

Telford and Wrekin Borough Council

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Comment text:

The comments on the LGBCE ward proposals are based on local knowledge and while many of the proposals are acceptable some have been commented on in the attached file. In Telford and Wrekin while some communities are well established others are evolving or being created due to the expansion of the Borough. It is welcome that the Lawley area is proposed to have its own representatives, however the division of the Horsehay community between two wards does not comply with the statutory criteria and needs amending. Comments on some of the individual proposals are included in the attached file. One of the LGBCE statutory criteria is equality of representation therefore it was surprising that so many former single member wards were being combined into two member wards with little evidence. Surely single member wards are preferable to ensure that there is focused representation of individual communities. For example the proposed single member Sutton Hill ward is to be welcomed, the Councils' objection makes little sense. Sutton Hill sadly has had significant levels of deprivation for decades and has never had its own representation on the Council being combined with Madeley. As little change has resulted in the area surely a fresh approach is welcome, indeed the Councils public consultation resulted in only 12 respondents out of 8,000 electors demonstrating the lack of engagement and motivation the residents have towards their current representation. The proposed combining of Arleston and College wards is difficult to understand when each community is and always has been distinct such that College has switched political allegiance many times in the past. It is difficult to see the justification other than on political grounds and the evidence provided to justify the proposal should be revisited. Both communities have very different resident profiles with their own community facilities and separated by a major highway. Please see the attached file for comments on other ward proposals. I would like to thank the LGBCE for the obvious hard work that has gone in to this review especially trying to collate so much diverse input. Cllr. Nigel Dugmore For & on behalf of Telford and Wrekin Conservative Group

Uploaded Documents:

[Download \(https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1652039783_Boundary+Review+Submission+2.docx\)](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1652039783_Boundary+Review+Submission+2.docx)

Telford and Wrekin Ward Boundary Review

LGBCE Proposals November 2021

Conservative Group Submission

Admaston & Bratton:

As in our previous submission a modest change of boundary by continuing along the B5063 to the junction with Shawbirch Road then continuing east to connect with the existing boundary would be logical and give a variance of +4.6% by 2027. (LGBCE proposals give a -5.0% variance)

Arleston & College:

Both Arleston and College wards have represented two distinct communities for many years. The two wards are divided by Watling Street a main thoroughfare. Arleston has perfect natural boundaries and the two communities have been represented by political opposites until the last local election. The proposal to merge these two wards is politically motivated and is not based on the LGBCE criteria.

Our previous submission which has not been acknowledged is to keep the two wards distinct with a minor boundary change for college ward to include the College Fields area bordered by Apley Drive and Whitchurch Road. This would result in variances of -0.1% for College ward and +4.9% for Arleston by 2027.

Ercall:

As per our previous submission we propose no change to this ward, which will have a variance of +5.9% by 2027.

Haygate & Park:

The LGBCE proposals to merge the two wards, including the Haygate Fields development is reasonable and complies with the statutory criteria.

Shawbirch & Dothill:

The merger of these two wards appears to be for electoral balance and does not recognise they are two distinct communities. The -9% variance would be reduced significantly if the 'Maxell' development at Shawbirch roundabout was included in this ward as per our earlier submission. The two clearly separate communities would then continue to have their own representative and the statutory criteria would be met.

Apley Castle & Leegomery:

This proposal is to avoid creating a new Parish Ward, however this will be necessary when the 'Maxell' development site is occupied (the first houses are ready for occupation now!). The two communities are distinct and have logical boundaries as indicated in our earlier submission.

As a former resident of Leegomery I can assure the LGBCE that Leegomery residents consider Wellington as their 'go to' leisure, shopping and nightlife centre, despite being in the Hadley and Leegomery Parish.

Maintaining two separate wards with boundaries as outlined in our earlier submission would give variances of +1.5% Apley Castle and +2.9% Leegomery if the two wards were combined the variance would be +4.4% against the proposed -6%. Then the remainder of the existing three member Hadley and Leegomery ward could form a two member Hadley Ward as outlined in our previous proposal resulting in a variance of -2.3% as an alternative to the proposed Hadley and Trench Lock ward with a variance of -9%.

Ketley/Oakengates:

The proposals for this area would be less controversial if they were adjusted so that Oakengates and Ketley Bank was formed in to a two member ward and Ketley was a single member ward maintaining the proposed outer boundaries.

The Councils' engagement exercise was disappointing with only 23 respondents hence the results are statistically irrelevant. It is the case that Ketley and Ketley Bank communities separate and Ketley Bank residents gravitate to Oakengates. Therefore we think that the two member ward should be Oakengates and Ketley Bank.

Brookside:

The proposed Brookside ward is logical. The residents of Lake End Drive are equidistant between Brookside and Stirchley local centres, the latter having more facilities and therefore residents are more likely to use Stirchley than Brookside.

Madeley and Sutton Hill:

The proposal for a two member Madeley ward and a single member Sutton Hill ward is well overdue. There has been significant levels of deprivation for many many years which the current representation has failed to alleviate especially in Sutton Hill. With only 12 respondents to the Councils' community engagement event it is clear that a different approach is long overdue. There will be significant benefits to residents by having a dedicated representative, who will be focussed on tackling the issues which will help to improve the area and better reflect the community interests and identity.