

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

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Tunbridge Wells Liberal Democrat Councillor Group Boundary Commission Submission 2022 Part 1

Introduction: The Tunbridge Wells Liberal Democrat Councillor Group believes the proposal set out in this document represents the best possible arrangements to meet the 3 key objectives of the review. Alongside this submission we have provided a high detail map which shows where we recommend the boundaries be placed. We have added additional notes where appropriate. As of time of submission, we did not have access to mapping software based on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's ("TWBC") forecast population figures for 2027. However, we have used our own mapping software based on current numbers, local knowledge and the 2027 elector forecasts provided by TWBC on a polling district level. We have tried to keep within 10% of the average figure for electors per councillor for each ward, as far as possible, whilst meeting the other two assessment criteria of the review. In the large majority of cases we have been able to achieve this and, with the exception of Capel, we do not believe that any ward exceeds or is below the target figure by more than 15%. With the exception of two wards, our plan adheres to the uniform pattern of 3 member wards. The proposed wards are listed below in alphabetical order. This submission is divided into 2 parts.

The Wards:

CAPEL Description: This ward remains the same as the existing Capel ward and matches the Capel parish. Our views on this reflect those of Capel Parish Council, which are laid out in a separate submission. We also believe that the anticipated construction of new homes (as per the Local Plan) in the ward will mean that it will very quickly reach the target number for electoral equality within the described boundaries. We consider the proposed solution preferable to the alternative (i.e. connecting Capel to another ward) because, as new houses are built, the combined ward would quickly have far more electors per councillor than the average, necessitating another visit from the Boundary Commission.

CULVERDEN Description: This ward mostly covers the existing Culverden ward, excluding part of the area near the town centre and the area surrounding St Johns Church. The ward would now include the Culverden Down area.

Community Identity: The Culverden neighbourhood is clearly identifiable, with sports facilities including Culverden Stadium, local shopping areas and primary schools (Bishops Down and the Wells Free). These sites provide a focus for community interaction through activities such as school fetes and community football matches. It is served by residents associations including Culverden RA, Royal Wells Park RA and Boyne Park RA, which engage with the community and reflect its views to TWBC and Kent County Council ("KCC") through dialogue with the ward councillors and the Town Forum. Roads in the areas reflect the community identity in their names, including Culverden Down/Road/Square/Park/Park Road.

Effective and Convenient Local Government: All parts of the ward are easily accessible on foot or bike, as well as the main road (the A26) having a bus route.

GOUDHURST AND HAWKHURST Description: This ward covers the parishes of Goudhurst, Hawkhurst and Sandhurst.

Community Identity: The villages of Goudhurst, Hawkhurst and Sandhurst are historic communities. Each is served by its own church and primary school. These sites provide a focus for community interaction through activities, such as the parish newsletter produced by St Nicholas' church in Sandhurst, that keeps people connected to important local events. Community activity and engagement is also undertaken by Goudhurst, Hawkhurst and Sandhurst parish councils: for example Goudhurst PC helps organise an annual Christmas Fair in the village and Hawkhurst PC maintains Copt Hall, which hosts the Hawkhurst Friendship Club, a social club for older people in the village community.

Effective and Convenient Local Government: The ward covers the parish council areas exactly. All parts of the ward can be reached by a short car journey.

NOTE: Because the ward follows the parish boundaries exactly, to get from Goudhurst to Hawkhurst it is necessary to briefly leave the ward, travelling via the Glassenbury road (B2085). To address this problem, we would also accept a warding pattern that included this road in the ward, even if that would mean a lesser degree of co-terminosity with the parishes.

HORSMONDEN AND LAMBERHURST Description: This ward covers the parishes of Lamberhurst, Horsmonden and, Brenchley and

Matfield. It also includes a small out-of-town estate on the edge of Paddock Wood. Community Identity: The villages of Lamberhurst, Horsmonden and, Brenchley and Matfield are historic communities. Each is served by its own church and hall and often its own primary school. These sites provide a focus for community interaction through hosting community groups like the Women's Institute in Matfield, the British Legion in Lamberhurst and Gentlemen's Breakfast Club in Horsmonden. Community activity and engagement is also undertaken by Lamberhurst, Horsmonden, Brenchley and Matfield parish councils, for example all of which have been working closely with local residents, through local briefings and consultations, to devise Neighbourhood Plans. Effective and Convenient Local Government: The ward largely covers the parish council areas, also including an out-of-town estate near the edge of Paddock Wood. All parts of the ward can be reached by a short car journey. PADDOCK WOOD Description: This ward mostly covers the Paddock Wood Town Council area, excluding the out-of-town estate covering Green Lane and the roads running off it. Community Identity: The town of Paddock Wood is a distinct town. It has its own Community Centre (currently being built, halls, sports facilities, churches and primary schools. These sites provide a focus for community interaction, for example the Wesley Centre hosts Heritage Paddock Wood, a group that collects and shares information about the history of the community. Community activity and engagement is also undertaken by Paddock Wood Town. Council, which carries out important tasks like providing meetings for the local community to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan and get updates on its progress. Effective and Convenient Local Government: All parts of the ward are easily accessible on foot or bike and its boundaries largely follow those of the Town Council area. PANTILES AND BROADWATER Description: This ward includes the whole of the existing Broadwater ward and most of the existing Pantiles and St Mark's ward, excluding High Street, Forest Road and part of Birling Road. Community Identity: There are a few clear neighbourhoods in this ward, including "The Village" near the Pantiles themselves, St Mark's, Showfields and Ramslye. The ward has recognizable churches at both ends, King Charles the Martyr near the Pantiles and St. Mark's in Broadwater Down. They provide a community focus through activities like men's groups, older people's groups and regular coffee mornings open to the public. The Showfields and Ramslye communities are also served by the Number One Community Trust centre, which provides a community cafe and community hall for hire. It is also served by a number of residents' associations and activist groups, such as the Farncombe RA and Residents Against Ramslye Development who engage with the community through activities like organising petitions and drafting collective responses to consultations. Effective and Convenient Local Government: All parts of the ward are easily accessible on foot or bike and bus routes connecting with the local Sainsbury's. PARK Description: This ward largely covers the existing Park ward, excluding the area north of Pembury Road and Calverley Road. It now includes the High Street, Forest Road, part of Birling Road and part of the area south of Church Road. Community Identity: There are several clear neighbourhoods in this ward, including Camden Park, Hawkenbury and the town centre. The communities benefit from a number of open spaces (including many of Tunbridge Wells' parks, from which the ward gets its name) and churches, which serve as hubs of the community. For example, St Peter's church holds frequent events for the whole community, for example the recent Spring gardening event with guest speakers from the local garden centre and a local greenkeeper. It is also served by local community groups like The Friends of Dunorlan Park and the Hawkenbury Village Association, who keep local people up to date on important community news through regular newsletters, and lobby TWBC and KCC on important local issues, such as maintaining funding for upkeep of important local green spaces. Effective and Convenient Local Government: All parts of the ward are easily accessible via bike or a short drive. PEMBURY Description: This ward covers the parish of Pembury plus Blackhurst Lane and Sandown Park off the A264 and the out-of-town Knights Wood estate. Community Identity: The village of Pembury is historic, predating Tunbridge Wells itself. It has its own churches, primary school, library and village hall. These sites provide a focus for community interaction. For example, the village hall hosts the Pembury Women's Institute and the Library hosts a "Knit n' Natter" craft and social group. Community activity and engagement is also undertaken by Pembury parish council, by, for example, by organising a survey for local people on the location of a new dog bin in the village. NOTE: The proposed ward also includes areas outside of the historic parish, but these are both in close proximity to Pembury, well connected by B-roads, and do not have an identity connected to other wards. Effective and Convenient Local Government: All parts of the ward are easily accessible via a short drive.

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