Council Response to Alternative LGBCE Draft Recommendations for the Eastern Areas of the Borough

Introduction

The Council welcomes the opportunity to comment upon the alternative recommendations the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBCE) for England has put forward in its latest consultation. The following observations have been drawn together from comments made by Councillors in an internal consultation exercise that was open to all. Councillors also have the option of responding to the LGBCE directly by the 29 March deadline.

The Council would like to thank the LGBCE for taking on board concerns expressed about the initial recommendations, in particular the two very large (geographically) 2-member wards originally proposed for the Eastern side of the Borough.

The observations have been structured in line with the LGBCE Draft Recommendations to ensure the Council's comments reflect the proposals made by the LGBCE in this stage of the consultation. Comments from Councillors aim to highlight where the proposals do and do not reflect local community identities as well as practical geography on the ground as well as taking account of the LGBCE three main considerations when carrying out a review:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

South Eastern Rushcliffe

Nevile and Langar

Current: 1 councillor
Proposed: 1 councillor
Anticipated number of electors 2027: 2,678
Variance from the average 2027: 10%

The Council and those Councillors responding to this additional consultation exercise are pleased to see the entirety of Langar cum Barnstone parish within a single Borough ward, Nevile and Langar. We understand that, to maintain numbers, the parish of Owthorpe moves to Cropwell ward and do not believe this impacts negatively on affected communities at a local level.

Cropwell

Current: 1 councillor
Proposed: 1 councillor
Anticipated number of electors 2027: 2,260
Variance from the average 2027: -7%

The Council is pleased to see the Cropwell ward reinstated as a single member ward under the alternative recommendations for the Eastern side of the Borough.

The Council understands that the LGBCE is proposing to move the parish of Owthorpe from the Nevile and Langar ward to the Cropwell ward to assist the achievement of electoral equality in the Nevile and Langar ward following the introduction of the entirety of Langar cum Barnstone to that ward. The Council supports this arrangement. Councillors have expressed conflicting views on this arrangement with one seeing close community links between Owthorpe and Cropwell Bishop, and another believing there are stronger links with Colston Bassett in the Nevile and Langar ward.

In addition, the Council supports the decision to treat the entirety of Upper Saxondale as one community and, whilst it understands that better electoral equality can be achieved by moving the northern boundary of the Cropwell ward southwards to include this community in the Newton ward, it would like to stress the strength of community alignment Upper Saxondale has with parts of the existing Cropwell ward.

North Eastern Rushcliffe

Bingham North

Current: redrawing of the boundaries within Bingham to reach more equitable electoral representation
Proposed: 2 councillors
Anticipated number of electors 2027: 4,992
Variance from the average 2027: 3%

The Council supports the further expansion of the North Bingham ward to include Car Colston, Scarrington and Screveton parishes to facilitate good electoral equality for neighbouring wards and does not see any particular difficulties in terms of local governance and community identity in this area.

Bingham South

Current: redrawing of the boundaries within Bingham to reach more equitable electoral representation
Proposed: 2 councillors
Anticipated number of electors 2027: 4,745
Variance from the average 2027: -2%

The proposals for the Bingham South ward remain as presented in the original consultation.

Cramner

Current: 1 councillor
Proposed: 1 councillor
Anticipated number of electors 2027: 2,670
Variance from the average 2027: 10%

The Council notes that the Cramner ward has been reinstated following the initial consultation period; however, much is changed under the new proposals. The Aslockton and Whatton-in-the-Vale parishes have been retained and joined with Granby, Elton-on-the-Hill, Orston, Thoroton and Flawborough facilitating the distribution of single member wards in the Eastern part of the Borough as requested in the initial consultation. The Council is supportive of this arrangement but would ask for the LGBCE to refer to Sutton cum Granby as ‘Sutton cum Granby’ and not as Granby – the electors in Sutton are rightly proud of their hamlet.

East Bridgford

Current: 1 councillor
Proposed: 1 councillor
Anticipated number of electors 2027: 2,645
Variance from the average 2027: 9%

The Council welcomes the reduced geographical size of the new East Bridgford ward which has enabled a single member ward to be created. The Council recognises that the new East Bridgford ward comprises East Bridgford, Kneeton, Flintham, Sibthorpe, Shelton and Hawksworth parishes.

Newton

Current: no existing councillor
Proposed: 1 councillor
Anticipated number of electors 2027: 2,278
Variance from the average 2027: -6%

The Council understands the creation of a new ward for Newton which combines the community of Upper Saxondale, and the northern section of Cropwell Butler parish, in a ward with Saxondale, Newton and Shelford parishes. Councillors who responded to the consultation internally were split with regard to the inclusion of Upper Saxondale and Saxondale within this ward. Some were in favour, but others were concerned about the links between communities as a result of the A52 forming a very real geographical barrier on the ground, a lack of shared community identity and no real shared activities between the communities.

The Council has concerns about the proposed boundary dividing Cropwell Butler parish, the only newly proposed boundary in this area which is not coterminous with a parish boundary, and the impact of this on local parishes, but understands why this has been done.