

Brighton and Hove City Council

Personal Details:

Name:

E-mail:

Postcode:

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I live in [REDACTED] which is currently part of the Brunswick and Adelaide ward. I am commenting exclusively on the proposals concerning my ward. You are promoting the Conservative Party proposal to merge Brunswick and Adelaide with Regency ward and to create a "seafront facing" ward stretching from Second Avenue in Hove to The Old Steine in Brighton, and including the "Lanes" shopping area of central Brighton, a distance along the seafront of around 1.5 miles. You note the submissions from the Labour Party and Green Party both of which mention the stability and community-focused nature of Brunswick and Adelaide ward, leading to a lack of need for very much change from the existing boundaries. But you do not appear to give any considered reasons for rejecting these arguments. You say that the Commission carried out a "virtual" tour of the area; perhaps if you had visited in real life, you would have noticed the very different characters of the communities at the western end of this proposed new ward. The existing Brunswick and Adelaide areas are heavily residential, and the few tourist facilities that exist, are low-key and family based. There are strong local community groups often based around shared public spaces such as the Waterloo Community Garden, and Brunswick and Palmeira Squares. The eastern end of this proposed new area is very different – it is the main hub for incoming tourists, including most day trippers, and is much less residential in character, containing numerous very busy hospitality venues and shops. It is hard to understand, let alone accept, the Conservative Party's argument that the new area proposed has a singular character of "retail, tourism and leisure". The new ward would not successfully reflect common "community interests and identities". Nor would it contain "identifiable boundaries" since it straddles the boundary between Hove and Brighton, which is a boundary of historical significance as well as marking contemporary social and demographic differences. This boundary is respected in your current review of parliamentary constituencies, so it is not clear why you have chosen to override it here. You argue that the creation of this Regency ward would "improve representation and case management in relation to Brighton's homeless population". This echoes the Conservative Party's submission which argues that the ward [whether this is the existing or proposed expanded Regency ward is not clear] has become a hub for facilities for homeless people". It is nonsense to suggest that the proposed Regency ward is the "hub" of the "homeless population". First, homelessness is a widespread and often hidden problem which involves people living in marginal and unsustainable accommodation. This is a problem for the whole of Brighton and Hove. When referring to a "homeless population", perhaps you have in mind specifically "rough sleepers", which is a significant issue for Brighton. But the idea that there is a "homeless population" of rough sleepers that resides solely in one ward is not coherent – by definition, people sleeping rough have nowhere fixed to live and the problem of rough sleeping extends far beyond the boundaries of your proposed Regency ward. Your proposals would reduce the representation of the existing wards from four councillors to three. Given that you are aiming to create a ward that would have a very wide range of different issues to address, in which councillors would need to represent very diverse populations and policy issues, from the management of densely populated residential areas of historical housing to the West, to the regular influx of tourists and the management of busy hospitality and shopping areas to the east, it is hard to see how these proposals will make governance better, despite the fact that constituent numbers may look consistent on paper. If you really are determined to reduce the level of voter representation in this area, it might make more sense to look at the possibility merging Brunswick and Adelaide with part, or all of, Central Hove, with which the existing ward has much more in common.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded