

Buckinghamshire Council

Personal Details:

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Comment text:

I have lived in Chalfont St Peter from 1969, when I was 3. I was a Chiltern District Council ("CDC") councillor 1999-2015, during which time I was Chairman of the Boundaries committee - so I appreciate the mathematical challenges of even representation, but assume that with modern computer programmes, moving roads in and out of Wards can be done without the time consuming mathematical slog of the past. I can remember the Bucks County Council Ward boundaries of Little Chalfont/Chalfont St Giles and Chalfont St Giles/Chalfont St Peter being problematic, but I consider it should be possible to include people within the area associated with their postal address, so that they do not feel excluded and being treated as just canon fodder making up numbers. I believe this should over-ride the +/- 10% tolerance between Wards' voters totals. Given the disastrous (for democracy) local elections turnout of around 20% other than when they coincide with a General Election, I feel any scheme should incentivise voters to participate as much as divide up Bucks into even Wards. I am therefore very disappointed that it would appear the error of including the old Goldhill CDC Ward in the Bucks Council's Chalfont St Giles Ward/Division is being continued; particularly since Goldhill residents have long found this irritating - as I know from speaking to many they consider that it effectively leaves Goldhill residents feeling they have no representation ("What does a Chalfont St Giles Councillor know or care about us in Goldhill, Chalfont St Peter?" being a summary of what's been said to me in the past). Goldhill where I now live is NOT part of Chalfont St Giles, but is part of Chalfont St Peter: our postal addresses are all Chalfont St Peter; Chalfont St Peter Library rather than Chalfont St Giles library would be the library of choice for Goldhill residents, Goldhill is within the Chalfont St Peter Parish and furthermore the Chalfont St Peter Parish Feast Day event for the whole of Chalfont St Peter is held on Goldhill Common. All of the old Goldhill CDC Ward should be within a Bucks (unitary) Council Chalfont St Peter Ward. I also strongly object to the proposal to make Chalfont St Peter a multi-member Ward. This proposal is undemocratic, as it makes it more difficult for Independent candidates to stand for election. since the independent who by definition won't be standing in tandem with another candidate will unfairly have to leaflet twice the area instead of just the 1/2 of Chalfont St Peter in which they wish to stand as party candidates who share a leaflet. Thus this also wastes paper and trees since each independent has to have double the leaflets otherwise required, at double the expense for both the leaflets themselves as well as then likely having to get paid delivery help, which then creates an unfair and unnecessary financial barrier to participation in the democratic process. Assuming the inclusion of Goldhill within Chalfont St Peter, if Chalfont St Peter were to be split into two Wards, perhaps called Chalfont St Peter West and Chalfont St Peter East, then based on the old CDC seats - no doubt on your records - I would suggest combining Austenwood & Goldhill Wards with as much of the Goldhill end of Central Ward for CSP West as required to make for an even number to match Chalfont Common and the remainder of Chalfont Central to make CSP East. Without access to detailed current Ward voter numbers, it is difficult to know whether the A413 could be a natural boundary between CSP East and CSP West, and so I can only deal in broad brush principles here. Alternatively, if because of the inclusion of the Goldhill Ward within Chalfont St Peter, and the additional numbers of voters caused by the new Newland Park and The Grange dwellings (in the CDC Chalfont Common and Central Wards respectively) it was considered 3 councillors would be required, I would suggest combining Goldhill & Austenwood Wards for one seat, (CSP East) while both Chalfont Common and Chalfont Central could each make a seat on their own, (the 2nd & 3rd seats, called CSP West and CSP Central respectively) - with slight adjustments to the old boundaries to even up numbers where necessary. I hope these suggestions will be taken in the politically neutral and constructive spirit intended. For the sake of democracy, I sincerely hope that as many Bucks (Unitary) Council Wards will be single seat Wards and would urge you look again at any proposed multiple seat Wards to divide them all into single seat Wards.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded