

North Yorkshire

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Comment text:

Dear Boundary Commissioners

I am writing as a former prospective parliamentary candidate for Scarborough and Whitby and the serving Chairman of the Scarborough and Whitby Conservative Association. I have spent a considerable amount of time getting to know the whole area in this constituency and so have a number of comments for the proposals affecting Scarborough and Whitby.

There are lots of positives about draft proposals that you have created and I am happy to support most of the changes.

There are a handful of areas however where I think small amendments would improve the current proposals by being more logical in keeping distinctive communities together and providing better representation for the coast. This was a concern I heard repeatedly raised about the new unitary authority whilst canvassing during the General Election last year.

In terms of the Whitby area, I strongly support the boundaries for Danby & Glaisdale and Esk Valley & the Coast.

I support the commission's plans to keep Whitby parish wholly contained within two divisions but object to shifting the border between Whitby West and Whitby Streonshalh westward. The east and west sides of Whitby are completely different with separate issues and as I was repeatedly warned as a parliamentary candidate have a long held and deep antipathy towards one another. It would make it extremely difficult for a councillor to represent both parts of the community effectively and make the side that was not represented, if the councillor was from the other side of town,

feel unrepresented. Although these divisions may seem parochial to the commission which has to review the entire county, they have deep resonance to locals and would create numerous issues for the future. An alternative would be to move the boundary back eastwards towards the river and to instead move Ruswarp village into Whitby Streonshalh. Although a separate village to Whitby, Ruswarp falls within the parish boundaries and is well connected to Streonshalh by the bridge leading from the village up Larpool Lane into the heart of Streonshalh. As Ruswarp has its own identity separate to the town this would cause fewer problems and maintain the cohesion between the identities of the West side of Whitby and the East side allowing residents and councillors to feel part of a more cohesive community.

Moving on to the Scarborough area I strongly support the commission's proposals for Scalby & Derwent, Newby, and Seamer & East Ayton. These boundaries make sense maintaining rural communities within predominantly rural divisions, as Scalby feels and identifies as its own village separate from the rest of Scarborough and Newby. And using Scalby Beck as the boundary makes geographic sense.

I also strongly support moving the area north of Stepney Road into Woodlands. It is a much improved boundary on the current ones which do not have any sense of identity or community. I have had residents suggest to me that the name of the Woodlands division should be amended to Northstead and Stepney, both historic areas which people still use as place names to say where they live, have more resonance and are more easily identifiable than 'Woodlands'. The Northstead name came to cover the current division of its name due to boundary changes over the years mixing and matching parts of the town where the historic Manor of Northstead was located but the current boundaries do not reflect that at all. It would be an improvement if the commission were to restore the previous Scarborough Borough Council ward name of 'North Bay' to the division currently named as Northstead as it is both more accurate and where people living in the division describe themselves as being. This cosmetic change would also mean that Northstead Primary School, Northstead Methodist Church, Northstead Pharmacy, Northstead Car Park and Northstead Manor Drive are once again located in a division with the name Northstead, which would seem more logical.

I would also support the resident who suggested moving the Broadway Area into the currently named Northstead division due to community links. Given the commission's concerns about electoral variance, this could be resolved by moving a number of roads south of Dean Road cemetery, around Caledonia Street and Gordon Street, into the Castle division as they are currently an awkward appendage to the so called Northstead division.

In order to prevent Castle division from having too high an electoral variance, this could be resolved by moving the Westwood area into Falsgrave as suggested by another local resident. This would maintain the electoral variance within desired limits whilst also allowing division boundaries to better map identifiable communities. From my canvassing the area the roads around Westwood look much more to the A64 and amenities around there than they do to the historic area of the Old Town or roads above the A171 which make up the majority of Castle division and so it would make more sense for the boundary of Falsgrave to be moved eastward to include them as they are currently isolated from the rest of the division they are in.

I support the commission's decision to not heavily change Weaponness and Ramshill. It has its own distinctive character separate from the rest of

the town and it is good that the commission is intending on preserving this. One small adjustment I would recommend would be to move the northern boundary south slightly to include all of Valley Road in one division with the rest of the Westwood area. The current boundary runs along Valley Road and then jumps up to Valley Bridge and down Ramshill Road. A tidier solution in my view would be to make the boundary run down the middle of Grosvenor Road and down Cambridge Terrace onto Ramshill Road. This would allow it to meet the new boundary that the commission has drawn on Belmont Road in a more logical manner. Also the character of Grosvenor Road is much more like Valley Road than the rest of South Cliff.

Whilst the above amendments to Scarborough Town wards are relatively minor, I do object strongly to the proposals for Eastfield and Cayton. To move a considerable part of Eastfield including George Pindar School and the Eastway Playing Fields where the beloved, local AFC Eastfield football team practise and play would be to draw a line through the heart of Eastfield. It would weaken the community's voice which as an area of high deprivation is the opposite of what the commission should want. I would support North Yorkshire Council's cross-party proposals of instead having the new housing estate of Middle Deepdale, which is North of most of historic Eastfield and has a separate identity due to geography and the road network, moved into the Cayton division instead. It would allow voters who have lived in Eastfield all their lives to continue to be represented in a division called Eastfield and avoid confusion. Turnout at elections in Eastfield is already much lower than average and so to create any confusion by moving parts of the centre of Eastfield into Cayton would risk further democratic disengagement.

I hope the above constructive suggestions are helpful and will win the support of the commissioners for the next round of deliberations.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

Attached Documents:

None attached