

Submission to the LGBCE consultation on the Tandridge District Boundary Review

For the reasons set out below, I believe Chaldon should remain as a single councillor ward.

There is a strong sense of community within Chaldon, which is a village in it's own right, and whilst we value the importance of Caterham to us, we are a relatively self sufficient ward. We have our own village council, who run several events for our residents which include the village fete, street parties, etc. but more importantly the Chaldon Village Council has a strong working relationship with the district council due to having a single councillor ward. Furthering this, it is a clear and efficient mouthpiece for residents who need to seek guidance and advice on issues at all levels of local government via their bi-monthly meetings and thus delivers on the so-called democratic society we aim to provide for our population.

It is also key that we recognise the features that make Chaldon the village it is. Firstly, St Peter & St Pauls Church, Chaldon, which was first recorded in the Charter of Frithwald in 727 AD, and is referenced in the Domesday Book of 1086 AD. There are also two primary schools (St Peter & St Paul Church Primary School, Rook Lane & Oakhyrst Grange Primary School, Stanstead Road). Then there is Surrey National Golf Club which is a premier golf club, that contains areas of ancient woodland, and St Lawrence's Hospital Burial Ground, which was restored by a Chaldon Village Council working group in 2007, before the NHS gave ownership of the site to Chaldon in 2011. It is now overseen and maintained by a brilliant group of local villagers and volunteers. There is also a pub, The Harrow, Stanstead Road which is over four centuries old itself and was actually used as a HQ by the home guards in World War Two. Furthering that, it also stands near the Pilgrims Way which is a historic path running through the North Downs for thousands of years, that has been used by many civilisations. Finally, Chaldon has many more historic paths and fields criss-crossing it's countryside as part of the North Downs including Six

Brothers Field, Alderstead Heath to name a few. Finally, our Village Hall is in excess of 100 years old, and dates back to around the time of the First World War. It is evident from the information above, that Chaldon has many historic features, which are cared for by residents from in and around the village, which also supplements the point about community spirit above.

Moving on, Chaldon has identifiable boundaries, namely signage which welcomes you to Chaldon at multiple points throughout the village which is in line with the ward boundaries and therefore it is clear and identifiable for residents. This satisfies another request from the LGBCE, in terms of what is considered when proposing ward boundaries.

As the councillor of Chaldon, I am familiar with the challenges that are faced by myself within my ward. As a resident in Portley Ward, for the first 16 years of my life, and a resident of Chaldon for the last 7 years, the differences between the wards and challenges faced by councillors is notable. Therefore, coupling Chaldon with either Westway or Queens Park is not practical from the point of working for the residents in the best possible fashion. New councillors to Chaldon, including myself take time to understand the unique challenges to the ward, which include continuously protecting the greenbelt and AONB areas from development, broadband issues (particularly in the West of the village, as you move away from Caterham), lack of public transport (minor bus connections to Redhill, Reigate & Selsdon) and protecting the historic and unique areas that Chaldon consists of. In turn, these challenges are very different to those faced in the ward of Westway as proposed by the LGBCE which consists mainly of four estates which populate the area to the west of Coulsdon Road, and has a much more urban feel. The ward is also very well connected with a significantly more transport connections to the towns and villages in the surrounding area. The broadband speeds and levels of infrastructure are also far greater and this poses varying challenges. Finally the topography of Chaldon makes it unsuitable to be merged with other wards such as Bletchingley and Nutfield.

Finally, Chaldon has a slight overrepresentation of 8.43% regarding the desired number of electors in it's current format, however this far outweighs the detriment moving to a three councillor ward could cause to the Village and it's residents. Chaldon is a strong community, which has come together throughout the years to defend the village when needed from both development and other issues, and this has in turn protected places of history and beauty for people to enjoy when passing through our wonderful village. I feel that moving to a three councillor ward and merging with an urban ward with different priorities, would compromise this and as a resident of Chaldon and indeed the councillor of Chaldon, I feel I have a role in ensuring the future of this village and keeping it's fate in the hands of our village council, and more importantly it's residents.

Best Regards,
Cllr Lewis Sharp

Tandridge

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Comment text:

Related subject: Chaldon, Westway, Queens Park, Bletchingley and Nutfield

See attached. Chaldon to remain a single councillor ward.

Attached Documents:

- Chaldon Boundary.docx