

Tandridge

Personal Details:

Name: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: The proposed local boundary changes and introduction of new wards into Tandridge

As a resident of Chaldon, I am writing to raise my concerns about the proposals to alter the current arrangements and to combine the existing single councillor ward of Chaldon with Westway.

I note that the criteria being used to make these new proposals are electoral equality, community identity and effective local government. I have serious concerns that the proposed merger does not meet these criteria, particularly that of community identity. My view is that these criteria would be better met by retaining Chaldon as a single councillor ward and Westway as a 2 councillor ward.

My biggest concern relates to the community identity criteria. Chaldon is a village community, quite distinct and separate from Caterham and the more heavily built up Westway to which it has few physical or social links. Chaldon has only one road that links it to Caterham and bus services are limited. The Chaldon community is led by an active Village Council supported by numerous groups – e.g Chaldon Ladies, Friends of Chaldon Church - that provide local social facilities for the residents. There are no shops/cafes or medical services in Chaldon but residents look, not just to Caterham, but also to Merstham and Redhill for these services.

Semi rural areas such as Chaldon often have significantly different concerns and priorities - e.g Green Belt protection, local planning issues, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - to more urbanised areas. The combination of Chaldon with the more heavily and densely populated area of Westway to make up electorally convenient numbers will deny the residents representation of their distinct local interests which does not feel an acceptable outcome.

I see a precedent for retaining single and 2 councillor wards has already been established for the wards of Woldingham and Warlingham and would argue that the case for doing so for Chaldon and Westway is equally strong.

Retaining distinct representation for Chaldon would lead to a variance from the standard of -8% for Chaldon and 11% for Westway. This isn't out

of line with the variances accepted in some of the other areas and, in any case, the proposed modest improvement in the distribution of voter numbers does not justify the drastic dilution of representation of the interests of the distinct Chaldon community. I should be grateful if you would take these serious concerns into account and will preserve Chaldon as a distinct and separate ward in your final proposals.

Attached Documents:

None attached