

West Northamptonshire

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Comment text:

Related subject: DCCA elected members

Please see uploaded report

Attached Documents:

- DCCA Boundary consultation May 2023.docx

Daventry Constituency Conservative Association

Caring & Campaigning for our community

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Date: 12th May 2023
Association: DCCA
Chairman: Daniel Lister
Vice Chair Political: Jo Gilford (Report author)
Subject: New electoral arrangements for West Northamptonshire Council March 2023

1 Executive Summary:

- 1.1 This report informs the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBC) boundary review into the ward boundaries in West Northamptonshire.
- 1.2 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements include:
 - How many councillors are needed.
 - How many electoral wards there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
 - How many councillors should represent each ward.
- 1.3 In April 2021 a new West Northamptonshire Unitary Authority was created. The LGBC review is being carried out to ensure that:
 - The wards in West Northamptonshire are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
 - The number of electors represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the district.
- 1.4 Following an initial period of consultation, the LGBC has commenced a second period of consultation following analyse of submissions received with a view to publishing final recommendations in August 2023.
- 1.5 The review is now consulting on a pattern of 35 wards, four more than there are now with 76 members, 17 fewer than there are now.
- 1.6 This report comments only on the wards that fall within the DCCA area.



2 Background:

- 2.1 The LGBC recommendations are based on how many electors there will most likely be in 2028 with the aim to create wards with as near as possible with the same number of electors represented by each member as close to the average as possible.

| | 2028 |
|---|---------|
| Electorate of West Northamptonshire | 325,510 |
| Number of councillors | 76 |
| Average number of electors per councillor | 4,283 |

- 2.2 The LGBC recommendations in total for WNC are:

- Thirteen three-member wards
- Fifteen two-member wards
- Seven one-member wards

- 2.3 The LGBC consider that their draft recommendations will provide for a generally good level of electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests.

- 2.4 DCCA falls within the boundary of WNC and is responsible for managing the election process for 24 of their currently elected members. These 24 elected members belong to eight three-member wards.

- 2.5 The DCCA proposal was that:

- 2,148 electorate were transferred to Wards in the neighbouring South Northamptonshire Conservative Association
- The number of wards within the DCCA area is increased from eight to nine
- The elected members be reduced from 24 to 20

- 2.6 The LGBC recommendation for the wards that fall within the DCCA area is there will be a total of 9 wards and 17 members:

- Two three-member wards
- Four two-member wards
- Three one-member wards

- 2.7 Campion Ward (two-member ward) will move to the neighbouring association of South Northants conservatives

- 2.8 There is currently a NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BOUNDARY REVIEW also being undertaken. Within this review falls the ward of EARLS BARTON.

- 2.9 This review will now see Earls Barton Ward residents residing in the DCCA constituency. Previously the ward was mainly within the Boundary of the Wellingborough Association. Therefore, as DCCA will now encompass the entire ward, the suggestion will be that DCCA now take on responsibility for selection of members within this ward.

| Parish | Ward | Number of councillors | Variance 2028 |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Daventry Town | Daventry North | 2 | 8% |
| | Daventry South | 3 | 6% |
| North and North-central Parishes | Braunston & Crick | 2 | 6% |
| | Brixworth | 1 | 2% |
| | Long Buckby | 2 | -6% |
| | Moulton | 3 | 0% |
| | Naseby | 1 | 10% |
| | Walgrave & East Farndon | 1 | -4% |
| Southwest | Woodford & Weedon | 2 | 4% |

3 Consultation

3.1 **DAVENTRY** – Upon review of the LBCG proposal, we concur with the creation of two Daventry based wards reflecting the North and South as opposed to the previous East and West configuration and agree they will reflect community identities while allowing a good level of electoral equality for both the town and the surrounding wards.

3.2 **NORTH AND NORTH-CENTRAL PARISHES** – Upon review of the proposal, we agree ‘in the main’ with the recommendations and have made no further recommendations with regard to the wards of: Naseby: Moulton: Walgrave & East Farndon and were pleased to see the Brixworth becoming a new one-member ward coterminous with Brixworth Parish Council.

3.3 However we ask that further consideration be given to the ward of Long Buckby:

- **Braunston & Crick** - Watford be located within the Long Buckby Ward. A large part of Watford Parish is linked to Long Buckby by Murcott. Watford Parish associates itself with Long Buckby and has little by way of connection or shared issues with the areas covered by Braunston and Crick. Those in Watford use the GP surgery within Long Buckby and attend both infant and junior schools within Long Buckby. The Parish Council have stated their strong desire to retain links with Long Buckby.

- **Brixworth** – West Haddon be located within the Long Buckby Ward. As with Watford, the Parish Council have stated a strong desire to maintain links with Long Buckby. West Haddon residents use the GP surgery within Long Buckby and make use of the services such as the Library within Long Buckby. Transport services serve West Haddon via Long Buckby. Although having their own school, many children from Long Buckby attend West Haddon Primary and vice versa.

Should this mean the total population variance is greater than the stated maximum variance, we would be content to see Harleston Manor CP which has no links to Long Buckby located into Duston or Campion Wards.

- 3.4 **SOUTHWEST** – We note the significant differing proposals for this challenging area and were pleased to see that LGBC had based its draft recommendations on our proposal and created a two-member Woodford & Weedon ward.
- 3.5 We also welcomed the opportunity to reflect on comments as to whether creating two single councillor wards, one looking to Woodford and the other looking to Weedon Bec, would better serve the communities in this area.
- 3.6 After careful consideration and consultation with the current Ward Councillors and Parish Councils we would propose that the Ward is not split into two single member wards but remains a two-member ward.
- 3.7 As part of our consultation we also liaised with Preston Capes Parish Council who considered there to be more community links with the Woodford and Weedon Ward than the proposed relocation of them into the Silverstone & Rural South Ward and therefore request consideration also be given to moving them back into the Woodford & Weedon Ward.
- 3.8 As stated in our initial consultation comments the proposed Woodford & Weedon Ward would group together the larger villages of Weedon Bec and Woodford Halse with neighbouring villages that share good transport links and common characteristics.
- 3.9 Splitting the ward into two single wards would result in the scenario of a single member representing the views of a large village whilst balancing the needs of adjacent sparsely populated areas in surrounding parishes whose needs are different. By having two members this conflict will be managed better.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our proposals:

| Ward | Detail |
|-------------------------|--|
| DAVENTRY NORTH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per LGBC recommendation |
| DAVENTRY SOUTH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per LGBC recommendation |
| BRAUNSTON & CRICK | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remains a two-member Ward as proposed Watford is moved to the Long Buckby Ward |
| BRIXWORTH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remains a one-member Ward as proposed West Haddon is moved to the Long Buckby Ward |
| LONG BUCKBY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remains a two-member Ward The Ward encompasses Watford & West Haddon Harleston Manor CP is moved into Duston or Campion ward |
| MOULTON | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per LGBC recommendation |
| NASEBY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per LGBC recommendation |
| WALGRAVE & EAST FARNDON | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per LGBC recommendation |
| WOODFORD & WEEDON | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remains a two-member ward The Ward encompasses Preston Capes |

