

## New electoral arrangements for Surrey County Council Draft recommendations August 2023

### Formal Response from Worplesdon Parish Council

#### Relevant extracts from the Draft recommendations document – August 2023

Proposed changes have been recommended for the County division of Worplesdon including proposed changes to the electoral arrangements for the Parish Council, as follows:

Para 61: *"The Council proposed placing the southern section of Ash parish, including Ash Green in Shalford division, mirroring the current arrangements her, while placing Wanborough parish in Worplesdon division. No evidence of community identity regarding Wanborough was provided, nor was there any evidence that the southern section of Ash shares any particular community identity with the remainder of Shalford division. In order to propose what we consider to be a better pattern of divisions across the west of Guildford Borough, we propose to place the southern section of Ash within the Worplesdon division".*

Para 63: *"With electors from the southern section of Ash placed in Worplesdon division, this division would have 15% more electors than average without any further changes. We proposed to place the settlement of Jacobs Well into Guildford North division, with a boundary tunnning along the Portsmouth railway line".*

Para 66: *"The Council proposed a boundary between Guildford West and Worplesdon divisions that follows the parish boundary for the most part, apart from the Rydeshill (sic) area where the proposed boundary ran along Broad Street. We visited this area on our tour of Surrey but did not consider that Broad Street offered a particularly strong boundary, or that there was an obvious difference of community identity between the areas to the north and south of this road. We therefore propose to include the entire Rydeshill (sic) area in a Guildford West division, with the boundary running behind Bramble Close and Dorrit Crescent".*

Para 153 *"We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Worplesdon parish".*

#### **"Draft recommendations:**

"That Worplesdon Parish Council should comprise of 16 councillors, as at present, representing three wards":

**Table 1: Proposed Parish Ward changes – as per para 153 above**

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Jacobs Well	2
Rydes Hill	3
Villages	11

#### **Proposed parish ward changes:**

Worplesdon Parish Council objects in the strongest possible terms to the proposed parish ward changes as they completely fail to accurately reflect the existing, separate, and quite distinct

communities of Broadacres, Fairlands, Jacobs Well, Perry Hill and Wood Street Village, which the Parish Council represents.

Currently only a few roads within the Rydes Hill area are included within the parish of Worplesdon – none of the current communities (Broadacres, Fairlands, Jacobs Well, Perry Hill, Pitch Place, Rickford, or Wood Street Village) would directly associate themselves with Rydes Hill.

Lumping the remainder of the parish into one ward called 'villages' would completely fail to respect the uniqueness of each village/community, two of which (Wood Street Village and Perry Hill) have Conservation Areas.

The Parish Council considers that two councillors is insufficient to represent the ward of Jacobs Well and that three councillors should continue to be required to represent this village.

The Parish Council felt that the most defensible boundary for Jacobs Well is the River Wey and that Jacobs Well should be retained within the county division of Worplesdon given the impact the Weyside Urban Village is likely to have on the number of electors within the Guildford North ward moving forward.

It is not clear from the documentation when these changes were to be applied to the Parish Council, as the Parish Council elections are held at the same time as the borough elections, which won't take place until 2027, whereas the next County Council elections are due to be held in 2025.

#### **Proposed county ward changes:**

The Parish Council also objects to the proposed County division changes on the basis that the proposals have not been well through and fail to take into account the existing arrangements and individual communities within the parish.

The proposals would result in the parish of Worplesdon represented by three separate county councillors, which is likely to result in confusion amongst the electorate.

**Table 2: Proposed County Divisions – as per para 153 above**

<b>Proposed County Division</b>	<b>Parish area being represented</b>
Guildford West	Park Barn/Broadacres/Broad Street/Dorrit Crescent/Bramble Close
Worplesdon	Fairlands, Perry Hill, Wood Street Village
Guildford North	Jacobs Well