

Gloucestershire

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Comment text:

Related subject: Stroud, Trinity War

I have attached my objections to the proposed changes to the County Council divisional boundaries which result in Trinity Ward, Stroud being moved from Stroud Central to Bisley and Painswick division.

The proposal does not pass any common sense test and must be revised if you truly want to have efficient and effective local government.

I welcome news on any changes to the review.

[See Attached]

Attached Documents:

- Case for Trinity Ward remaining part of Stroud Central 2023.docx

PROPOSED CHANGES TO ELECTORAL DIVISIONS – STROUD DISTRICT

TRINITY WARD – STROUD TOWN

Background

Proposals have been published for consultation on the revised county electoral divisions within Stroud District following the change in Constituency boundaries and resident numbers by 2029. Submissions on these proposals are being accepted up to 11 December.

The proposals include creating an additional division to accommodate the increased numbers following the addition of Wootton under Edge within the new constituency – and the removal of some wards to other new bordering constituencies.

The estimated average number of electors in a County Division by 2029 will be 9,504 and the aim is to be within 10% of this average by 2029. The current proposals create an additional electoral division within Stroud District and the new proposals set out how divisions will be clustered to be within the parameters of the estimated 2029 numbers. This has resulted in some changes within the existing pattern of electoral Districts.

Trinity ward

One of the proposals is to move Trinity ward, which sits within Stroud Central Division currently, to Bisley and Painswick Division. The reason seems to rest solely that this allows the numbers for each Division to be within the parameters given. There is no logical community, delivery or political advantage to the change.

I object to this proposal on a number of grounds.

1. Trinity Ward is one of 6 electoral wards which make up Stroud Town with all of the divisions encircling Stroud Town as petals around a centre and make up the social community which supports Stroud town itself. Schools, Healthcare, shopping, social care all lie within the boundaries of the 6 divisions. To take Trinity out of this is to disrupt this cohesive pattern and destroy the sense of community within the town. My understanding is that one of the criteria for this review is to enable effective and efficient local government. This proposal does the opposite of this and makes no sense to the local population or the smooth running of local government.
2. Trinity Ward boundary lies within a very short walking distance of Stroud town centre and contains within it Stroud Hospital and Stroud maternity hospital. It is hard to understand how the town hospital can be within the remit of a councillor who does not represent the majority of patients who are likely to use the services.
3. Trinity has little or no affinity with Bisley or Painswick which are distant rural centres and not part of the day to day life of the vast majority of residents. How can a Councillor be expected to truly understand the urban issues in Stroud which impact on Trinity residents when the majority of their time is dealing with rural and village issues?

4. The boundary of Trinity also lies on the southern side of Bisley Road (a major road out of Stroud) with Slade Ward on the opposite side. I am a resident of Slade Ward and have lived there for over 40 years. Many of my neighbours and friends live in Trinity and I can see no sensible community advantage to moving their council arrangements to Bisley and Painswick. In fact it is impossible to understand how one side of the road can face Stroud for its County council support and the other faces Bisley. On the contrary it will present a piecemeal representation for Stroud Town and add planning complications when 2 Councillors represent the issues of Stroud Town.
5. I am also a long standing governor of Stroud Valley Community school which sits within neighbouring Central ward and has a large intake of pupils from Trinity Ward since it is the closest school. Under these proposals, families will be working with a Councillor who has no knowledge of the school and yet they live within the County Councillors constituency. A similar pattern will also arise on secondary education which lies within Stroud Town boundaries. This disrupts efficient and effective local government which is one of the criteria for the boundary changes.
6. I appreciate the need for numerical parameters to be part of the equation to ensure there is some equality between divisions, but this should not override all sensible knowledge of the community and its needs. There must be an alternative proposal which meets the numerical criterion but also allows Trinity to remain with Stroud Central where it naturally belongs. I urge the powers involved in this to recommend an alternative proposal be adopted for the sake of common sense and effective local government.

[REDACTED]

Slade resident

25.10 2023