

## Derby City Council

### Personal Details:

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### Comment text:

Derby Liberal Democrats believe that the submission made by Derby City Council to you in February for new ward boundaries meets the 3 statutory criteria. It optimally balances the need for electoral equality with the need to protect the identities and interests of local communities. 20 years ago at the last boundary review, you did a good job of keeping natural communities together in the same ward. There were some places where this couldn't be done because of the numbers constraints eg part of Sunnyhill Ave, Kendon Ave, Stenson Ave, Grenfell Ave, Keswick Ave, part of Coleridge Street, part of Stenson Road, Ainsworth Drive, Walton Drive, Gaskell Ave & Masefield Ave. This time, because Blagreaves needs to grow, these roads, where residents feel part of the Blagreaves community, can become part of Blagreaves. Including these roads in Blagreaves will mean that the invisible community boundary is the same as the ward boundary. Other changes proposed by the Council's submission include moving areas of new housing from one ward to another where numbers mean this has to happen, eg the Manor Kingsway development moving from Littleover to Abbey. That estate does actually have more in common with neighbouring areas of Abbey in terms of shopping facilities and local schools than it does with Littleover. In the southern part of Littleover ward there has been new housing being built over the past 25 years, and continuing to this day. The Heatherton estate is very much part of Littleover and is now a well-established part of the Littleover community. It is strongly linked to the rest of Littleover by the main spine road that runs the length of the ward - Rykneld Road/Burton Road. Everyone in the area has to use this road to access the wider community and beyond. The boundary between Littleover and Blagreaves is broadly in line with which secondary school young people in the area attend. Those in Littleover go to Littleover Community School and those in Blagreaves go to Derby Moor School. The Council's submission respects the parliamentary boundaries between Derby North and Derby South and Mid Derbyshire. The only exception being in the city centre where the line has been drawn along the roads that demarcate the 2 distinct halves of the city centre. The northern half is the old town centre area and the southern half is the area of later expansion. Respecting these boundaries means that there isn't confusion among voters and it makes administering a local and parliamentary election day much easier and avoids ballot papers ending up in the wrong places. The city centre has plenty of venues suitable to enable having a separate polling station for the northern half of it. This wouldn't be the case in other parts of the city. The process used for developing the submission was fair and inclusive of all councillors. Up until late January it looked like all councillors would agree with the Council's proposals. But there was a sudden change in the position of the Labour Group. At one of the workshop meetings between councillors and officers, a Labour councillor insisted that a certain area of his ward needed to stay in that ward because it was an area where they got a strong vote from! There was a pause and an officer said "Cllr X, I don't think that is something the Boundary Commission can take into account." In February the Labour Group Leader and Deputy approached the Conservative Group Leader and Deputy asking for a meeting to present their proposals for new ward boundaries. The meeting took place on 11th February at the Council House. Labour said that their boundary proposals had been drawn in such a way as to minimise the number of seats that the Liberal Democrats and the Reform Party could get. They had used their data on historic voting intentions to isolate the areas where a majority of people voted either Liberal Democrat or Reform, leaving those parties with minimal presence on the Council. We therefore ask you to totally disregard submissions that support the Labour Party proposals. We believe having 3 members per ward is the most effective way to get high quality representation for residents as they benefit from the combined knowledge, experience & wisdom of 3 people. It's also best for members to work in teams of 3 as it helps with work/life balance & the workload can be shared according to how much time each member has available. If 1 is ill or on holiday there are still 2 to do the work. 3 member wards are therefore the most resilient, win-win solution.

**Uploaded Documents:**

None Uploaded