

[REDACTED]

From: Cllr AEdwards <CllrAEdwards@castlepoint.gov.uk>
Sent: 13 December 2022 00:24
To: reviews
Subject: Website errors on filing response to Castle Point draft recommendations

Categories: [REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I experienced captcha errors, I needed to repeat completion more than once, followed by an "unexpected error" as I tried unsuccessfully to file a response to the draft recommendations for Castle Point. I have attached an image showing the error message. The message is unhelpful as it provided no details of the error nor suggestions for resolution.

Accordingly please find below the comments on the consultation I was unable to submit via the website.

Please confirm receipt.

Yours sincerely

Cllr. Allan Edwards

"The currently proposed local election boundary changes for Castle Point fall short on several points.

Despite being based on anticipated population growth in the borough the plan reduces the number of councillors, and hence intends to increase the number of voters served by each councillor. This will have a negative impact on the effective representation of voters.

However, the ward population forecasts from the council, are, due to the extended time taken on this consultation now based on out of date data as they are not based on the most recently available census. The latest census shows different growth patterns which must be taken into account, failure to do so will mean an error in fact is being designed into the decisions.

An additional error is the inclusion of local plan data that should not be considered. Point 25 in the report stated: "We received two submissions during consultation that challenged the electoral figures put forward by the Council. These submissions argued that a new local plan might be forthcoming and the review should be paused until this was confirmed. We are of the view that, as the figures had been agreed at the start of the consultation, it is right to continue with the review on this basis given there are few firm details of potential change. Indeed it is likely we would fail in our statutory duties were we to postpone each review in the manner suggested."

Yet Point 43 in the report states,

"Furthermore, we have amended ward boundaries near the western edge of the borough, to allow for the potential residential development east of the A130." It is therefore wrong, by the commission's own decision in point 25, to include potential development east of the A130 in the consideration drafting of ward boundaries, particularly as the local plan where this development was proposed has now been formally withdrawn.

Overall the proposals fail to respect commonly perceived local area boundaries, crossing major roads that completely separate distinct areas and create small illogical enclaves. This could be resolved if smaller wards, with two councillors each were defined enabling ward boundaries to more closely match the locally perceived traditional area boundaries. These problems include:

The proposed Hadleigh West ward south of the A13 is by the vast majority of residents going to be considered to be Benfleet – for example, Benfleet Road, Vicarage Hill and Essex Way in particular. Along the south side of the A13, From The Dale to the Victoria Circus roundabout, if residents did not naturally describe themselves as being in Benfleet then they would consider themselves part of Thundersley, although the north of the A13 is normally considered Thundersley. Looking north of the A13 Parkfields, Kingsmere, Queensmere, Martingale etc. through to Wensley Road and Warren Chase are all more naturally Thundersley than Hadleigh as they are West of the Rayleigh Road.

The proposed Thundersley ward crosses the major road boundary of the A13 to incorporate Glen Road, and Mount Road and just parts of Hill Road and Thundersley Park Road. All of these roads are naturally Benfleet.

The Proposed Tarpots ward fails to respect areas. South of the A13 and east of Southwold Crescent would not be considered the same area as Tarpots. Extending Tarpots to incorporate the Jotmans Area again fails to recognise local boundaries. Jotmans is distinct from Tarpots. Jotmans would sit more naturally with a ward ending at the junction of Richmond Avenue with The High Road. With developers proposing significant building in Jotmans the Tarpots ward is at risk of becoming significantly unbalanced if those plans proceed.

St. Marys Extends too far west – east. A new ward, oriented North South, bounded east by Brook Road and Kents Hill road, North By Bowers Road, and East By Mount Road could eliminate several natural boundary issues.”

Councillor Allan Edwards
Member for Boyce Ward
Castle Point Borough Council

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