

Shropshire

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Comment text:

Related subject: Burnell Division: Pulverbatch Parish

Feedback to Boundary Commission changes for Burnell Division

I am writing this feedback on behalf of myself and my husband. We strongly recommended that Pulverbatch does not join the Bishop's Castle Division for the following reasons.

Geographically there are no strong links with Bishop's Castle. Pulverbatch lies within the Severn Valley, therefore roads naturally orientate north towards Shrewsbury. Bishop's Castle lies in the Onny Valley, with the road network naturally oriented to the south. This means that Pulverbatch and adjoining parishes in the Burnell Division share a common interest in accessing services in Shrewsbury. These services can be reached much more quickly than going to Bishop's Castle, which also has an extremely limited range of services compared to Shrewsbury.

The journey by car to the nearest retail park in Shrewsbury is 7.8 miles, compared to 12.6 miles to the small supermarket in Bishop's Castle. Not only is it further, but it takes proportionately longer due to the narrow, steep and twisting nature of the road, which is more likely to be cut off in winter than travelling to Shrewsbury. In addition, there is no bus service to Bishop's Castle.

Administratively, Pulverbatch is not within the Bishop's Castle sphere of influence for the local medical practice, the schools, the three emergency services and the churches. With regard to council responsibilities, waste collection and the state of the roads in Burnell are focussed on Shrewsbury, not Bishop's Castle. The mobile library serves a number of Burnell Division parishes on the same day, whilst Bishop's Castle parishes are served on a different day. Similarly, leisure activities are primarily sourced in Shrewsbury, such as the theatre, cinema and swimming pool.

The political consequence of this geographical mismatch with Bishop's Castle is that any member elected from Bishop's Castle would have a limited understanding of the needs of Pulverbatch's parishioners, which would be vastly different to those of Bishop's Castle residents. NB:

statistically, it is highly likely that a new member would come from Bishop's Castle, due to the population distribution. Furthermore, if there are any problems regarding any of the above services, they are most likely to affect the existing Burnell Division parishes as well [but not Bishop's Castle] and can be most effectively addressed by the current elected member. If Pulverbatch is removed from the Burnell Division, the two elected members – representing the new Burnell and Bishop's Castle Divisions – would be dealing with the same problem, which is wasteful of time and resources.

It is noted that the current combination of parishes in Burnell fully meets the Boundary Commission's population requirements now and in the future. The removal of Pulverbatch [and other parishes] in order to add Bayston Hill, would mean the elected member has to address the different needs of the relatively densely populated Bayston Hill, compared to the rest of the proposed Burnell Division. It would seem preferable to have a single member division just for Bayston Hill, even though it is above the recommended population requirements: it is a compact settlement which would be easy to serve, despite its larger population.

If it is considered absolutely necessary to move Pulverbatch out of the Burnell Division, it would be much more appropriate to join the new Longden Division, which has all the common interests outlined above. This would be preferable to including Bicton with the Longden Division, which is not geographically well aligned with Longden in terms of access to services.

Attached Documents:

None attached