

Kirklees

Personal Details:

Name: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: - (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: Fixby

Please see attached file

Attached Documents:

- wardboundarychanges.pdf

New Electoral Arrangements for Kirklees Council -

I am extremely unhappy about the proposed changes to ward boundaries as they affect the north Huddersfield area where I have lived with my family since 16th April, 1984.

- When Ashbrow Ward was formed along with the 22 other wards for the 'all-out' elections in May 2004, great care was taken to create wards which had a mixed composition of areas – areas of social housing, private rented, small privately owned houses and areas of more affluent detached housing. Ashbrow is an excellent example of an electoral ward with a balanced economic demography of housing types alongside areas of green spaces.
- The proposed Huddersfield Central ward will bring together a high proportion of areas of deprivation including large areas of privately rented and social housing accommodation into one electoral area. This would inevitably create an excessive amount of casework and demands related to the nature of the area e.g. making bids for funding specific projects, local and government initiatives, problems regarding school admissions etc. The workload of the three councillors elected to represent the Huddersfield Central Ward would be disproportionate to councillors representing more middle-class areas yet they would only receive the same allowances.
- Over the last twenty years, nine different local councillors who have represented the area have been able to work effectively across the mixed nature of Ashbrow Ward working in partnership with staff working for Kirklees Council, residents, community groups, the NHS, the Police, and other statutory and voluntary agencies. It would be tragic to throw away all that has been achieved during this time that has created the increasingly diverse and vibrant Ashbrow Community.
- Only six of the 23 wards remain unchanged in the current proposals with massive upheaval to the remaining 17 wards which we consider to be totally unnecessary. I accept the need to produce 23 wards with approximately equal electorates but the electoral roll for the proposed Huddersfield Central ward will grossly under-record the number of adults who live in this ward. I believe that the boundary changes as they affect the north Huddersfield area should be restricted to equalising the numbers of electors in each ward and keeping the rough outlines of each ward as they are currently as far as possible.
- The proposed wards contain communities which have no affiliation with each other but split up areas which do have natural community links. For example, the Birchencliffe area which is currently in Lindley Ward is proposed to go into the new Huddersfield North ward. There is at least a two mile corridor between Birchencliffe and the rest of the proposed Huddersfield North Ward with no direct public transport links or road link without travelling in and out of Calderdale or through both

Huddersfield West and Central Wards. High School children who live in Birchencliffe are likely to attend Salendine Nook High School unlike children who live in other parts of the ward.

- In contrast, the proposals would divide Deighton and Brackenhall which are geographically inseparable. Over many years, a natural affiliation between the residents has grown and a positive community identity has been established.
- Finally, I strongly oppose the proposed naming of the new wards in the Huddersfield area after points of the compass and 'Central'. Residents will have difficulty identifying themselves with a nebulous area like Huddersfield North compared to identifiable area like Ashbrow, Dalton, Newsome, Greenhead, Lindley etc.