Brighton and Hove City Council

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This map is somewhat of a curate's egg, there are some major positives and major negatives versus the current map with regards to representing communities. In my response I've listed what I consider some positive changes, neutral changes/missed opportunities and negative changes - broadly the positive changes are more numerous but the negative changes more impactful. I then follow up with a series of suggested changes which look viable population-wise, though the lack of a tool to check the population by voting district makes it difficult for me to be 100% sure the numbers work. Positives: + Rottingdean & West Saltdean, Kemptown & Marina and East Brighton are wards much more representative of their actual communities than the current wards in the area. They are as near perfect as the arithmetic allows. + Queen's Park, Hanover & Elm Grove, Stanmer and the new Moulsecoomb & Bevendean wards are also broadly well drawn. The exact boundaries between Queen's Park and the new Kemptown ward (and Hanover & Elm Grove) aren't ideal but are fine given numerical constraints. + In itself the Preston Park ward is an improvement and is less imperfect than its prior incarnation. + Similarly Fiveways is, in itself, a sensible new ward. + Patcham & Hollingbury is barely changed geographically but the new name represents the area better. Neutral: ~ Wish, Westbourne and Goldsmid were badly drawn wards on the prior map and remain so (I used to live in Goldsmid, there is no coherency to the ward whatsoever and it represents no particular community). The problems with Wish and Westbourne are probably not possible to resolve within population limits (at least under the current voting system - they would combine into a good 4-member Aldrington ward in a single transferable vote setup). However it's a shame to see Goldsmid neither majorly reworked nor abolished entirely, this is a golden opportunity to replace the ward with something less inappropriate. ~ Central Hove should extend eastward to St James' Road and Palmeira Avenue - this is a pre-existing oddity but it's baffling that these areas have been assigned to Regency without any adjustment around this area. ~ The new Seven Dials, St Peter's & North Laine trades a bad boundary at the centre of Seven Dials for a bad boundary at London Road. Very much a lateral move for an already slightly incoherent ward. Negatives: - Brunswick and Adelaide is removed altogether. I can see the thinking behind this decision but think it is a very poor call for multiple reasons: 1) It is a distinctive area of the city all by itself and its own community, albeit slightly differing from the current ward boundaries, in a way that many extant wards are not. As stated before Goldsmid is a more natural candidate for abolition and B&A is actually one of the better drawn wards on the current map. 2) The new Regency ward will be very incoherent, stretching from Hove town centre to The Lanes, very different areas of town. The current Regency is already quite bad in this regard, especially with it dividing Seven Dials. The new boundaries resolve that problem but introduce a worse problem with Regency in its place. 3) Although personally I, as a resident, don't think Brunswick "feels" like Hove it is, nevertheless, formally part of it and the boundary between the two towns of the city should be reflected on the ward map, as it is in the city's name. This is an extremely negative change and the worst proposed change on the map by some margin. - Westdene & Hove Park is a sprawling, messy and incoherent ward, the extreme ends of the ward have very little in common. It also crosses the Brighton-Hove boundary, which I don't think is appropriate for the city. - With the exception of Boundary Road, which is genuinely on the border between Portslade and Aldrington, major commercial streets should not form the boundary between wards, as they often act as the centre for a community. In this light I view London Road acting as a ward boundary with some confusion, as it is the centre of its own area of town. - Central Hove has a strangely arbitrary northern border. This is the most minor complaint I have by some distance and appears to be necessitated by population changes. I have more positive things to say than negative but, aside from Central Hove's boundaries, the negatives are all very strong. On balance both the prior map and these proposals are poor representations of the geography of the city but, in a binary choice, the current map is less flawed. The east of the city is much improved but these improvements are offset by negative and, as a

local, frankly strange choices for the city centre and Hove. With this in mind I have proposed a set of major changes, as I don't think minor changes can salvage these proposals. This results in a deeply imperfect map that, nevertheless, represents the city more appropriately than either the current map or these new proposals. These may require conversion of two member wards to three member wards or vice-versa: 1) Round Hill absorbs the New England Quarter (rough borders are north of Cheapside, east of the train tracks inclusive of the back of the station and also absorbing areas south of the railway viaduct from Preston Park) and is renamed to "Round Hill & London Road" or "Round Hill & New England Quarter". 2) The map retains Brunswick & Adelaide, transferring streets west of St John's Road and Palmeira Avenue to Central Hove, in turn absorbing the area east of Palmeira Avenue and south of Davigdor Road. This second change isn't ideal but is likely necessary for numbers. 3) Westbourne absorbs areas of Goldsmid west of Goldstone Villas, with minor adjustments. 4) Central Hove incorporates the area between Goldstone Villas and Denmark Villas (with or without the train station) and all remaining areas in Goldsmid south of Cromwell/Davigdor Road. 4) The remainder of Goldsmid is apportioned to Hove Park. 5) Hove Park retains its current northern border, marking the border with Brighton. Rearrangements in the city centre are difficult without more precise tools to quantify populations - so with an awareness that boundaries may need shifted slightly from what I have said to make numbers add up: 6) Regency loses the area east of West Street to St. Peter's ward but gains the regions east of Queen's Road, south of Guildford Road and Albert Road and Clifton Hill (broadly Montpelier and some station adjacent areas). It may also warrant a rename, as the area(s) the ward encompasses are not referred to as "Regency" by locals (unlike some regions within it such as, say, Montpelier). 7) St. Peter's gains the Prestonville area from Preston Park (which would be acceptable in either ward) - the built up area west of the train line and below Highcroft Villas. It is renamed "St Peter's, North Laine & The Lanes". 8) Preston Park, in turn, absorbs parts of the Patcham & Hollingbury ward south of Old Farm Road and The Deneway. 9) With Westdene now too small for its own ward and Preston Park under quota these are combined into "Preston Park and Withdean". This, sadly, undoes the improvement to the Preston Park ward and produces something similar to the current Withdean ward but allows for much bigger improvements across the map. 10) If numbers allow minor changes to the boundary Queen's Park ward and Kemptown & Marina could be made - transferring the area east of Rock Gardens and south of the Eastern Road to the latter. This would be an improvement but a very minor one. I fully expect this consultation is geared up to only make minor changes to the proposed map, however I do hope I'm wrong in this regard as the current proposals are severely flawed and need major changes to produce an electoral geography that adequately reflects the city's communities. I hope it is still possible for major changes to be implemented - they are needed.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded