

West Northamptonshire

Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: Evenley Parish Council (Parish or town clerk or officer)

Comment text:

Dear team,

Please find Evenley Parish Council's (EPC) response below, regarding new electoral arrangements for West Northamptonshire:

Our current ward (Middleton Cheney) includes the parishes of Aynho, Charlton, Croughton, Evenley, Farthinghoe, Hinton, Kings Sutton, Middleton Cheney, Newbottle, Overthorpe, Thenford and is represented by three councillors.

The proposal divides the ward into two – Middleton Cheney (Chacombe, Farthinghoe, Greatworth, Marston St Lawrence and Middleton Cheney) and Kings Sutton (Aynho, Charlton & Newbottle, Croughton, Evenley, Kings Sutton, Overthorpe and Thenford) – each with one councillor.

However, in paragraph 237 (page 45) the Commissioners state, “We note that these wards can be combined to form a two-councillor ward and we welcome comments with community interest evidence on whether this would be a better option.” Combining the two wards would not affect electoral quality.

EPC discussed the issue at its meeting on Monday 24th April 2023, and asked for feedback from residents.

The consensus is that it is in the best interests of our community to be represented by two councillors over broadly the same area as currently.

This will better “reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of strong community links.” In particular, Evenley has strong local links to

Middleton Cheney, as well as to Kings Sutton.

For example:

- Former NCC Division (“Middleton Cheney”) is long established and all parishes are used to working together as part of this;
- Secondary school (Chenderit) in Middleton Cheney is one of two attended by Evenley children;
- Leisure facilities (exercise studio and classes) frequented by residents;
- Good road links (A422);
- Similar rural issues face the whole area – eg planning (village environments, housing pressures and affordability for local people, encroachment on open countryside), anti-social behaviour (speeding), policing (farm thefts and village issues), social isolation, transport (or lack of), high quality rural environment;
- Heseltine Gallery (art gallery) in Middleton Cheney is open daily and exhibitions are enjoyed by residents across the area;
- Farthinghoe Recycling Centre (off A422) is used by all local villages and households in the area.

Furthermore, as part of a two-councillor ward, we would continue to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of two councillors.

Best wishes,

Attached Documents:

None attached