

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 10**

### **MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR CHRIS BODEN REGARDING REVIEW OF COUNTY DIVISION BOUNDARIES IN FENLAND**

**COUNCIL- 23 July 2015**

#### **NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER PART 4 RULE 1 PARAGRAPH 10**

##### **This Council notes:**

1. that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is currently conducting a review of electoral arrangements in Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)
2. that CCC proposed a reduction in Council size from 69 to 63, a reduction which the LGBCE stated that it was minded to accept.
3. that the LGBCE has subsequently recommended a scheme of divisions for Cambridgeshire with a Council size of 61.
4. that within Fenland, the LGBCE's draft recommendations include several proposals (listed in Schedule one) which neither reflect the identities of local communities nor promote efficient and effective local government.

##### **This Council therefore agrees to submit to the LGBCE (as part of its consultation process) the following resolutions (including schedules):**

- a) that it would be preferable, to ensure both the effective and the efficient management of CCC, that its Council size be reduced from 69 to 63.
- b) If the LGBCE continues to be minded to ignore the evidence submitted by CCC in support of a Council size of 63, that the number of County Councillors should not be reduced below 62.
- c) that the draft recommendations from the LGBCE relating to boundaries for county divisions in Fenland are unacceptable, and that the LGBCE's draft recommendations are therefore opposed by Fenland District Council for the reasons given in Schedule 1a to this motion.
- d) that all of the County Councillors representing divisions in Fenland should represent single-member divisions, since these smaller single-member divisions reflect communities' identities better than much larger two-member divisions.
- e) that, if the LGBCE agrees to a Council size of 63 for CCC, Fenland District Council recommends the scheme of divisions for Fenland listed in Schedule two, for the reasons given in Schedule 2a
- f) that, if the Commission remains minded to propose a Council size of 61 for CCC, Fenland District Council recommends the scheme of divisions listed in Schedule three, for the reasons given in Schedule 3a.

##### **Schedule One - LGBCE Draft Recommendations for Fenland**

1. **Chatteris** - the whole of the Town of Chatteris
2. **March North & Waldersey** - The parishes of Christchurch & Elm, together with the parish of Wisbech St Mary (excluding Morrow) together with the whole of March North ward (except Westry and the area west of Westry) together with the whole of March East ward (except Cavalry Drive and the roads off Cavalry Drive) together with that part of March West ward which is north of the river and east of the Peas Hill roundabout.

3. **March South & Rural** - the parishes of Manea & Wimblington together with, from March East Ward, Cavalry Drive and the roads off Cavalry Drive, together with that part of March West ward south of the river and east of the A141.
4. **Roman Bank & Peckover** - the Wards of Peckover and Roman Bank, together with the parish of Parson Drove, together with Murrow from the parish of Wisbech St Mary.
5. **Whittlesey North** - the wards of Bassenhally and Stonald, together with, from the District ward of St Andrews, the whole of the Town ward of St Andrews, together with, from the District ward of St Andrews, that part of the Town Ward of St Marys to the west of King's Dyke and the rear of the properties on Garden Grove, Turners Lane and St Mary's Street.
6. **Whittlesey South** - the parish of Doddington, together with the wards of Lattersey and Benwick, Coates & Eastrea, together with, from the District ward of St Andrews, that part of the Town Ward of St Marys to the east of King's Dyke and the rear of the properties on Garden Grove, Turners Lane and St Mary's Street, together with, from March Town, Westry and all of March Town west of Westry and west of the Isle of Ely Way.
7. **Wisbech North** - Kirkgate, Staithe and Waterlees Village wards.
8. **Wisbech South** - Clarkson, Octavia Hill and Medworth wards.

#### **Schedule 1a - Weaknesses in the LGBCE Draft Recommendations for Fenland**

- a) The proposed two-member Division of March North and Waldersey, with a projected 2020 electorate of 18,351, is a massive division comprising almost two-thirds of the urban population of March together with the far more rural areas of Elm, Christchurch and Wisbech St Mary. This proposed division is not a cohesive area sharing a commonality of interests.
- b) The proposal to split the parish of Wisbech St Mary between two different divisions artificially splits a parish and fails to reflect local shared identity within the parish.
- c) The proposal to change boundaries within Wisbech, separating Octavia Hill ward from Staithe ward fails to recognise the links between these two wards (for example, the number of children from Octavia Hill ward attending Meadowgate School in Staithe ward).
- d) The proposal to split St Mary's Town ward in Whittlesey between two divisions, with a very poorly defined boundary at the rear of properties on three roads, fails to recognise established local communities, will create uncertainty as to the boundary and is not conducive to efficient and effective local government.
- e) The inclusion of electors from Westry and from parts of Burrowmoor Road, Gaul Road and Knight's End Road in the LGBCE's proposed Whittlesey South division fails to recognise that these areas look exclusively towards March not Whittlesey, that they are an integral part of the Town of March and that their inclusion in a Whittlesey division would be regarded as bizarre by those who live there.

**Schedule Two - Fenland District Council's proposals for Fenland (10 divisions)**

			2020 Electorate	Variance* (based on 62 divisions)	Variance** (based on 63 divisions)
FDC1	Chatteris	Town of Chatteris	8980	6.79%	8.51%
FDC2	Fenland North	Roman Bank Ward; Peckover Ward	7450	-11.40%	-9.98%
FDC3	Waldersey	Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary Ward; Elm Parish;  the Town Wards of March Rural South and March Rural North (as proposed in the LGBCE's draft recommendations)	7460	-11.29%	-9.86%
FDC4	Wisbech Riverside	Medworth, Clarkson & Waterlees Village Wards	8610	2.39%	4.04%

FDC5	Wisbech East	Octavia Hill, Staithe & Kirkgate Wards	8240	-2.01%	-0.43%
FDC6	March North East	March North Ward (less the proposed "Rural North" Town Ward);  that part of Polling District BA1 north of Creek Road  that part of Polling District BC1 east of the A141 and west of Waveney Drive / Pentland Way	7720	-8.19%	-6.72%
FDC7	March Central	that part of PD BA1 south of (and including) Creek Road;  that part of PD BC1 East of Waveney Drive / Pentland Way  Polling Districts BA2, BA4;	7600	-9.62%	-8.17%

		<p>Polling District BC4 east of the A141</p>			
FDC8	March South East & Rural	Manea Ward; Christchurch Parish; Wimblington Parish;	7850	-6.65%	-5.15%
		<p>Polling District BC2_3 east of the A141</p> <p>Polling District BA3</p>			
FDC9	Whittlesey	<p>The District Wards of Bassenhally and Stonald;</p> <p>the St Andrews Town Ward in Whittlesey</p>	7596	-9.67%	-8.22%
FDC10	South West Fenland	<p>The St Marys Town Ward in Whittlesey</p> <p>Lattersey Ward and Benwick, Coates &amp; Eastrea Ward</p> <p>the Parish of Doddington</p>	7594	-9.69%	-8.24%

79100

\* the electoral variance for each proposed division is calculated using a County-wide average electorate in 2020 of 8409, being 521,380 divided by 62

\*\* the electoral variance for each proposed division is calculated using a County-wide average electorate in 2020 of 8276, being 521,380 divided by 63

**Schedule 2a - Advantages of Fenland District Council's proposals for Fenland (10 divisions)**

- a. This scheme of divisions avoids the massive 2-member division contained within the LGBCE's draft recommendations.
- b. No part of the Town of March is included within a Whittlesey Division.
- c. Octavia Hill and Staithe Wards are not split between divisions.
- d. That part of Walsoken within the District is united in a single division.
- e. There is a better split between predominantly "rural" and predominantly "urban" divisions than in the LGBCE's draft recommendations
- f. No parish council area is split between divisions.
- g. Within Whittlesey, no Town ward is split between divisions.
- h. The boundary between divisions in Whittlesey is far more clearly defined than in the LGBCE's draft recommendations

**Schedule Three - Fenland District Council's proposals for Fenland (9 divisions)**

			2020 Electorate	Variance*
FDC1	Chatteris	Town of Chatteris	8980	5.07%
FDC2	Fenland North	Roman Bank Ward; Peckover Ward; Parson Drove Parish	8470	-0.90%
FDC3	Waldersey	Wisbech St Mary Parish; Manea and Elm & Christchurch Wards;	8580	0.39%
FDC4	Wisbech Riverside	Medworth, Clarkson & Waterlees Village Wards	8610	0.74%
FDC5	Wisbech East	Octavia Hill, Staithe & Kirkgate Wards	8240	-3.59%
FDC6	March South-East	March East Ward from March North Ward: Polling District BB1 PD BB3 (east of Norwood Road)	9220	7.87%
FDC7	March North-West	March West Ward from March North Ward: Polling District BB2	9200	7.64%

		PD BB3 (west of Norwood Road)		
FDC8	Whittlesey	Bassenhally, Stonald & St Andrews Wards	8700	1.79%
FDC9	South West Fenland	Doddington & Wimbington; Benwick, Coates & Eastrea and Lattersey Wards	9100	6.47%
			79100	

\* the electoral variance for each proposed division is calculated using a County-wide average electorate in 2020 of 8547, being 521,380 divided by 61.

**Schedule 3a - Advantages of Fenland District Council's proposals for Fenland (9 divisions)**

- a. This scheme of divisions avoids the massive 2-member division contained within the LGBCE's draft recommendations.
- b. No part of the Town of March is included within a Whittlesey Division.
- c. Octavia Hill and Staithe Wards are not split between divisions.
- d. That part of Walsoken within the District is united in a single division.
- e. There is a better split between predominantly "rural" and predominantly "urban" divisions than in the LGBCE's draft recommendations



- f. No parish council area is split between divisions.
- g. Within Whittlesey, no District or Town ward is split between divisions.
- h. The boundary between divisions in Whittlesey is far more clearly defined than in the LGBCE's draft recommendations
- i. this scheme achieves division boundaries which are 88% co-terminous with District ward boundaries. This is significantly better than the 75% co-terminosity achieved in the LGBCE's draft recommendations. Co-terminosity is a good indicator of reflecting community identity and of achieving efficient and effective local government, primarily because these statutory objectives were significant factors when the LGBCE itself created the District ward boundaries. The LGBCE is obliged to seek to provide for co-terminosity between district wards and county divisions in accordance with Paragraph 2 (3) (d) of Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

**Chris Boden**