

Derbyshire

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Comment text:

Dear Sirs

I am writing as the Group Secretary on behalf of Derbyshire County Council's Conservative Group (representing the Council's 41 Conservative Party Councillors) in response to your consultation on proposed new divisional arrangements for the authority.

Our Group strongly supports Derbyshire County Council's submission to you, agreed by Full Council on 12th July 2023 (available here). While it must be acknowledged that it will always be a challenge to propose boundaries which have electoral parity, respect and reflect community interests and identities and promote effective and convenient local government, the proposals put forward by the County Council are pragmatic and seek to meet all of the these tests as much as is geographically possible.

However, the area where we have most concern around the boundaries is in the High Peak. Despite significant work from both officers and members, the County Council's proposed boundaries are the best that any of us we have been able to come forward with given the challenging geography, a significantly smaller electorate than other districts (High Peak's electorate only equates to 7.4 Councillors, rather than the 8 we have had to work towards) and while working on the basis of single member divisions.

We recognise that the County Council's proposals for the High Peak are far from optimal, in terms of respecting existing community identities and representing a radical re-drawing of existing boundaries which are already well established and understood. We would therefore strongly urge the Commission to consider alternatives which better reflect existing boundaries and community identities. To do this, we recognise that an

exceptional case may exist for Glossop to remain as part of a two-member division, instead of the County Council's alternative which combines parts of Glossop with Bamford, in a division which almost stretches from Sheffield to Greater Manchester.

We look forward to seeing your first draft proposals in due course and participating fully in the next consultation.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Alex Dale
Secretary
Derbyshire County Council Conservative Group

Attached Documents:

None attached