong to break up Stivichall, which is a coherent neighbourhood which tends to use different amenities such as schools, places of worship and GP surgeries to Cheylesmore. Additionally, the affinity between this box and the ward of Cheylesmore is also explained by the fact that this box used to be part of that ward in a previous boundary configuration.

Earlsdon: I believe the proposal respects the historic boundaries of Earlsdon ward whilst achieving electoral equality for Earlsdon and surrounding wards. Box LI from St. Michael's was previously a part of Earlsdon ward. It is often referred to by residents as Earlsdon and new developments in this polling district have emphasised this. I also believe it is rational to move polling district DH from Earlsdon to Whoberley ward. DH is separated from the majority of Earlsdon by an industrial estate whilst at the same time being connected to Whoberley ward via a number of roads. Many constituents on these roads, particularly Broad Lane, believe they are in Whoberley ward. This is also demonstrated by the fact that there is a close-knit community around Hearsall Common, which is a green space facility that is very commonly used by residents of Whoberley roads such as Sovereign Road, Broomfield Road and Broad Lane. Both of these changes reverse the changes made in the previous boundary review.

St. Michael's: The proposal for St. Michaels helps to ensure electoral equality for a number of wards whilst reflecting the changes to St. Michael's. Moving polling districts LE and LI recognises the ring road to the south and west as a ward boundary. This means the ward will be made up of three recognised and coherent neighbourhoods, Hillfields, Charterhouse/Stoke and the City Centre. The addition of polling district JA from Lower Stoke recognises the growth of the Charterhouse/Stoke neighbourhood via the housing development on the former Humber Works. In some cases, roads such as Terry Road have been expanded by the new development.

Wainbody: To address the shortfall in electors in Wainbody ward, I support the addition of the majority of polling district QG from Westwood. QG is mostly made up of the Westwood Heath estate, which are newer developments of executive housing which have more in common with parts of Wainbody ward such as Cannon Park than Westwood ward. Furthermore, Westwood Heath is in close proximity to the University of Warwick Campus and Cannon Park while an industrial estate separates it from much of Westwood ward. As an MP, the cases I receive from Westwood Heath often resemble the issues raised by constituents in Wainbody.

Westwood: I believe the proposal accurately reflects the changing nature of the ward, namely the growth of new developments in Canley which has skewed the ward to being dominated by the neighbourhoods of Canley and Tile Hill. For the reasons mentioned above (in the Wainbody section), I believe that Westwood Heath no longer fits within Westwood ward. However, I would note that Cromwell Lane at the top of Westwood Heath Road should remain in the ward. This aids both electoral equality and recognises that Cromwell Lane has long been understood as an extension of Tile Hill Village. It is also sensible to bring polling district SC into Westwood ward. This, in effect, unites the Tile Hill North and Tile Hill South estates meaning the majority of Tile Hill will now be in one ward. Finally, I also support the renaming of this ward to Tile Hill and Canley. This name better reflects the ward, particularly if Westwood Heath is no longer a part of it.