

Northumberland County Council

Personal Details:

Name:

E-mail:

Postcode:

Organisation Name: Northumberland County Council Green Party group

Comment text:

On behalf of Northumberland County Council's Green Party group, I would like to suggest that Alnwick remains a two-councillor ward and that the multi-councillor ward solution is considered for towns such as Hexham and Berwick. Alnwick town is too large to be represented by a single councillor, but there is no way of splitting it that wouldn't divide communities. Northumberland County Council's proposal, for example, splits Alnwick's historic heart from the rest of the town, splits shopping areas from residential areas and puts all primary care and leisure services into one ward. The current two-councillor arrangement, however, provides for convenient and effective local government, because the two councillors are required to work together on behalf of the community. This gives residents better representation, combines the strengths of the two individual councillors and results in better decision making. Hexham is currently slightly too small for three councillors, but slightly too large for two. Whether Hexham becomes a multi-councillor ward or not, my suggested solution would be to remove Acomb from Hexham and place it in the Humshaugh ward, making Hexham small enough to become a two-councillor town and helping to bring Humshaugh's electoral numbers up. Acomb is connected to the Humshaugh ward by the river (the North Tyne), the main road (the A6079) and the old Border Counties railway, and the residents don't consider the village to be part of Hexham (although it's close to it). If the Humshaugh ward then finds itself with too many electors, the northern part of the ward could be moved into the Bellingham ward, helping to bring the elector numbers in that ward up. The Birtley parish probably has more in common with the Bellingham ward (in both social and landscape terms) than the Wark parish, but the Birtley parish probably doesn't have enough electors to bring the Bellingham ward's elector numbers up sufficiently. Consideration should therefore be given to moving the Wark parish into the Bellingham ward. I would, however, have some concerns about whether the residents feel that Wark parish shares a sufficiently close identity with the rest of the Bellingham ward. Close attention would need to be paid to the consultation responses of those living within the parish.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded