

West Northamptonshire

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Comment text:

The Review Officer (West Northamptonshire)

by email toThe RO
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
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By national standards and measures WNC is a rural, sparsely populated area. where rural population density is some 90% lower than the urban wards of Northampton.

I believe the citizens of Preston Capes have achieved and maintain successful models of mixed /urban rural living.

However, success in the context of such a small community requires effective, reciprocal services and partnerships. We need to continually identify and develop best practice in all aspects of work and play/.

Our Council plays a vital number of roles in helping our businesses and communities thrive, but can only be truly effective if it is itself motivated

and structured to deliver excellence. Co-ordinated restructuring of council wards which reflects the will of the people is an essential enabling requirement.

This review follows closely on the heels of the changes brought about by the Structural Order. Getting it right is fundamental to realising the benefits provided by the consequent challenges and opportunities.

Sense of place is important especially to rural communities. Any proposal which disrupts Council supported business is not viable - the fundamental challenge to the Council should be to identify and build upon what works best.

From the Preston Capes perspective there needs to be confirmation that the most appropriate councillors will be available to offer their services.

The proposals would not facilitate or deliver effective local government services.

But why change when maintaining the status quo is what is actually required?

The draft Recommendations have identified the average number of electors per councillor currently works out as 3,936 and in five years with a 9% uplift at 4,283.

Woodford Halse Census 2021 gives 4,284 for 2028.

A number 10% lower, to allow for electors say, gives 3,855

Preston Capes census 2011 is 216 (although the adjacent parish hamlet of Canons' Ashby is included in Preston Capes, so likely to be 150 electors in 2011, which with a 9% uplift provides a 2028 figure of 164.

The combined figure for Preston Capes and Woodford is therefore 4,020.

My recommendation is to combine Preston Capes with Woodford Halse with NO extra Councillor required. The boundaries of both parishes should remain unchanged.

There could be some headroom added, say from Charwelton to bring the figure closer to its perceived limit.

To provide some feel for Woodford Halse I have added a few descriptions of some of their affiliations, as follows...

There exists strong links and contact with Woodford Halse village , (3 miles) literally going back centuries when Swan farm was 'The Welsh Road' where the Drovers rested before descent on London markets.

Today Preston Capes juniors attend school in Woodford by school bus if required.

Shops include the necessary fundamentals and there is a variety of restaurants, and a pub

A veterinary practice provides a small animal clinic.

Nearby Daventry (7 miles) provides all that would be expected of a market town , including 3 supermarkets and variety of shops and entertainment.

Matters concerning Highways and other significant infrastructure would be conducted with the representative councillor, as at present.

This completes my Submission upon the Draft Recommendations [REDACTED]

14th May 2023

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Attached Documents:

None attached