

Derby City Council

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Organisation Name:

Comment text:

To whom it may concern, Firstly I will introduce myself as a long standing local resident in the Breadsall Hill Top area for all of the 39 years of my life. Not only have I lived here all of my life, but I have an extensive network of family and friends across the entire Breadsall Hill Top and Chaddesden area. This extensive network spans several different generations. Furthermore, I am a former City Councillor for the current Derwent Ward. The comments and observations below are a reflection of my life experiences of this specific area of Derby. It can also be noted that my grandmother had 9 brothers and sisters, and their offspring and families through the area. Whilst growing up in the Breadsall Hill Top area (on Coniston Crescent) I always sensed a deep divide in the area. It was and still is commonplace for parents in the Breadsall Hill Top area (or Estate) to instruct and advise their children to play and socialise towards the countryside area and in Oakwood and not in the other direction towards Chaddesden. It was almost like an understanding in the area. Obviously growing up you don't quite understand the reasoning. However, into my teens and early twenties it became apparent that the more financially secure members of our family and friends network were in the Breadsall Hill Top area and the less financially secure were in the Chaddesden area. This was reflected in many social matters that I observed; educational attainment, work related networks, types of holidays, clothing choices and food choices (could be an exhaustive list). It is not as pronounced as it once was (that is a good thing), but this has created distinct communities. There was and still is to this day a mental dividing line in the area. That dividing line is Max Road, Hereford Road and Hampshire Road. Most residents will not consciously think about it, but if mentioned and discussed they will always agree. The communities either side of that see themselves as distinct and different. Those distinct communities are also very close knit and the division between the two is very strong. The understanding of this is what I ultimately credit for the time I did get elected, and then consequently got two further Councillors elected. Even if one stepped down for work and family related reasons and the other may not stand again. From the governance viewpoint the area is not at all easy. The requirements in regards to Council policy and decision making of the Breadsall Hill Top area (and the proposed new boundary) and the Chaddesden part of the current Derwent Ward are very different. Due to the nature of this it is practically impossible to partake in the Governance and Decision making process, and represent both communities equally. There is a constant feeling of having to pick which community you are representing; the more economically secure Breadsall Hill Top area or the more deprived Chaddesden part of the current Derwent Ward. Moreover, the Policy and Council intervention required for both areas is uniquely different. Furthermore, there was also an air of competition between the two communities. If Councillors or The Council aired some activity (like spending) in one of the communities it would inevitably end up causing resentment from the other distinct community. The Breadsall Hill Top area especially would resent Council funds being spent in the Chaddesden area of the current Derwent Ward. A post on social media of that would provoke a negative backlash. It did happen the other way around too. I could provide many examples of this. Whenever attempting to address this matter with other City Councillors it was always very hard to explain just how divided the current Derwent ward is. Unless you have a lifelong experience of the area and experience of Governance both together it can often be understated. There are no other examples of such differing communities within a ward boundary in Derby. Over the years I have prayed that this matter would finally be recognised by the Electoral Commission. Never did I actually think it would happen. Of course I follow these matters with great interest. The recognition of these circumstances was submitted in the Labour Party proposals early in the year. Whilst never having been a member of the Labour Party past or present I must thank them for recognising it in their submission. If any other party or organisation objects to these draft recommendations I can only presume it is for self interest and not in the interest of the residents themselves. To conclude I would advise that for the Breadsall Hill Top area and the Chaddesden area be split into the

proposed two member wards in the interest of the residents. These are distinct areas with differing needs and under the proposed recommendations they will be much better served by the democratic and governance of Councillors in the future.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded