

Tandridge

Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: Chaldon

We submit the current status of Chaldon be retained as a single Councillor ward.

Recognising the history and character and unique geography and topography of the Village, rather than the combinations of current wards that would be required to redraw the electoral map into a three Councillor ward.

Chaldon has a strong sense of identity, evident in the myriad of organisations and governing documents that are designed to protect and serve our community.

Notably, the community spends a great deal of time protecting its special character, the Green Belt and AONB within which a major portion of it sits. When The Chaldon submission to the Neighbourhood Plan for Caterham Chaldon & Whyteleafe was undertaken, extensive community research was sought on the priorities of the community. Protecting the special character of the village and protecting the Green Belt were by far the top priorities expressed and these priorities remain critical today and for the foreseeable future.

The Village is served locally by several forms of communication including the Chaldon Village Magazines, “Chaldon Matters” and “Parish News” and the Chaldon Village website, run by the Village Council but covering all life in the village as well as a myriad of local organisations that operate within and around the Village.

The number of local groups is testament to the deep sense of community and internal engagement amongst the residents of Chaldon.

Chaldon has its own unique annual Village Fete that is extremely well supported from far and wide, the proceeds from which are ploughed back into the many local community charities and well deserving causes.

Alongside this is the fact that Chaldon is a mostly rural community with a keen sense of enjoyment from the beautiful surroundings in which the Village is set. Chaldon is bordered for the most part by wooded areas and has a sylvan outlook.

The historic St Peter & St Paul Church, with its wall mural of great significance dating back to the middle ages that is recorded in the Domesday Book, is just another of the many considerable points of interest.

The Village provides ample space for dog walkers and ramblers alike, adjacent to the North Downs Way that many modern day Pilgrims pass along on their way from Winchester to Canterbury because Chaldon forms part of this historic route. In fact one of our roadways is called Pilgrims Way. There are also several other designated walks, which are regularly used by locals as well as people from far and wide. Organised 'walks and talks' are also arranged on a regular basis, which adds to the Village uniqueness.

The boundaries are therefore not mere lines on a map but really a reflection of Chaldon, a community in its own right, with its own character and a sense of self-reliance and self-containment.

In summary, Chaldon meets electoral equality almost perfectly, and to merge it with other wards would deliver less electoral equality in the larger ward. Chaldon has an integral and separate identity from other villages and towns around it, given its geography, topography, history and the unique character and needs of the village and its inhabitants.

Any merger would place a high burden on additional Councillors needing to familiarise themselves with its many unique issues and to engage with the village. The burden on one Councillor serving it is already high and adding to this remit would be prohibitive and counter productive.

Furthermore, we consider that the single Councillor ward has been successful for Chaldon and that having an election every four years has not prevented engagement with democracy or collective representation to the local authority.

Indeed, a single ward Councillor has ensured that the focus of the Ward Councillor is on communicating the needs and priorities of Chaldon ward residents to Tandridge District Council.

In addition, both residents and the Ward Councillor are able to readily participate in activities throughout Chaldon ward because the ward is coherent and navigable. This also makes for a manageable workload for our Ward Councillor which is very important and which none of the other

combinations with Chaldon allow. All of this is consistent with effective and efficient government.

Chaldon delivers near perfect electoral equality as a single Councillor Ward with few or no clear links and interests in common with surrounding communities. The topography and geography of the village limit the physical links to surrounding areas, diminishing effective and efficient local government in any larger ward combination.

Combining such a different and high intensity workload with other wards with their consequent workloads would pose an undue burden on multiple Councillors.

Chaldon has and presents interests and needs so different from neighbouring wards that we would not feel democratically represented when combined with other (particularly more urban) wards.

In short, after consultation with other residents, we conclude that remaining as a single Councilor ward is the only right and proper solution for Chaldon.

Thank you,

Attached Documents:

None attached