

Worcestershire

Personal Details:

Name: Miss Melissa Bassett

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Organisation Name: Electoral Matters Committee on behalf of Redditch Borough Council (District or county officer)

Comment text:

Related subject: Divisions within the Redditch Borough Council authority area

This consultation response is put forward on behalf of Redditch Borough Council as agreed by the Electoral Matters Committee at their meeting held on 29 February 2024. The proposed changes in this response aim to harmonise Worcestershire divisions with the outcomes of the recent Electoral Review of Redditch Borough Council and subsequent Polling District Review. The current polling districts are the result of collaborative efforts undertaken by a dedicated working group tasked with ensuring suitable electoral administration and access to the democratic process for the electorate.

This submission proposes two changes to proposed county division boundaries within the Redditch Borough Council area.

The first change relates to Redditch Central/Redditch East proposed divisions. A map of the proposed change can be found in Appendix 1 of attached Report:

Our proposal entails relocating the boundary to encompass the entirety of the RBC polling district of Church Hill North, within the proposed Redditch East division. This change involves the transfer of approximately 1,271 electors from their current division to Redditch East. This boundary change also means that the RBC polling district Papermill will in its entirety be within the proposed Redditch Central division. This adjustment involves approximately 791 electors. This new proposed boundary is represented by the yellow line on the map, with the blue line the current boundary and the red line the boundary initially proposed by the LGBCE.

The second change relates to the Redditch West/Redditch South proposed divisions. A map of the proposed change can be found in Appendix 2 of attached Report:

Our proposal involves shifting the boundary northward to encompass Morton Stanley Park and Redditch Golf Course within the Redditch South division. This adjustment ensures that RBC polling district of Callow Hill falls within the Redditch South Division in its entirety. This proposal will

result in the relocation of 27 electors residing on Lower Grinsty Lane from Redditch West Division to Redditch South Division. The new proposed boundary is represented by the yellow line on the map, with the red line being the boundary initially proposed by the LGBCE. By aligning divisional boundaries with the findings of the Redditch Borough Council Ward review and subsequent Polling District Review, the aim is to ensure greater coherence and efficiency in electoral administration within the region as well as provide effective and convenient local governance.

Attached Documents:

- [20240229-rbc-electoral-matters-draft-minutes.doc](#)
- [appendix-1-map-of-boundaries-relating-redditch-east-redditch-central-division.pdf](#)
- [appendix-2-map-of-boundaries-relating-to-redditch-west-redditch-south-division.pdf](#)
- [electoral-matters-committee-report-29-feb-2024---lgbce-worcestershire-county-divisions-review.pdf](#)

ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE
2024

29 February

**Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) –
Worcestershire County Divisions Review**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillors Dormer, Leader, and Court, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton
Report Author	Job Title: Darren Whitney, Electoral Services Manager Contact email: darren.whitney@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881650
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	N/A
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RESOLUTIONS

- 1.1 Members of the Committee are asked to note the contents of the report; and**
- 1.2 decide if a submission to the LGBCE be made from the Authority regarding the proposed changes within this report.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The report highlights the progress of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) review for Worcestershire County Council Divisions.
- 2.2 It highlights where boundary changes to the proposed county divisions would fit better within the polling districts created as part of the 2023 polling districts and places reviews.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 No direct costs from this report.

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4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The LGBCE is a statutory body accountable to Parliament that conducts reviews of local authority electoral arrangements in England. Its statutory obligations are set out in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
- 4.2 One of the objectives of the LGBCE is to provide electoral arrangements for English principal local authorities that are fair and deliver electoral equality for voters.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 5.1 This report deals with statutory functions but relates to the strategic purpose of an effective and sustainable council.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 It is preferable that choice of boundaries can help minimise unnecessary additional journeys by motorised vehicles.
- 5.3 Emissions and carbon footprint should be reduced as far as possible.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 None for this report.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 The LGBCE have published it's draft proposals for the new electoral county divisions in Worcestershire, consultation on these is open until 18 March 2024.
- 6.3 Details of the review can be found on the LGBCE website:.
<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/worcestershire>
- 6.4 For the Redditch Borough area the LGBCE are recommending four divisions, all of which will have two members.

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6.5 Individuals and political parties and the authority can make submissions to the consultation.

6.6 Officers have identified two proposed divisional boundaries where it would be useful to amend them to make them coterminous with the agreed polling districts from the recent reviews.

6.7 Redditch Central/Redditch East Proposed Divisions

This relates to the new North Ward of the Borough and would involve moving electors both from and to the Redditch Central and Redditch East proposed divisions.

In appendix 1 the blue line is the current county division boundary and the red is the LGBCE proposed boundary line.

Officers propose the yellow boundary line which would make the following changes:

The boundary is moved so that the whole of polling district NRC – Church Hill North is within the proposed Redditch East division. This is currently 1,271 electors.

The boundary is moved so that the whole of polling district NRB – Papermill is within the proposed Redditch Central division. This is currently 791 electors.

The combined effect means that Redditch East division increases by 480 electors and Redditch Central is reduced by the same amount. In percentage terms this means the electoral variance from the average will move from -4% to -6.5% for Redditch Central and from -8% to -5.5% for Redditch East.

If members decide not to recommend this change a review of both polling districts NRB and NRC will be required.

6.8 Redditch West/Redditch South Proposed Divisions

This relates to moving boundary between the Redditch West and Redditch South Divisions within the Webheath & Callow Hill Ward.

If the boundary is moved north to encompass Morton Stanley Park and Redditch Golf Course it then makes the boundary of polling district WCD – Callow Hill co-terminus with the division boundary. This is shown as the yellow line in appendix 2.

There are currently 27 electors in the area all on Lower Grinsty Lane and they would move from Redditch West Division to Redditch South Division.

If members decide not to recommend this change; rather than make this a separate polling district it would be better to adjoin this part of WCD to either polling district WCA or WCB.

- 6.9 The LGBCE will publish their final recommendations on 2 July 2024 and the new arrangements will be in place for the County Elections in May 2025.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 If proposals are not sent to the LGBCE polling districts will need to be reviewed again which could lead to new polling places being required.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Map of boundaries relating to polling districts NRB and NRC

Appendix 2 – Map of boundaries relating to WCD

LGBCE Website: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/worcestershire>

Relevant Statutory provisions

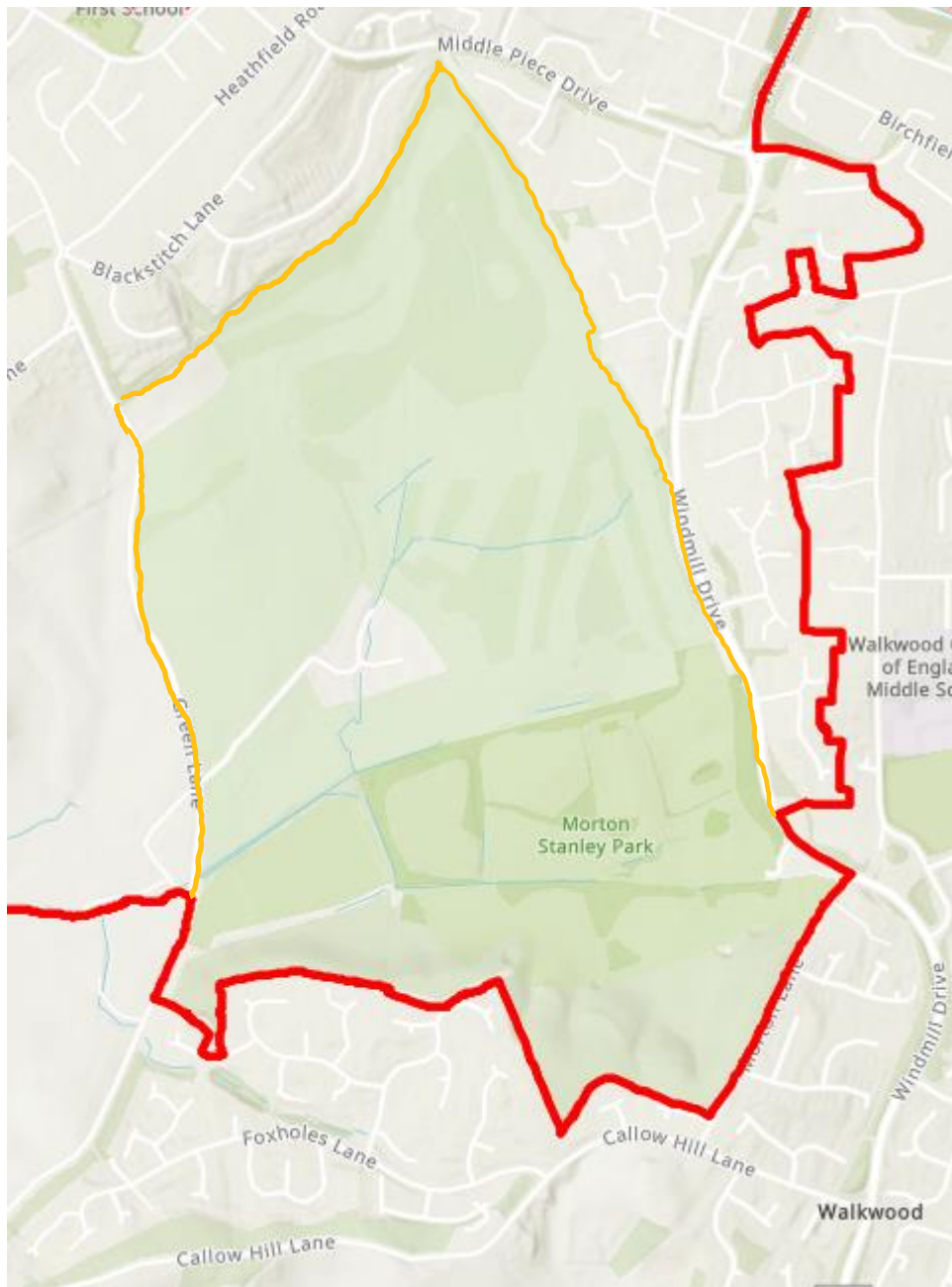
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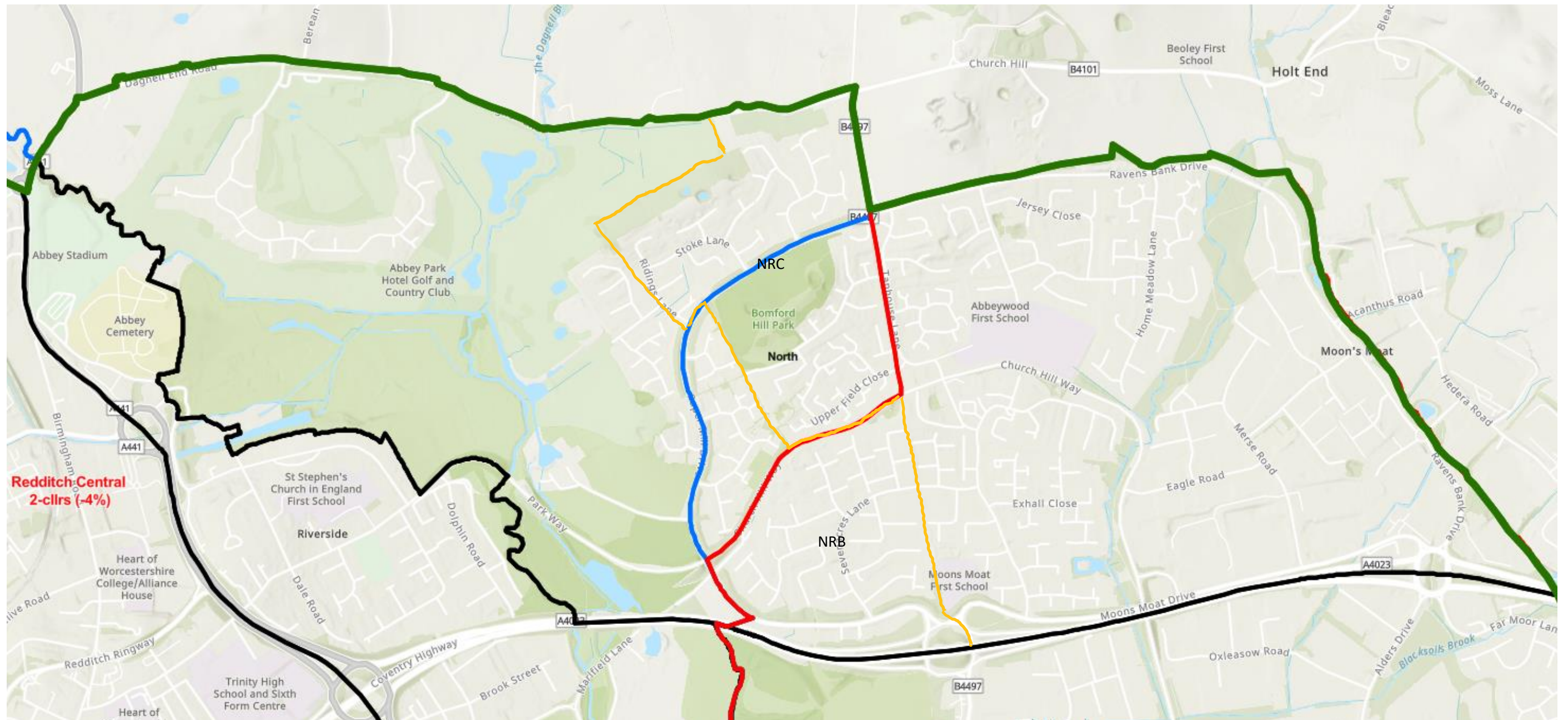
9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder		
Head of Service		
Financial Services		
Legal Services		

Appendix 2 – Map of boundaries relating to WCD



Appendix 1 - Map of boundaries relating to polling districts NRB and NRC



Electoral Matters Committee

Thursday, 29th February,
2024

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor Peter Fleming (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Barker Smith and Sharon Harvey.

Officers:

Sue Hanley, Darren Whitney and Melissa Bassett.

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Luke Court and Monica Stringfellow. Councillor Sharon Harvey was substitute for Councillor Stringfellow.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Matters Committee held on 13th December 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

17. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND (LGBCE) - WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY DIVISIONS REVIEW

The Committee considered a report which set out proposals by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) for revised County Council electoral divisions in the Borough. The consultation on the proposals was open until 18th March. Officers had identified two areas where the proposed division boundaries

Chair

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were not coterminous with recently agreed polling district boundaries.

In Redditch Central/Redditch East the proposals meant that there would be two polling districts NRB 1 and NRB 2 in different county council divisions. It was suggested that the boundary was moved so that the whole of polling district NRC – Church Hill North would be within the proposed Redditch East division. This was currently 1,271 electors. The boundary would also be moved so that the whole of polling district NRB – Papermill was within the proposed Redditch Central division. This was currently 791 electors.

In Redditch West/Redditch South it was suggested that if the boundary was moved north to encompass Morton Stanley Park and Redditch Golf Course the boundary of polling district WCD – Callow Hill – would then be co-terminus with the division boundary. This would move 27 electors Members from Redditch West to Redditch South division. Members supported this suggestion as it improved the efficient administration of elections.

During consideration of the Redditch/Redditch South proposal, a Member raised the impact on electoral equality of the LGBCE proposals for Wirehill, which would move into Redditch South. This affected 700 electors. Having considered the net result of the changes in overall elector numbers in each division, members concluded that they would not wish to make a submission relating to the Wirehill proposals.

It was proposed by Councillor Peter Fleming, seconded by Councillor Juliet Barker Smith and

RESOLVED that

1. That the contents of the report be noted, and
2. Officers make a submission on behalf of the Council to the consultation on proposals for County Council electoral divisions being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as set out in the report, relating to Redditch Central/Redditch East and Redditch West/Redditch South electoral divisions.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 6.46 pm