

Milton Keynes

Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: Haversham-cim-Little Linford Parish Council (Representative of parish/town council)

Comment text:

Related subject: Newport Pagnell North & Hanslope

This representation is on behalf of Haversham-cum-Little Linford Parish Council.

At our meeting on 15th July 2024, we agreed to submit the following representation to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in respect of the consultation related to the review of the number of councillors, wards and ward names for Milton Keynes City Council.

The Parish Council recognises and supports the need to increase the number of councillors across Milton Keynes, given the recent and planned growth in population and we also support the need to review boundaries to ensure electoral equality.

In regards to our Parish, our main concern is in relation to ensuring that the review delivers improvements in the alignment of future ward boundaries with the 'community identities & interests' aspect.

Today, our Parish is part of the Newport Pagnell North and Hanslope Ward, which is comprised of five rural village-based Parishes (our own plus Gayhurst, Stoke Goldington, Hanslope and Castlethorpe) plus the northern part of the Town of Newport Pagnell – part of Milton Keynes' urban fringe.

As such the interests between the rural based areas and those of the urban area are often misaligned, for example in terms of matters of highways, planning, community safety, housing, adult services and many others. This puts a strain on the effectiveness of our Ward Councillors

who have to deal with a significant urban population concentrated in a fairly small geographical area as well as a similar or slightly smaller population much more geographically spread and with differing priorities and interest, all driven by the clearly different identity between the rural villages and the urban areas.

We believe that as part of this review, consideration should be given to a separation between rural and urban as far as possible. We wish to make you aware, that prior to a change at the last Boundary review, our Parish was part of a single councillor ward (Hanslope Park). Whilst we understand the desire to remain based around three councillor wards, this is not mandatory and, as is the case locally, it can compromise the community identities and interest aspects. We believe a one Councillor Ward option should be re-examined.

Alternatively, we believe there is an opportunity to have a predominantly rural Ward by including some of the rural parishes that are currently part of the neighbouring Olney Ward within a new “rural north” ward (name to be determined). This would benefit those neighbouring rural parishes to the east of our current Ward, who have the same situation as us, in terms of being included in a ward with urban Olney. Olney is also a growing town and thus potentially needs to reduce the geographical size of its own ward and both Newport Pagnell and Olney towns are also being affected by the substantial population growth driven by the MK East expansion.

This review is therefore the perfect opportunity for boundary changes to be made that reinforce the ‘community identity and interests’ aspect of the Ward that our Parish would be a part of.

We reserve the right to make further comments.

Attached Documents:

None attached