

## Mole Valley District Council

### Personal Details:

Name:

E-mail:

Postcode:

Organisation Name:

### Comment text:

Dear Sir or Madam, I was the District Councillor for Mickleham, Westhumble and Pixham from 2015 to 2019. I am strongly against merging the wards into multi-member superwards, for the following reasons: 1) Multi-member wards raise the barrier of entry for an independent candidate to an insurmountable level. An individual wishing to engage in public service, but not politics, will find it impossible to compete against the campaign machinery of either political party across such a wide area. This is unethical. It will also 'bake in' to local politics the tedious tittle-tattle of party politics which wasted innumerable hours and generated so much bad feeling which I remember from my days as a Councillor. 2) Multi-member wards will have two undesirable side-effects: a) It will split responsibility for any given resident or issue between three Councillors. This means inevitably some problems will end up being picked up by nobody, and that those Councillors that are conscientious will end up shouldering an even greater burden than they already do, whilst those Councillors that are idly coasting in safe seats can be even less active than they already are. b) It will mean that Councillors are nominally responsible for areas of the District that are a long way from where they live, which will make it less practical for them to visit, understand and assist with issues. It will also mean that the electors are less likely to know who the candidates are from within the community when they are voting for them. This is especially true in rural areas. I think this is the wrong way to approach the problem of re-drawing political boundaries. But if you insist on doing so, I have the following suggestions: 1) In terms of the geography of Mickleham, Westhumble and Pixham, Pixham has virtually nothing to do with Mickleham and Westhumble so could easily be split off and added to Dorking without any upset. Mickleham and Westhumble must stay together because they are essentially the same community (they share a Parish Magazine for example). 2) When looking for geographical areas to add Mickleham and Westhumble to, I would suggest rural areas rather than towns, because the sorts of issues will be similar and a certain amount of expertise in dealing with them will accrue to the Councillors over time. In other words I would add Mickleham and Westhumble to either Brockham or Westcott (or even both), before I would add them to parts of Dorking or Leatherhead. 3) I very strongly urge you to take this opportunity to get rid of the endless cycle of elections every year followed by one year off every four, and move to all-out elections every four years. This endless election cycle exacerbates the political tittle-tattle and tedium which I refer to above, and distracts Councillors from the actual business of running the Council. It does this by diverting bandwidth from governing to campaigning, but it also does this by tangling the Council in ultra-short-term decision-making. I genuinely believe it is bad for Local Government and society locally. Yours faithfully, [REDACTED]

### Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded