

Councillor Robert Yorke



7th July 2023

Dear Boundary Commission Team

RE: West Auckland Electoral Division, Durham County Council.

I have had the pleasure of representing the West Auckland Electoral Division at Durham County Council since 2008. I wish to express strong concerns about your proposals for the three-seat Evenwood and Cockfield Ward as it is considered far too large an area with too many towns and villages to cover effectively, in total there are 21 towns and villages within this proposed “super” ward.

West Auckland and the surrounding villages have diverse needs and reduction to a one-seat ward here would spread the already stretched resource even thinner, making it very difficult for anyone tasked with such a remit to provide effective County Council representation and support to the areas effectively.

Our communities are better served by two local elected County Councillors who know and understand the needs, problems, and ambitions of our area.

As County Councillors we have worked hard for many years and built-up good working relationships and mutual respect with various groups and organisations in the area such as Schools, Faith Groups, Businesses and Charities. Many local bus services now operate within the current boundary ward as do our nurseries which feed our three local primary schools.

The strength of this network would be lost with your proposal and the support to serve such a complex electorate with pockets of deprivation would be diminished.

A counter proposal for a two-seat West Auckland Ward keeps local communities together and fits better with the existing arrangements. I strongly support the proposal to maintain a two-seat West Auckland Electoral Division.

Please accept this letter in support of the proposed **two-seat West Auckland Ward**.

Best Wishes,

Rob Yorke
County Councillor – West Auckland Electoral Division.