

Fenland District Council

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Comment text:

Please see attachment

Uploaded Documents:

Download (https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1654527482_Consultation_Response.pdf).

Cllr Will Sutton, Member for the Elm & Christchurch Ward

Consultation Response

Copy & Paste of the Council (Ruling Party) Evidence.

STARTS.

EVIDENCE OF COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

The eastern boundary of the proposed new ward is made up of the external District Council boundary. In addition the proposed new ward encompasses Streets South of River Nene from Broad Street to the railway line, River Nene Old Course to Stags Holt Wind Farm, West of track from the river to Rodham Road, West of drain from Rodham Road to nearly Bedlam Bridge, North of B1099 to drain that runs north of Horsemoor to Coleseed Road, East of Coleseed Road, North of Upwell Road, West of track behind Cavalry Drive and Fairfax Way, North of Barkers Lane, West of The Avenue, The Causeway, High Street to March Town Bridge in addition to the whole of Christchurch Parish

The ward encompasses the parish of Christchurch in its entirety as well as the eastern aspect of March Town. The area is self sufficient encompassing shops, health care provision in addition the community is linked by Cavalry Primary School, Townley Primary School as well as Neale Wade Academy. The majority of children from Christchurch Townley Primary school attend Neale Wade Acedemy in March and a school bus provides this clear transport route. In addition residents of Christchurch look towards March for their shopping, health care, worship and recreational activities.

Whilst it is acknowledged that there is not one road that links the two areas of March East and Christchurch together the junction at Bedlam Bridge is only slightly outside the proposed ward boundary.

It is proposed to retain this ward as a three member ward due to the long established governance arrangement within the town, whilst also enabling ease of accessibility for local electors to their respective political representatives.

The ward name reflects the local geography and will be easily recognisable by local residents. ENDS.

The important parts of this claimed Evidence are :-

STARTS. In addition residents of Christchurch look towards March for their shopping, health care, worship and recreational activities. ENDS.

I will address this claimed EVIDENCE in order.

Shopping

About three years ago Ex Parish Cllr. William Beswick did a survey of Christchurch Village in order to get a regular bus service on a Friday for residents to do their shopping, the results were an overwhelming desire for a bus to Downham Market with the second choice being Wisbech, the reason behind the choice was that both options have a Morrison's supermarket, this can be evidenced by minutes of the PC where they (the PC) discussed subsidising the service, I also accompanied Mr Beswick on a visit to a local bus company to discuss the possibility of supplying the service. My question is: - where is the Council's (Ruling Party) Evidence?

Heath Care

The vast majority of Christchurch residents are registered for their primary health and dental care at the Upwell Heath and Dental Centre, as are many residents of the parish of Elm, this can be evidenced by the requests from Upwell Centre for donations toward the upkeep of their car park, Christchurch PC declined but Elm have made payments because they felt their residents benefited from the care provided by the centre, secondary care for both Parishes is provided by and large by the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Kings Lynn. My question is: - where is the Council's (Ruling Party) Evidence?

Worship

Christchurch, (Formally Brimstone) as its name suggests, has its own Church, with a very successful 'Coffee and Cake' event every Thursday and regular worship on a Sunday so it's difficult understand why resident's would travel to March for their worship, the Evidence for this can easily be found in the monthly Village Magazine (The Heron) My question is: - where is the Council's (Ruling Party) Evidence?

Recreational Activities

Christchurch has its own recreation ground and very successful Community Centre, the Community Centre is relatively new (Opened by myself and Ex Cllr Nigel Russell in June 2016) I'm not sure if it is still the case but at one time Christchurch had more recreational land per head of population than anywhere else in Fenland.

The recreation Field has its own Skate Park, two areas of Play Equipment, one for toddlers and one for the older children, football pitch, all are well used, the PC has just agreed to install some extra picnic benches at the request of parishioner's so they have somewhere to sit whilst the children enjoy the equipment.

The Parish Council has recently taken back some land (two and a half acres) adjacent to the Playing Field where they plan to extend the recreation offer for parishioners. My question is: - where is the Council's (Ruling Party) Evidence?

All the above can be evidenced so one has to ask the question: - if this short section can be so wrong, how much of the whole document can be relied upon.

It is known by many that the two ruling party members for Wimblington and Doddington were against the original proposals to combine them with Christchurch and Benwick, it is also a fact that both Elm PC and Christchurch PC are totally against splitting up the current ward which has served them both very well for many years, I am told that Leverington, Parson Drove, Wisbech St.Mary, Coates, Benwick, Eastrea, Newton, Tydd St.Giles and Gorfield all have many residents that are totally against the current proposals.

My own view of the whole process from day one is that we should be looking to reduce member numbers, rather than increase them but if we must increase then the forty one member scheme put forward would more than adequately serve the population of Fenland and more importantly keep the Village wards separate from the Towns.

The comment about no road to link March East is a non-entity because no matter what is done the whole of Christchurch Parish can-not be accessed without going through many FDC wards or out of district, Mumbys Drove can-not be accessed without going through Upwell (Norfolk) and March Riverside cannot be accessed unless you travel through the following wards : - Wimblington, March East, March North and Elm or the more direct route travelling through Upwell (Norfolk)