

York

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Organisation Name: City of York Council (Acomb ward) (Councillor)

Comment text:

3. Responses to existing documents and additional comments

Just to offer my personal thoughts on a range of other proposal text, comments, responses etc.

a) Boundaries across the city

Personally I don't understand why the Dringhouses/Micklegate boundary isn't at the clearly delineating marker at the entry to Hob Moor. If the maths doesn't math for that bit, fine, but Pulleyn Drive and White House Gardens back onto St George's Place and have a popular thoroughfare separating them from The Gables.

Obviously the silly boundary quirk between Copmanthorpe, Bishopthorpe, Rural West, Dringhouses and Woodthorpe can be fixed with a CGR, but it does demonstrate that ancient archaic boundaries are unhelpful here: Bishopthorpe, Copmanthorpe, Poppleton and Skelton are large villages that have their own character; Acaster Malbis, Askham Bryan, Askham Richard, Rufforth, Hessay and Knapton are smaller distinct villages on the same side of the river with similar challenges. Any way of grouping them would make sense, and the proposed boundaries are as perfectly sensible as any other, and are backed by the Acaster Malbis parish council on top of others.

Fulford and Fishergate merging is extremely sensible. I used to live on two different houses on Hospital Fields Road, and two different houses between Broadway and Heslington Lane, and everyone would confidently say I lived in Fulford in all four houses. Fulford Barracks, Fulford Police

Station and the Fulford Arms are in Fishergate ward! Germany Beck and Fordlands Road are also clearly in Fulford with Fulford Cemetery between them, so I wholeheartedly agree with this merger.

Many of the other boundaries that I might take issue with are due to specific awkward parish boundaries that don't really make modern sense. Rawcliffe and Clifton are not divided along the current or proposed line, but somewhere west of that line. It would be possible to ward the parish to fix this, but the current proposal is at least a clear boundary, as is the Whitby Ave deviation from parish boundary. I don't think Murton and Dunnington and Fulford should transcend the ringroad, but again I guess that's what a CGR is for. Heworth, Tang Hall, Lawrence Street, Hull Road etc have similar challenges to Acomb around vastness of area and overlapping communities, and it's hard to draw any definitive 'correct' boundary. When I lived on Beaufort Close we weren't in Badger Hill nor any other community, but with Windmill Lane were almost seen as a standalone university commuter belt route - anything that is clear makes sense to me, and when I lived there I would have been supportive of the proposal of being grouped with both Badger Hill and Heslington.

The main boundary issue is Derwenthorpe (and not just because only a quarter is currently in the ward named after it). As I am sure a hundred submissions say, it's one community that is deliberately joined by a single entry route for cycles and pedestrians and purposefully split on car entry points, which the current draft proposal doesn't recognise. It is too small for its own councillor, but it should all sit within the same ward, connected to Tang Hall Lane.

b) Ward names

It is easy to get convoluted with names. One ward contains Bishophill, Micklegate, Bishy Road, South Bank, Clementhorpe, Nunthorpe, Rowntree Park, the Knavesmire etc. Calling it just Knavesmire ward or Micklegate ward is better than stringing four names together. Two clear communities with '&' is useful, but otherwise shorter and sweeter is better. 5) Derwent works, or Dunnington & Wheldrake (whether 2x1 or 1x2 member wards). 19) Rural West York is less clean than Poppleton ward for me. 22) WW&W is my least favourite name in terms of how clunky it is and it is silly not to have Foxwood in the name so my personal suggestion would be Foxwood & Woodthorpe but I defer to the residents of those communities if they have made suggestions.

c) Numbers

All statistical evidence demonstrates that we should have more than 50 councillors, like we used to, and that casework and representation is more sensibly aligned to the number of residents and not the number of electors. If any area doesn't register to vote as much, they need more support. But I appreciate that 48 councillors is what we will receive and that wards have to remain within elector figures percentage ranges so no further comment on that - 48 and 22 is viable and the blend of 1/2/3 member wards seems reasonable in each area.

d) Draft recommendations report

para 40 - I agree with the Greens that Hopgrove Lane should be one road not two and make more sense in Strensall ward than Huntington & New Earswick;

para 59 makes sense in both circumstances;

I have commented on para 70 already that Poppleton ward is cleaner;

72 is certainly correct about the links between Foxwood and Woodthorpe;

73 is true in a number of places - I regularly cross the railway line there to get the Coastliner from Tadcaster Rd, at Hob Moor to get to Millennium Bridge and the east of the city, at Holgate Rd iron bridge etc, but the boundary is clear and distinct and wide and feels like a transition;

74 is slightly wrong because some of British Sugar still sits in Rural West but this can be fixed via CGR; and lastly

81 is true that there is reasonable consistency for electors with 0 outside 10% in 2031, but it is not true for resident numbers, and the actual representation and work for councillors will clearly differ between larger per-cllr wards with poorer and underrepresented communities and smaller per-cllr wards with more affluence and overrepresentation (albeit not more than existing wards).

e) I was going to reply to Resident comments from the first consultation, but they range from 1166301 which enforces the draft proposal to 1166131 which discusses policy areas and it is hard to pick out specific points of agreement or disagreement. Parish Council submissions vary in strength (and I anticipate that there will be strong opinions provided in the current round of consultation that generally favours keeping parishes unified and as large as possible?) but I have no additional comments. I do agree with the UoY SU submission that a larger ward for the university area is appropriate given that they are overwhelmingly more likely to be only registered 'at home' or not be eligible to vote at all than the average York resident - and the proposed two-member is a complex large ward - but I can't think of a way to propose a three member ward containing the university without redrawing a massive number of local boundaries that make more sense intact.

On the whole I believe that the draft proposal makes sense, adds up against official population numbers, and works better than the existing boundary set - with some moderate and small tweaks able to improve the proposal further for local residents.

Thank you to everyone involved in this work from the LGBCE (and to everyone who wrote a submission) and best of luck with finalising appropriate wards!

Attached Documents:

None attached