

Submission from: **Aylesbury Liberal Democrats**

To: **Local Government Boundary Commission for England**

Re: **Warding arrangements for the Buckinghamshire Unitary Authority**

Date : **April 3rd 2022**

BACKGROUND

This note sets out the reasoning and relevant factors for recommending a new ward pattern in Buckinghamshire. It uses evidence from the Aylesbury region. It further suggests a potential ward structure in Aylesbury.

Last year the commission announced it was minded to recommend a 98-seat size of council. The Liberal Democrats welcome this as it aligns with our manifesto proposal. We believe this is an effective and efficient size of council.

We support 49 wards across the county consisting of two members per ward. We have looked at the experience of our elected councillors in the current Unitary Council and the unique demands and challenges that each ward has and how best residents can be represented by their councillors.

We have determined that with the current workload of a Unitary councillor that the better option is to have two members that can support residents as well as being able to take an active role within the councils committees and meetings throughout the year.

We have further considered that the role of a councillor is one that should be representative of the community that they serve. We feel that this can be done better by ensuring that the workload is shared across two councillors per ward, and that anyone that wants to be a councillor, but has commitments beyond the role, can do so.

We have also liaised with residents on the doorstep to gain their view on the services that they rely on and where they consider themselves to be in relation to the current Aylesbury wards. The opinion of residents has firmly been that

147 councillors is too many and that as Liberal Democrats we have worked to represent this in our campaigning and in our roles as elected councillors.

Within the county there are a number of areas with challenging demands that require a team of councillors to be able to work with one another to resolve issues with and for residents. A single member may find the role challenging to be able to keep up with a demanding workload, and bearing in mind that we would be supportive of councillors being able to remain in employment as well as satisfying the role of being a councillor.

We are generally satisfied with the wards that are currently held within Aylesbury, however we would ask the commission to take into consideration bonds between areas that are not currently in the Aylesbury Unitary seats and consider that there maybe a strong argument that some areas are better served being within the boundaries of seats within the Aylesbury area.

We have primarily looked at the current wards of; Aylesbury North, Aylesbury North West, Aylesbury West, Aylesbury South West, Aylesbury South East, and Aylesbury East. These wards cover the current Aylesbury town area and residents are reliant upon the services offered within the town. However we feel that there are areas that are also closely linked geographically that have a strong level of reliance on the town, and services within the areas outside of the current Aylesbury wards that are used by residents within those wards.

Berryfields, Buckingham Park, Watermead

Berryfields is a development area on the North West of the town which is connected to the town by the A41 and the Aylesbury Vale Parkway railway station. Currently residents in this ward are in the Waddesdon and Stone ward. We feel that the ward has a stronger link with the Aylesbury wards than it does with Waddesdon and Stone. This is owing to the provision of the Aylesbury Vale Academy school, that is in Berryfields, is a key provider of secondary education for residents within the current Aylesbury wards.

The GP services offered to residents living in the Berryfields estate area are currently situated within the Aylesbury North West ward and the catchment area for the surgery shows that here; [Practice Area Map - Meadowcroft Surgery](#). The new surgery opening in the summer of 2022 will cover the Berryfields and

Watermead area as well as parts of Aylesbury North West and Aylesbury North. The provision of medical services being linked to an area that a local representative serves is a vital part of the role of serving and delivering to local communities.

Buckingham Park and Watermead estates are established developments adjacent to the Aylesbury North West and Aylesbury North wards and currently they sit within the Wing ward. The residents have a strong connection with Aylesbury and are service users of Aylesbury. The catchment area for secondary pupils is the Aylesbury Vale Academy in the Stone and Waddesdon ward (Berryfields).

We feel that the connection between residents and these services should indicate that they are closely linked with Aylesbury town and arguably should be brought into the existing wards within the town area. As well as the local amenities that residents of Berryfields, Buckingham Park, and Watermead being situated within Aylesbury and not in Stone and Waddesdon or Wing.

Aylesbury South West and South East boundary issues

Currently the Aylesbury South West and South East wards share a part of its ward with Stoke Mandeville Parish Council. The area that sits in Stoke Mandeville is directly connected to the Hawkslade ward on Aylesbury Town Council (Unitary ward South West) and Mandeville and Elm Farm Town Council ward (within the South East Unitary ward). The maps in appendices 1 and 2, illustrate the issue where the ward is split. Issues that this causes is that as a part of Stoke Mandeville parish it crosses the borders of two community boards. We feel that it would be beneficial to the residents of these areas that they were taken into the Hawkslade and Mandeville & Elm Farm wards and not be a part of the Stoke Mandeville Parish. The closest Doctors surgery to the area is the Mandeville surgery. The closest secondary school is the Mandeville school ([Mandeville School Catchment Area Map](#)), both of which lie within Aylesbury South West ward

Fairford Leys

Fairford Leys is a relatively new but established area within the Aylesbury West ward. It is closely linked to the Aylesbury Town Council wards of Oxford Road and Walton Court. It is its own parish of Coldharbour. Unlike the areas

mentioned above within Aylesbury South West, the Fairford Leys development does sit within the Aylesbury community board area and therefore it is part of the funding and project process as with other wards within Aylesbury. Health provision in the area is covered by the Whitehill surgery and serves areas across Aylesbury town as shown here; [Practice Area Map - Whitehill Surgery](#). The catchment area Secondary school is Mandeville School; [Mandeville School Secondary Catchment Map](#). We would ask that the current position of Fairford Leys remains in the Aylesbury West ward and as is.

Aylesbury Town Centre

Aylesbury Town centre lies within the Aylesbury North ward. It currently covers a large area of the centre of the town from Walton Road to Oxford road. The area has seen a large development of office to residential properties with further conversions of notable amounts being planned. Whilst we have no immediate concerns about the numbers within this area and the lack of health and education provision, we are mindful of the developments and the demand that this may place on services outside of the parish ward and the Unitary area.

Aston Clinton, Bierton, Kingsbrook development

Appendix 3 shows the outline of the Aston Clinton and Bierton Unitary Council ward. We feel that the ward is oversized and that Aston Clinton could be grouped with Wendover, which it has more connections to through Secondary School education with Wendover than it does with Bierton. The closest catchment school for Aston Clinton is John Colet School, Wendover.

The road connections to Bierton would require travel through Aylesbury wards. We feel that the Kingsbrook development and Bierton should be absorbed into Aylesbury. As previously mentioned earlier in this document about Watermead, Kingsbrook will have a closer association with Watermead through Health provision. Bierton is an area that sits on the North East of Aylesbury and has direct links with Aylesbury East and North Unitary wards.

Stoke Mandeville and Wendover Unitary ward

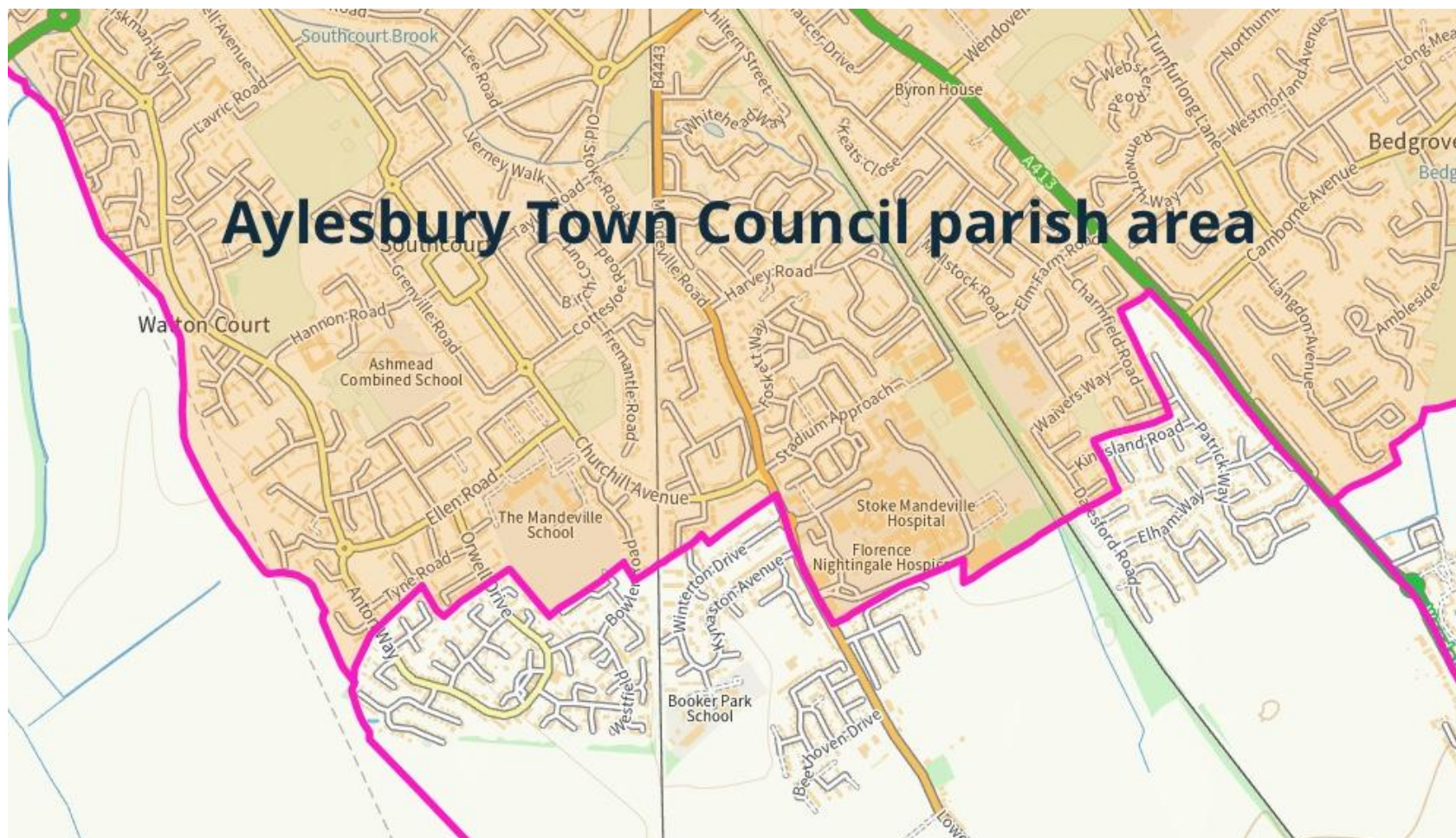
Although we have discussed adding the Aston Clinton area to the Stoke Mandeville and Wendover ward, we also feel that the ward itself is too large geographically and that it is not a representative ward across its large area. We would welcome the area that is currently within the South West and South East

Unitary wards being made part of them. We would balance that loss with addition of the Aston Clinton area, which as we have discussed in this document, has a closer relationship to the ward than the area currently within the parish boundaries of Stoke Mandeville.

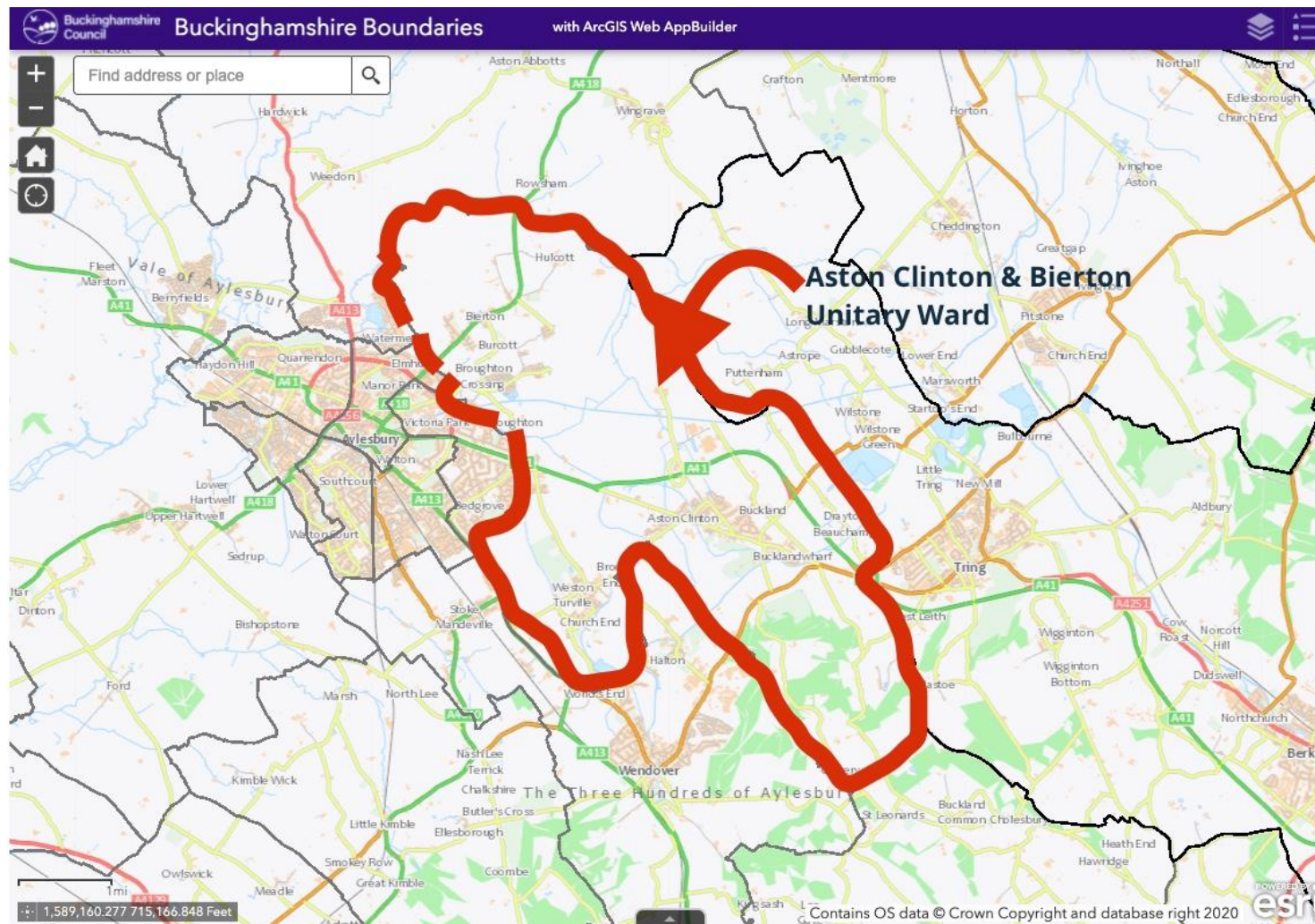
Appendix 1



Appendix 2



Appendix 3



Appendix 4

