

Swindon

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To whom it may concern:

I welcome the forthcoming review of local government /ward boundaries within Swindon Borough Council (SBC). Clearly this must take into account both current and forthcoming demographic changes, especially the completion of the Wichelstowe development and the projected population of the New Eastern Villages.

While I note that it is proposed not to increase the total number of elected councillors, this is a mistake given the likely significant increase in the voting population that will result from these developments. Without this increase in councillor numbers, the representation burden that will result will be both significant and undesirable.

Furthermore, account has to be taken of key developments currently outside SBC. I refer specifically to those in Purton Parish Council immediately adjacent to SBC and in particular the Haydon Wick Parish Council boundary. These are the contiguous new developments alongside the River Ray and Ridgway Farm, both off Purton Road. These very large housing areas are essentially part of the SBC urban area, residents use SBC facilities rather than those of Wiltshire County Council and Purton PC . They must be incorporated in an extended SBC boundary and be taken into account in reworking Ward boundaries. Any artificial constraint by the Commission in confining itself to existing SBC boundaries and limited the Council to 57 members will be a serious error.

Apart from the two new parished areas of the 'old' Swindon Borough (Central North and Central South Parishes), Ward boundaries must be

based on existing Parish boundaries. Without such approach, this will create confusion in the electorate and make the Parish administration and the role of elected councillors increasingly difficult with an erosion of respect for local democracy.

As a former SBC (then Thamesdown) councillor and Council Leader I am fully cognisant with the demands on elected councillors and hence a boundary review has to be based both on public perceptions of the logic of Ward and Parish boundaries and the workload on councillors who are generally part-time and have to combine employment or other tasks with public service.

Attached Documents:

None attached