

Worcestershire

Personal Details:

Name: Conrad Palmer

Email: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Organisation Name: Fairfield Village Community Association (Representative of a local organisation)

Comment text:

Review Officer (Worcestershire)
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England

Electoral Arrangements & Boundary Review for Worcestershire

The purpose of Fairfield Village Community Association is to further community life within the Fairfield Parish Ward (Fairfield, Wildmoor & Stoneybridge) and to support the preservation of the existing and future environment of the community.

Woodvale Division

The Chairman of the Association responded to the Commission's earlier consultation, which due to our error in the submission is recorded as a resident's response:

"The Woodvale ward currently consists of two distinct areas, the more urbanised Catshill & North Marlbrook, and the more rural Fairfield, Bournheath & Dodford. The needs of the two areas are different, and the rural areas are often overlooked because of the needs of urbanised

area. It would help if the Fairfield, Bournheath & Dodford were grouped with other rural areas, e.g. a Division equivalent to the District Council ward of Belbroughton & Romsley, where there is rural commonality with regard the day to day functions of the County Council, such as Highways.”

The committee of the Community Association, at their meeting of 16th January 2024, discussed the proposals outlined within the Draft Recommendations Report.

The committee expressed concern that if the proposed change goes ahead to the Woodvale Division, the geographical area of the Division will be very much larger, with more roads, gullies, footpaths, etc. As funding of repairs & improvement projects from the Divisional “local fund” is limited, it could mean that local works will be further delayed.

Ideally, the Committee would have liked a wholly rural Division, but as this has already been ruled out by the LGBCE, it was accepted that Fairfield, Wildmoor & Stoneybridge to remain in the Woodvale Division.

Parish Council & Parish Ward

The Committee felt that the LGBCE should amend wordings relating to the Parish and use the correct name for the Parish, i.e. Belbroughton and Fairfield, and the correct names for the Parish Council Wards, i.e. Belbroughton Ward and Fairfield Ward.

The proposal, by the then Belbroughton Parish Council, to add Fairfield to the Parish name was approved by Bromsgrove District Council at its full council meeting on 20th January 2016 (minutes ref: 94\15).

The pros and cons of enlarging the Fairfield Ward was discussed and it was felt that there is a potential for the Community Association to engage with an often-forgotten Belbroughton Ward market segment.

The parity of councillors representing the two Wards was welcomed, and it was noted that having a reduced number of Councillors for each ward may enable future Parish Council elections to take place, providing greater legitimacy, rather than co-option or elected uncontested, which has been the case for far too many years.

The Committee felt that a proposal be made to the LGBCE that they may wish to recommend a Governance Review, to explore a standalone Fairfield Parish Council, or a Ward merger with Bournheath, where there is more commonality than there is with Belbroughton.

Attached Documents:

None attached