

Submission by [REDACTED], Resident, Former Councillor and Community Campaigner/Organiser.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to object to the Councils submission of proposed boundaries and to ask the commission to make revisions, in particular to Attleborough/, Camp Hill/St Marys, and Bedworth warding proposals.

Please note that in making this response, the Council is refusing to provide requested information by the 7th deadline so no historic maps can be provided or referenced. I have with limited photoshop skills tried to include some helpful maps. However, I was involved in the changes in 2002 and have done a lot of historical research in the past looking at the boundaries for a Parish Council for the area based on community identity.

I spoke against the proposals at Cabinet in the 12th of October 2022. I attach my speech in appendix C. I would ask that this is read and taken into consideration as part of this submission as it details my concerns, along with the cover letter and other comments in this document. While I will touch on some of my concerns in my submission, I felt that it would have been better for the Borough Council to put forward some suggestions and allow local community groups and residents to comment.

Due to the complex nature of proposals, the use of specialist software and there being no access to officer support, I am aware even the smallest change I propose below is near impossible for me to draw on a map without it impacting other wards and me having to redraw them. That is why specialist officers could have consulted the community and given consideration to our views.

I grew up in Bedworth where I am still involved in a number of community organisations and groups. My family all live there. I was a Councillor in Bedworth previously. I grew up in Poplar ward where I represented, so know it well and I love the rich diversity of the area. I know the Hindu and Sikh community well and I am proud to have grown up in an area of cultural diversity. But most people wouldn't identify with a Gurdwara that is quite new comparatively and isn't used by the whole community. It is a bit like lumping together 'Christians'. across the town into one ward as there is a Church, they are all meant to go too because they identify as Christian, when in fact some are Baptists, some are Methodists, and some are Anglicans.

While I am a member of General Synod, religious buildings or racial profiling should not be the basis for ward boundaries and something more sinister is actually going on with these proposals which I discuss later.

I now live in Attleborough. I have also served as a Councillor for the area. As well as this I have worked across the area, including in particular in Camp Hill, where I stood as an unsuccessful candidate in the elections and had a Parish ministry in the Church of England for that Parish. I was also on the Board of Pride in Camp Hill and involved with regeneration plans and community development.

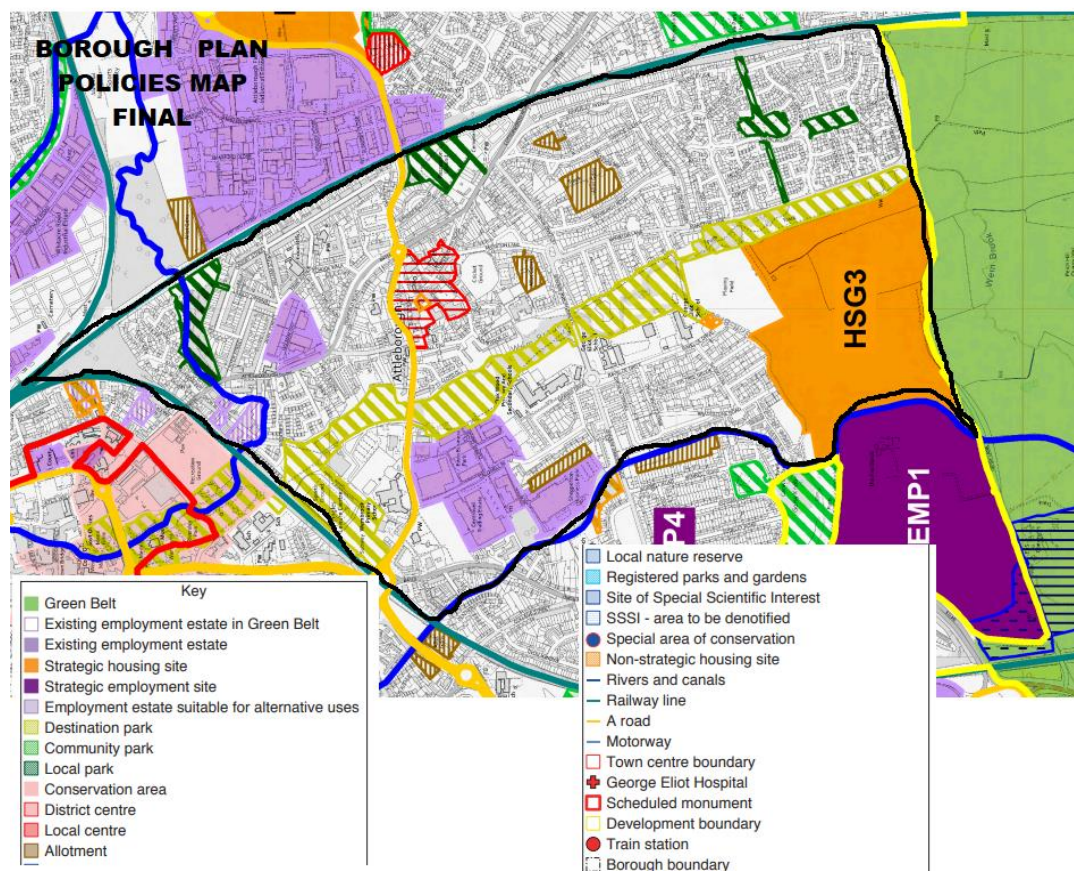
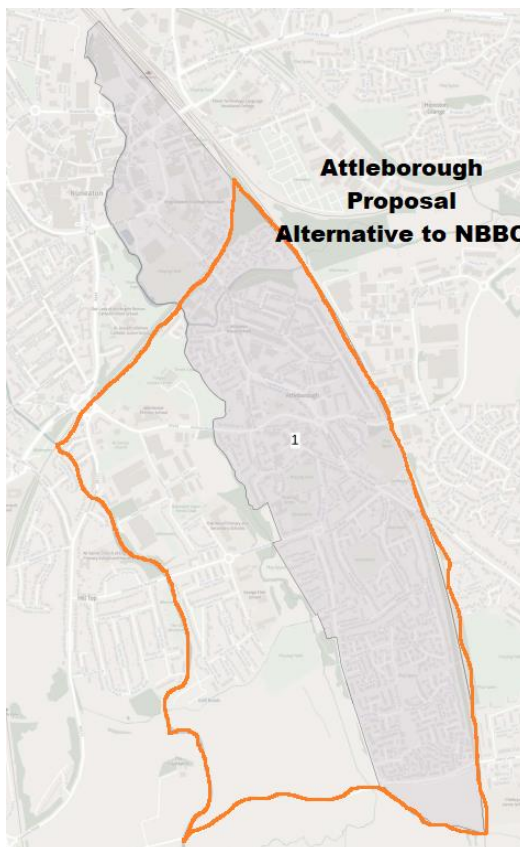
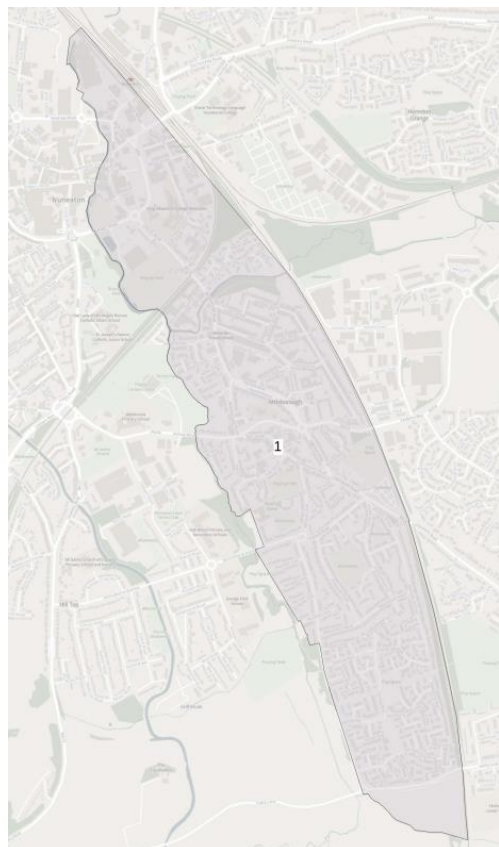
Please see below comments I submit per division. I appreciate this presents difficulties for the commission as I am unable to present an alternative plan for other areas impacted by the concerns I raise or suggested changes, but for reasons explained above, this is simply not possible for a lay person with no resources or access to information such as street lists or elector numbers, etc

I am especially concerned by the Council proposals because:

- These wards do not reflect our community identities well, are not effective areas for community representation and divide established communities or redefine them.
- Communities and even roads have been divided in a way that is messy, confusing and does not represent well the area.
- The use of Racial Profiling assuming a Gurdwara in Exhall is a basis to rip up historic communities as a high population of Sikh/Hindu communities, such an assumption is wrong.
- Concerns raised that this is a political proposal rather than in the interest of communities that boundaries should serve.
- The variation in electorate per Councillor between Bedworth Wards, showing there is flexibility in warding arrangements to better reflect the community they serve.

Yours, [REDACTED]

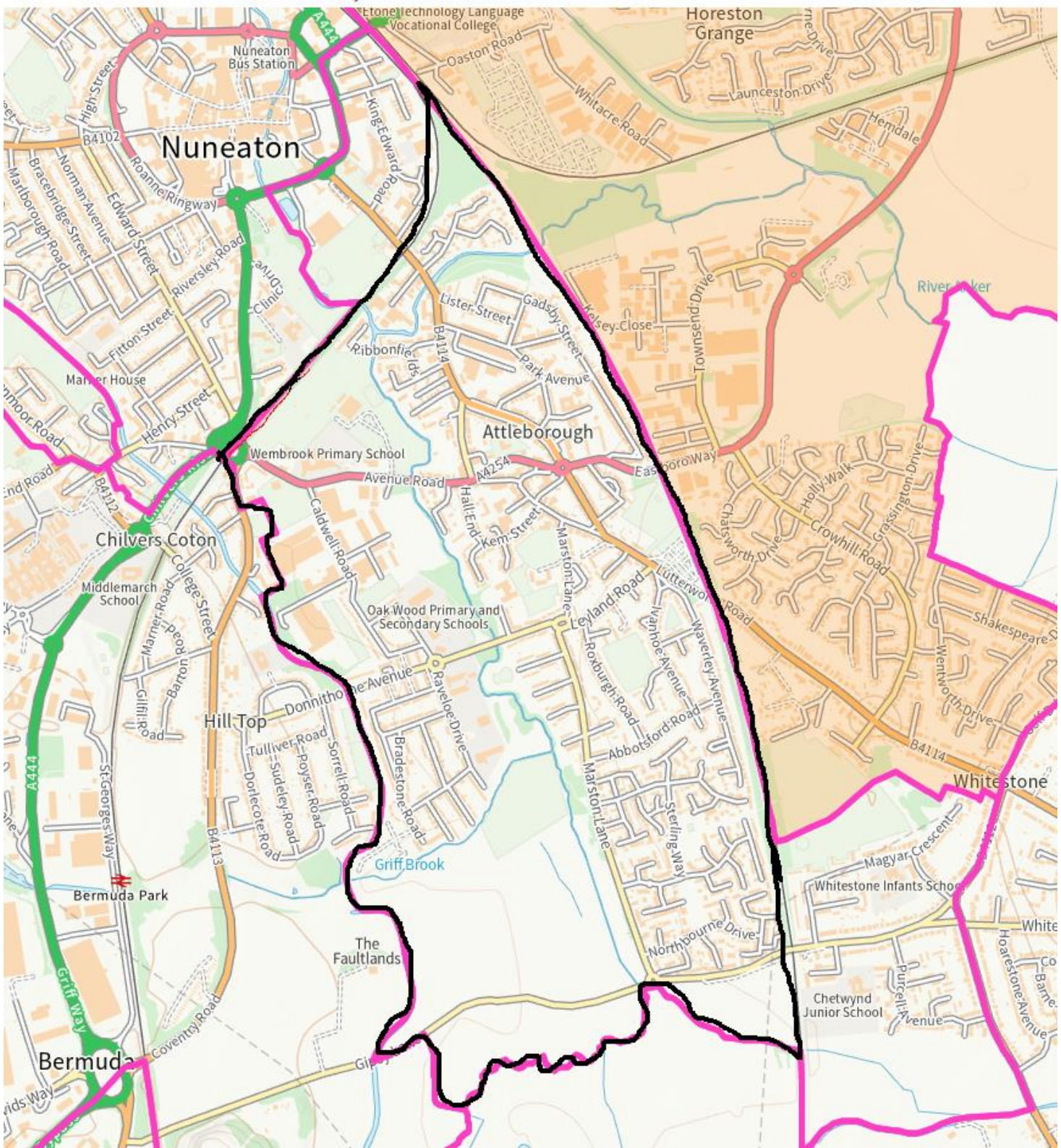
Proposed warding for Attleborough - Maps and new boundary which is effectively the other end of the County Division which is more related to the identity of Attleborough



ELECTION MAPS

NUNEATON EAST ED

County Electoral Divisions



Pink – Attleborough Division

Black – Mine and some residents' proposals for a new Attleborough District/Borough Ward

Proposed warding for Attleborough - Rationale:

I have set out above an alternative suggestion (shown on the right hand side) to that of the Borough Councils (shown on the left). My proposal sees to creation of a ward based on the Communities identity and on the actual rationale put forward by the Council. This is because the areas I have highlighted align more with what we know as Attleborough, where people live, work, and see their community. Community interests and identity are not reflected in the warding proposal. There are natural boundaries, shared interests, and links in the community itself have been ignored to create a ward that is about politics rather than people.

While the Rationale is sound in the NBBC proposal, in that it states, "Communities centre on Attleborough Green local amenity and shopping parade", the boundary/warding proposals do not bear this out.

The Attleborough County Council Division confirms this. While a district ward needs to be smaller than a County Division, the new proposed Attleborough ward taking in part of Nuneaton and not the area surrounding the district centre and the close knit community of Attleborough is problematic as the long strip created is hard to represent effectively and does not represent the community identity residents have.

The warding of Wembrook was always artificial when it was made in 2002. My proposal would see a reunification of Attleborough which shares shops, green spaces, schools, and other community spaces (community centre) as outlined in the copy of the Borough Plan outlined above.

The removal of Whitestone areas make sense as people there may not identify as Attleborough. The inclusion of Marson Lane in a new Attleborough is also welcome and forms part of the proposal I put forward too.

While it is difficult to show on the map above, there are walkways to and from Attleborough green in the proposed ward I have put forward. Its connected and where people shop or walk dogs or play or use community facilities or go to school or where they believe they live. We have a shared dog walking area, parks, shops, and it has its historic roots in Attleborough. There is no relationship between Nuneaton Town Centre and Attleborough communities, and anything beyond the former bridge or railway line on Attleborough Road into town. This goes back hundreds of years as the separating point between Attleborough and Nuneaton. Even before the railway line. In fact, it could be said originally Attleborough road led to Attleborough not formed part of the area and there has always been some debate if Caernarfon etc is part of Attleborough.

The debate really lay in which section of the County division is the locality of Attleborough and the heart of the area around the district centre. That is obviously the area I have outlined. The proposed section by the Borough Council is not and has never been known as or identified as Attleborough. Nor do those residents shop in the Attleborough Green district centre or connect to the community of Attleborough. They rightly identify as Nuneaton Town Centre and have their own community.

We have more in common with Caldwell, Red Deeps, or the new Stirling gate development than Oaston road. We share community events, services and people would say they are in Caldwell or Attleborough. I welcome the changes to Marston Lane and unification of Whitestone.

But what will the impact of including the town centre in Attleborough have on crime reporting or other community indicators and representing one community because the new Attleborough ward now seems to be spread over a long stretch of vastly different communities. Some positives are to being in Marston Lane and reunite Whitestone

I disagree with removing the area of gipsy lane and while it has no political advantage to put it in Attleborough were an independent or labour to stand, so they may be against it - it does serve the community better. I wonder if removing this is too sure up the Tory vote in what was the solid labour seat of Wem brook (taken in 2021 by the Tories).

These changes would be undermining the district centre of Attleborough not recognise it. Effectively Attleborough would find its main shopping centre would now be Nuneaton Town Centre.

The proposal brings together the community of Attleborough as it has always been known.

Unlike the Councils suggestion which is written by a new electoral officer and Councillors from outside the area with no public consultation. I have canvassed many people to ask their views about these boundaries.

Other comments of concern regarding other warding proposals by NBBC:

1. I received the message (in Appendix A) which shows the plan put forward by the Borough Council is gerrymandering and political in nature. I have been told this by a number of local sources, had people call and the message simply backs this up. I do not know if the Conservatives have put forward a separate plan. I have also not seen one from Labour or the Greens. The Cabinet meeting can be watched here where these boundaries were decided, and as you can tell there was little engagement with the boundaries. <https://youtu.be/c0yVfrvdSxo?t=8039>

2. The new boundaries do not represent community identity, cut through the middle of roads (not down a road but literally in half) and are based on how people vote (i.e., which party), where and how. It is data both main parties have.

There are areas joined together that have no community connection and in one case I highlight below there is even racial profiling.

3. There is a disparity between elector numbers showing there is slack to fix the issues I have raised in my submission.

4. Individual comments regarding wards

Woodlands and Mount Pleasant takes in some of Colly Croft when there is no need. It divides a community.

Woodlands also has more in common with Bedworth Heath.

Colly croft and Pine Tree

Colly croft doesn't include all of what is known as Colly croft, there is no justification for this.

Proposed Exhall and a replacement for Bedworth Heath and Poplar Wards

I represented poplar ward and grew up there.

The new proposed boundary is based on racial profiling

The cedars estate has more in common with Nicholas chamberlain school, the town centre and even across the road where Sainsbury's is and the black bank.

Rectory drive is in Exhall but has been excluded from the ward.

This new ward carves up what is already there bringing together areas that have no connection.

This will impact crime reporting and community forums and effective representation.

Where there may be an argument to have some part of Exhall in a new ward is heckly fields and what was St Giles school (recently renamed Exhall middle School). But either side of Coventry Road has always been very different communities.

Hawkesbury in an ideal world would have its own parish or ward as it has become a self-contained community with one exist and entrance. Surrounded by land or industry. Primary age children in Hawkesbury mostly attend schools in Coventry or used too as the school is just over the bridge from Hawkesbury.

Bedworth Park is shared by those in Poplar. As is the school and that side of the town. It has nothing on common with Bedworth heath.

Bedworth heath as an area has its own proud identity and history. It should retain its own ward. There is no justification for the kind of wars being designed to wrap around Bedworth. Other than political reasons.

Bedworth heath has no connection to the Poplars in York Avenue and Nicholas Chamberlain school.

Bedworth heath has more in common with Ash green and the Woodlands where children go to school, where people share shops and facilities.

Camp Hill having Cedar Road removed is quite worrying and while there was once a St Mary's ward back in the 70s, Cedar Road is definitely part of camp hill. The area is a departure from decades of established community identity that goes back from the development of the area to large projects around regeneration.

For the same concerns I raised with Attleborough, I am concerned about the dislocation of some parts of the community. Here we have some roads at the top of a hill far away from the community they are to join in St Marys.

I once stood in Camp Hill and lost to the BNP. I also worked there in Parish ministry. I know the area well. I suggest the boundary commission ask for information on pride in Camp Hill.

This is about removing some labour voting roads in a marginal seat. The rationale is poor, and Galley Common is an area of its own which should have its own identity.

The proposal of the name Griff and Coton does not identify with local residents. If unchanged the ward could be called Hilltop and Chilvers Coton. Though I have serious concerns about the proposed ward.

Heath and Black Bank

Heath and Black Bank have nothing in common and no local identity or shared facilities. This is a purely political move.

EXF is what has always been Exhall, more so than Hawkesbury.

Ash Green and Kersley should remain with that end of Exhall or go with Heath.

This proposal annexes what is traditionally Exhall, Grant Road, Rectory Drive, etc. Everything over the banana bridge. That should really be part of Exhall and Hawkesbury.

St Marys Ward

The parts that have gone to Attleborough should go back to St Marys Ward. I attend St Marys Church should declare an interest about the name. I think it could be confusing as it doesn't align with the Parish and it is a richly diverse area, and I am not sure the name really reflects the community's identity.

6 Oct 2022, 09:07

Sam - I applaud your efforts at saving the Civic Hall in Bedworth - I have worked there (albeit as a volunteer stage crew member) for over 30 years. One thing I want to clear up is that Nuneaton isn't confirmed as getting a new theatre - the funding hasn't been agreed, and as such, the whole borough could lose out if the Civic closes.

Just like Bedworth there are fancy plans in place for Nuneaton - but with no definitive funding in place.

This council is selling off our assets to lube their own pockets.

They are blurring constituency boundaries to try and ensure they remain in power. I saw for myself the leader of our council and the mayor having a meeting in the corner of a pub, and dissecting boundary lines and colouring in maps, trying to manipulate the figures to ensure they remain in control.

It's abhorrent the way they are behaving with public money and public buildings.

I for one will be making my voice heard wherever I am able.

Take care.





Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
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Warwickshire CV11 5AA

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024 7637 6376

04 November 2022

Mr Samuel Margrave
50 LEYLAND ROAD
Nuneaton
CV11 4RP

Request reference: FI457207455

Dear Mr Samuel Margrave,

Thank you for your request for information about: Electoral Boundaries

We are unable to fully respond to your request within the 20 working days we initially stated as we need additional time to collate the information. However, we are able to provide you with the following update:

We are working hard to complete your request and should a reply ready for you within the next 14 days

Once we have all the information for your request, we will write to you with a final response. We intend to contact you by 18 November 2022.

If you have any further queries or wish to discuss your request, please contact our customer services team who will be able to assist you.

Yours sincerely,

Martyn Harris
Lead Investigator

Appendix C

Speech to NBBC Cabinet 12th October 2022

Mr Chairman

I speak to ask cabinet to place proposals online and to ask local people for their views before submission.

Even the smallest change is complex and would need officer assistance.

These proposed wards do not reflect our community identities well.

I appreciate how hard it must be for some Councillors to have local knowledge.

I've always lived in the ward I represented.

In Attleborough both of my Councillors live outside the ward with one only moving from Leicester to the Nuneaton shortly before being elected.

It must be so difficult for them to represent an area they don't live in, never mind having to know this level of detail.

But Community identity matters. So, you need to get this right.

Attleborough now takes in the Town Centre. Meaning we are no longer a distinct community as we have been for generations. Just merged into Nuneaton Town Centre.

We have more in common with Caldwell, Red Deeps or the new Stirling gate development than Oaston road.

I welcome the changes to Marston Lane and unification of Whitestone.

But what will the impact of including the town centre in Attleborough have on crime reporting and our insurance premiums?

Colly Croft doesn't take in all of Colly croft.

Part of Camp Hill is missing from the new Camp Hill.

Exhall being joined up in a way no one recognises as Exhall is justified as down to a Gurdwara. Which is an alarming piece of racial profiling.

You have divided communities and even roads.

Not down the middle, but literally split up roads in half. That is confusing.

What does Bedworth heath share with Black Bank or Bedworth Poplars?

While I appreciate you want to take away Labours electoral advantage, it isn't the role the Boundary review should be playing.

I don't know if there is a deadline to respond with the Councils submission.

All I know is the last administration failed to listen to local people.

Don't do the same.

Thank you.

