From: Braintree District Labour Party

Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission electoral review of Essex County Council

Please find attached / enclosed 2 files –

1. Map of our proposed electoral divisions for Braintree District
2. Spreadsheet detailing by polling district our proposals.

Our written justification / supporting evidence for each proposed division follows. Please note that all our figures are based upon projected 2029 numbers as circulated by the LGBC.

1. Witham (Town) Division – comprising the current district council wards of Witham North, Witham South and Witham Central.

This would allow most of the town of Witham to be included in a single county division, which share the same facilities, services, schools, buses, train services, NHS and GP services, Council services etc.

1. Witham West and Rural – which largely replaces the existing county division of Witham Southern but is a far tidier alternative. Witham West includes the entry roads to the town from Terling, White Notley, Black Notley and the whole division is in the River Brain valley.
2. Braintree Eastern – largely replacing the existing Braintree Eastern division but includes part of the old Witham Northern division. This proposed division is uniquely united already – with most of the parishes previously united in a parish cluster (Blackwater Cluster); have been collectively involved in campaigning for the last 30 years about the future of Rivenhall Airfield; is largely made up of small to medium settlements being served by rural bus services; Kelvedon Railway Station is an important link for commuters and others in much of this proposed division.
3. Three Fields with Great Notley – almost identical to the existing division that covers this area. Includes part of the current Braintree West District Council seat, which is well connected to Great Notley by road.
4. Hedingham – largely the same as the existing Hedingham Division, made up of small to medium settlements in a very rural setting, with transport issues prevalent across the whole division along with schools, provision of local services common to much of the area.
5. Halstead – similar to the existing Halstead Division but with less rural attachment to the town as a reflection of Halstead’s growth in recent years. All the surrounding polling districts look to Halstead as their local centre for services.
6. Bocking – similar to the existing Bocking Division but with fewer rural additions to the proposed division. Uses as largely as possible the old division between the town of Braintree and Bocking – Coggeshall Road, which with Rayne Road was the historic divide and is easily identified with.
7. Braintree Town – largely the existing Braintree Town division, which unites most of Braintree Town in a single seat.

In summary, our proposed divisions achieve the following:

1. Maintain an excellent councillor / resident ratio with all our proposed divisions within 5% variance from the average according to 2029 figures.
2. Builds upon the existing divisions where possible but also tidies the geographical nature of the divisions (particularly the old Witham Northern division).
3. Unites as far as practical the urban populations of Halstead, Braintree, Bocking and Witham in single electoral divisions.
4. More rural areas remain united in commonality of their nature.
5. With just a couple of exceptions, maintains the current District Council ward divisions (and where it does not it continues to respect the nature of the community, thus BH High Garrett remains with a largely rural division, Braintree West part with Great Notley, Witham West with its hinterland); the integrity of parishes is maintained throughout.

We recommend the submission to the LGBC as a logical and defendable solution to the electoral review of Essex County Council within Braintree District.

If you require further information or clarity, please contact:

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