North Somerset

Personal Details:

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Comment text:

Firstly, it would be helpful if our key preferences and arguments could be presented in a clear order of priority.

We believe it is important to emphasise that Backwell values its autonomy, together with the uniqueness of its character and the particular challenges it faces when compared with neighbouring communities.

We agree that Backwell has little in common with Wrington, and the proposed grouping appears to be driven primarily by a numbers exercise, making it the least desirable option.

We also recognise the logic in your observation that Backwell has more in common with the Golden Valley district than with Wrington. However, we would like the response to reference Brockley and Flax Bourton instead, as they are much more closely aligned with Backwell through shared services and infrastructure. This includes the NHS, schools, bus services, footpaths and cycle routes, as well as many of the same development pressures and local issues.

In addition, BPC is keen to remain aligned with Downside. At a recent Council meeting held in Downside, residents who attended expressed their appreciation for the current arrangement, and we feel this local support should be reflected in the submission.

We would also like the response to note that BPC would wish to see any new arrangements reviewed before too long. Existing planning consents alone indicate that Backwell's population is set to grow by around 40%, even before taking into account allocations within the emerging Local

Plan. This level of change is likely to alter the balance of representation over time.

Overall, we believe the response should conclude by reinforcing two key principles: Backwell values its autonomy and distinct identity, but equally it is important that the parish has fair and effective representation.

From a practical perspective, it would be helpful to receive a draft by Tuesday, allowing Councillors sufficient time to reflect ahead of Thursday's meeting and suggest any amendments. Given the 6th July deadline, it would also be helpful if the draft response and your fee proposal could both be considered at the same meeting, and both items have therefore been included on the agenda.

Finally, it would be helpful if you were able to submit the response on BPC's behalf, ideally using the Parish Council's logo. We feel this would demonstrate to the Commission that Backwell Parish Council considers the matter sufficiently important to commission expert advice and representation.

Attached Documents:

None attached