

Stevenage Borough Council

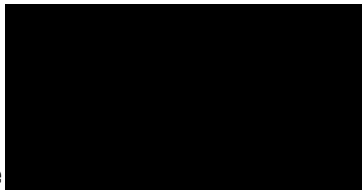
Personal Details:

Name:

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Postcode:

Organisation Name



Comment text:

The proposal includes transferring half of the traditional Old Town into Pin Green including such roads as Haycroft Road, Whitesmead Road etc and bringing the Leisure Park into the Old Town. I have no idea of the basis for this unless it's to try to benefit a political party. I am totally against it and am of the opinion that the Old Town should remain essentially as it is. I do not believe that this measure is necessary to ensure approximately equal populations for all wards. I would like to know who proposed how these changes would be made. Can you please let me know so that I can make a direct comment to whoever it was. In my opinion the whole thing requires a fundamental review [REDACTED]

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded

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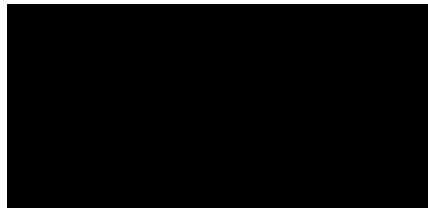
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I have now had a chance to read the recommendations by Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) and wish to make a 2nd submission. This submission is entirely about Stevenage Old Town ward. I wish to start by saying that I feel that this ward boundary review was not well enough publicised to residents. I have contacts with local councillors and am also a member of the Stevenage Old Town Business and Community Partnership (SOTBCP) but found out about this only recently. Whilst things like this would not really have been in the public arena some decades ago they should be now. I see that according to your report only a handful of local residents have commented although obviously the political parties have. I suspect that the vast majority of Stevenage residents are not aware that this is happening. As someone who lives on the edge of Stevenage Old Town I feel strongly that this should have been given more publicity. Second I note that the LGBCE is an independent body set up by Parliament and is not part of government or any political party. You are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. May I take it that your recommendations are considered by this committee and that any decisions are taken by that committee. Does that committee generally accept your recommendations "lock, stock and barrel? Turning to the substance of the recommendations :- The ward boundaries should reflect the identity and interests of local communities. They should lead to effective and convenient local government: to help our council discharge its responsibilities effectively. The boundary should be strong and easily identifiable. Not counting the ancient Roman settlement near St Nicholas Church, Stevenage Old Town as it is now known has existed since before the Second World War, long before the New Town came into existence. It has a close knit identity. Residents know each other and shop in the High Street. Residents in roads such as Whitesmead Road which are earmarked to be moved into Pin Green ward may well be insulted at such a move, albeit only a change of political boundary rather than a boundary reflecting the norms of daily life. As regards strong and identifiable boundaries for Stevenage Old Town, these already exist and are both strong and clear. They are Fairlands Way (south), Grace Way (east), Martins Way (north) and Fairview Road (west). Minor changes to these to accommodate numbers could easily be arranged without swingeing changes. To move Stevenage Leisure Park into Stevenage Old Town is in my opinion absolute nonsense. The Leisure Park is styled on an American theme. It has no retail outlets apart from eateries and entertainment. It is far removed in character from the Old Town and in my opinion does not reflect the identity and interests of Old Town people. The ward boundaries should reflect community identity. Transport links across the ward should be good. Public transport should be available. Community groups should be representative. The ward should reflect where local people go for shops, medical services, leisure facilities etc. As above the proposed boundary excludes getting on for half of those in the Old Town community but brings in an area which is totally dissociated with the Old Town. Public transport from the Old Town area to the Leisure Park would involve a bus followed by a 10 minute walk that is potentially dangerous bearing in mind some of the characters who frequent the railway station area, unfriendly for disabled people and generally unpleasant. A strong community group within Stevenage Old Town (SOTBCP - see above) has not been properly consulted on this and its own proposed boundary reflects the 4 given above, certainly not including the Leisure Park. Old Town people use facilities in the High Street. They may use the Leisure Park sometimes but will usually go there by car, particularly in winter. The ward boundaries should take account of issues that bind the community together or separate it from other parts of the area. Natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries should be identified. Issues that bind the Old Town as it is now are shopping and dining facilities, a strong community spirit and ease of access by walking. This applies to all of the area that is proposed to be transferred to Pin Green. The boundaries identified as south, east, north and west above are strong and identifiable. Indeed Fairlands Way and Grace Way are particularly noticeable. New Town planners even exaggerated this by allowing building of a

range of shops at the north end of the New Town in an east-west orientation so emphasising this boundary, It is possible to criticise this approach but nevertheless it exists. I urge you to reconsider the proposed boundary for Stevenage Old Town. I think that this process of consultation is good even though I will have "scraped in under the wire" and hope that views will be taken into account rather than LGBCE just "ploughing on regardless". Yours faithfully, [REDACTED]

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded