

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED DURING CONSULTATION

This appendix summarises the feedback received during consultation on the County Council's draft electoral review proposal. Contributions are grouped by district and the name of the main party concerned is given. Text shown in quotation marks ("for example") has been taken directly from the information received; remaining text is an interpretation or summary of the contribution. Where appropriate, notes have been added in italics to clarify methodological issues arising from the comments or to highlight potential consequences of the suggestions. The full feedback forms and correspondence are available on request.

CAMBRIDGE CITY

- **Cambridge City Council** - "wishes to express its wholehearted support for the County's proposals as they affect the City of Cambridge. 100% coterminosity with the City's new ward boundaries will be very convenient, in administrative and political terms, and will further good and cost-effective governance."
- **Cambridge City Conservative Association** - "would like to indicate support for the proposals with regard to Cambridge City, in view of the importance I would attach to coterminosity."

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE

- **East Cambridgeshire District Council** - "recommend Option 2 of the County Council's draft proposals."
- **South East Cambridgeshire Conservative Association** - ".option 2 represents the best way forward. This is based on the historic link between the parishes of Wicken and Soham."
- **City of Ely Council** - "supported proposals relating to the Parish of Ely."
- **Haddenham Parish Council** - "accepts the proposals as presented."
- **Isleham Parish Council** - "option 2 is the better option. Council's personal views are that Soham should be on its own and Wicken, Isleham, Fordham, Chippenham, Snailwell and Kennett should be together."
- **Soham Town Council** - ". the proposals were viewed with horror and disbelief. .It appeared to Councillors that no cognisance had been taken of historic or local community factors, and that the exercise seemed to be "numbers-crunching" led, particularly as no regard had been given to the principal of coterminosity. It was resolved that Soham Town Council do not consider that Soham should be split, unanimously rejects the totally unacceptable proposals to divide Soham . and consider that any boundary alterations must at least coincide with the recently determined District Electoral Review Boundaries."
- **Westley Waterless Parish Council** - is concerned about the parish boundary between Waterless Parish and Burrough Green Parish as the village of Westley Waterless is divided between the two parishes. "If this is not relevant

to this boundary consultation perhaps it could be passed on to the correct people."

The County Council notes that there is no scope to alter parish boundaries under this review. The comments could, however, be taken to suggest that any proposal to split the parishes of Westley Waterless and Burrough Green into different divisions would be viewed negatively.

- **Wicken Parish Council** - ". is concerned about the options suggested for Soham/Wicken. both options end up dividing Soham along an artificial and illogical boundary and putting together parishes which have little in common. The proposed solutions are not coterminous with the District Council boundaries, and this would lead to confusion. . the only sensible option is to retain the status quo with Soham North and Soham South (including Wicken) forming a single ward. the problem would obviously be the remaining ward of Isleham, Fordham and the small villages. The combination is sensible and logical, since Isleham has quite strong links with Fordham, but would lead to a low 2008 electorate. However, we feel that this is inevitable in these scattered, rural constituencies and presents far less of a problem than splitting towns along artificial and illogical boundaries and lumping together parishes that have no links. .We therefore recommend that neither of the options are chosen and that we retain the status quo and accept the discrepancy in numbers."

FENLAND

- **Chatteris Town Council** - "is firmly against the proposal that one county councillor should cover the Slade Lode, The Mills, and the Wenneye wards of Chatteris and another councillor should cover the Birch ward, Wimblington ward, Manea ward and Christchurch parish. .The people of Chatteris have no affinity with Wimblington and Christchurch and only limited affinity with Manea."
- **Cllr M Curtis, District Councillor Kingsmoor ward, Whittlesey** - "I support these proposals. The suggestion for Whittlesey is far better than the current situation and the overall proposal meets the needs for coterminosity."
- **Mr B Howlett, March East ward** - no comment
- **North East Cambridgeshire Conservative Association** - ".despite the fact that we don't entirely agree with [the proposals], we have been unable to devise an alternative. If the commission had seen fit to accept the Fenland District Council proposals for March . we are sure that a far better result would now be possible. However, under the circumstances, we have no alternative other than to support your proposals."
- **March divisions** - an alternative proposal was submitted by Cllr F. Yeulett (District and County Councillor), Cllr S Keane (March West Town Councillor and March East resident), Cllr B. Keane (Mayor of March Town Council and Fenland District Councillor), Cllr K. Owen (Fenland District Councillor March West ward), Cllr M. Ogden (County Councillor March West), Cllr J. West (Fenland District Councillor March North) and Mr L. Nyde (resident).

The alternative proposal contends that the County Council's proposals "do not take into account the historic and natural divisions of the town." The alternative involves the transfer of:

- approximately 1,270 electors from March North to March West division (the area between the River Nene and Wisbech Road/Dartford Southern side);
- approximately 1,220 electors from March East to March North division (the area contained by Station Road to the River Nene and the railway line);
- approximately 1,355 electors from March West to March East division (the Stow Fen area, between B1101 and existing March East district ward boundary).

The proposal utilises the "natural and traditional boundaries" of the river and B1101. "In the recent District Council elections, confusion was caused by officials failing to adhere to the new boundaries, thus placing a number of electors in the wrong wards. The boundary to the east of Wimblington Road would cause immense confusion."

The County Council notes that the alternative proposal loses coterminosity between the March East district ward and the March East electoral division.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE

- **Ramsey/Warboys/Somersham area - Option 1 versus Option 2**
- **Abbots Ripton Parish Council** - "We had initially preferred Option 2. However on discussion we would prefer Option 1. The reason for this is that we believe this to be the first opportunity we have had to have the whole school catchment area under the same county council seat."
- **Bury Parish Council** - "It was decided, unanimously, that Option 2. represented the best alternative for the village."
- **Colne Parish Council** - ".does not agree to the re-organisation whereby it severs its close links with Earith and Bluntisham Parish Councils. Colne PC reluctantly accepts Option 2."

The County Council notes that both options would in fact bring together Colne, Earith and Bluntisham, which were divided by the recent district ward review.

- **Cllr Victor Lucas** - submitted proposed amendment to Option 1. Wishes to see two divisions created as follows:
 - Earith ward plus part of Somersham ward (Colne, Pidley and Somersham parishes)
 - Warboys and Bury ward plus part of Upwood and The Raveleys ward (Abbots Ripton, Kings Ripton and Wood Walton parishes and Wyton Airfield parish ward) and remainder of Somersham ward (Broughton, Oldhurst and Woodhurst parishes).

- Wood Walton would remain with Ramsey parish. Cllr Lucas also proposes that St Ives is combined into two divisions, without including Holywell-cum-Needingworth.
- **Ramsey Town Council** - ".either of the two options in the consultation document is acceptable. The County Council might also consider a third option, which puts the Ramsey ward and Bury parish in electoral division no. 16 and puts Woodwalton parish and Upwood and The Raveleys parish in electoral division no. 17."

The County Council notes that placing Bury parish with Ramsey would lose coterminosity

- **Warboys Parish Council** - ".the Parish Council have decided to support Option 2. Although there are community interests between Warboys and the surrounding parishes of Broughton, Woodhurst, Old Hurst and Pidley-cum-Fenton, the Council decided that these were outweighed by the advantages of coterminosity with the boundaries of District wards."
- **Wistow Parish Council** - "is very concerned at the proposed linking of Wistow with Warboys and Bury. Wistow has a great deal in common with many neighbouring small villages (eg Broughton, Raveleys, Upwood etc) and very little in common with larger villages like Warboys. . there are compelling reasons for the Boundary Committee to be flexible and to find a group of smaller villages the would include Wistow and for Wistow not to be included with Warboys."

The County Council notes that Option 2 would combine Wistow with Upwood and The Raveleys. Removing Wistow from Warboys would mean losing coterminosity.

- **Woodwalton Parish Council** - "The parish Council has no preference. Option 2 which has the 2 District Council wards might be better."

Other comments received

- **Buckden Parish Council** - "Has no objection to the proposed electoral division."
- **Great Gransden Parish Council** - Have no specific objection to the proposed divisions, but do not feel the new houses to be built on the St Neots fringe (which fall within St Neots rural parish and therefore the proposed Gransden & The Offords division) should be included in the area as they are an urban rather than rural environment.
- **Hilton Parish Council** - ".endorses the proposal that Hilton becomes part of the Hemingfords ward. requests that the name be changed to The Hemingfords and Hilton."
- **Holywell-cum-Needingworth** - ".is totally opposed to the changes. The rural interests of Holywell-cum-Needingworth and the urban interests of St Ives East are not compatible. It would be impossible for councillors to take an independent view when the two areas could be in total opposition. The village status would be jeopardised. would be better served being in a ward with Somersham, Bluntisham, Earith, Colne, Old Hurst, Pidley and Fenton. The

Parish Council would prefer to be part of a large rural ward served by two councillors than merged with St Ives East."

- **Huntingdonshire District Council** - ".appreciate the problem in producing proposals that meet all of the criteria laid down by the Electoral Commission. However, there are certain aspects of what [the County Council is] suggesting that the panel had difficulty in reconciling with the guidance and where there seemed to be insufficient justification to substantiate the proposals that you have consulted upon."

Concerns relate to:

- Number of electors per member
 - Council size
 - Coterminosity
 - Community interests (specifically Buckden, St Neots and Little Paxton)
 - Splitting of parish wards (specifically in Huntingdon and St Neots)

The District Council propose that 19 Councillors in Hunts would place the district on a much more comparable basis with the other Districts within the County. Their proposal leads to 100% coterminosity with the district wards and includes four two-member divisions.

The County Council notes the proposal includes a division composed of Godmanchester and Buckden. These district wards are not contiguous and therefore this combination does not meet the Boundary Committee's requirements.

- **Little Paxton Parish Council** - ".has always seen Little Paxton's inclusion in the St Neots Priory Park division as most appropriate arrangement as we look to St Neots for most of our public transport links, secondary educational resources, local employment, police and fire cover, shopping and recreation. Your proposals do not reflect the realities of our ties with the local community at all and the Parish Council is strongly opposed to them as a consequence." The Parish Council propose that Little Paxton be joined with St Neots and the boundaries within St Neots be adjusted.
- **North West Cambridgeshire Conservative Association** - propose same solution as put forward by Huntingdonshire District Council.

The County Council notes the proposal includes a division composed of Godmanchester and Buckden. These district wards are not contiguous and therefore this combination does not meet the Boundary Committee's requirements.

- **St Ives Town Council** - ".St Ives should be divided into two wards but they be formed as follows: 1) St Ives South and half of St Ives West, and 2) St Ives East and the other half of St Ives West. . It is felt that Holywell-cum-Needlingworth should remain with its District Council sub-division and the wards adjusted to suit. The reason for these recommendations is to maintain community identity, otherwise the population will feel discouraged from voting."

- **Sawtry Parish Council** - wrote directly to Boundary Committee. "Wish it to be noted that they are strongly of the opinion that the local electoral division remain based from Sawtry."
- **Upton and Coppingford Parish Council** - ".do not agree with the parish being included in the Sawtry ward. The parish's common interest is with the villages of Alconbury and Alconbury Weston. They are closest and most villagers will pass through them on the way to our major town of Huntingdon, our medical, social and post office facilities are within the villages and many of the parish's children attend their school."
- **Woodhurst Parish Council** - "strongly object to the proposal that the village should now be included in the Somersham area. The village has few, if any, ties with Somersham. Warboys is the village that Woodhurst has close ties with. We use the post office, the doctor and the shops in Warboys. Warboys Community Primary School in the designated school for Woodhurst. Historically the village has always had close ties with Warboys and virtually none with Somersham."

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE

General comments for the district

- **South Cambridgeshire Conservative Association** - feel the South West area of the district should be looked at in greater depth. Submit proposal with 11 divisions identical to the County's proposal, and five altered divisions. These are:
 - Bassingbourn (The Mordens ward, Bassingbourn ward and Meldreth ward)
 - Gamlingay (Gamlingay ward, Orwell and Barrington ward, Haslingfield and The Eversdens)
 - Melbourn (Melbourn ward, Fowlemere and Foxton ward)
 - Duxford (Duxford ward, Whittlesford ward, Newton parish and Harston parish)
 - Shelfords (The Shelfords and Stapleford ward, minus Newton parish and plus Hauxton parish).
- **South East Cambridgeshire Conservative Association** - support the proposal given by South Cambridgeshire Conservative Association.
- **Impington Parish Council** - suggest that potential major adjustment to the Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire boundary could change the basic assumptions in this area.

The County Council notes that there is no scope within this review to comment on district boundaries.

- **Cllr John Reynolds** - proposed revisions to Bassingbourn and Melbourn area, as detailed above by South Cambridgeshire Conservative Association.

Comments for specific parishes

- **Arrington Parish Council** - ".feels that things work well as they are at present. .Changing the boundaries would have a detrimental effect especially on the educational and policing requirements of the area."
- **Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council** - ".strongly agree that Bassingbourn ward should be left as it is. At present primary schools within the ward feed into Bassingbourn Village College. The proposal would mean that there was no common link! The proposed ward would also be separated by a major road. If it works why change it!"
- **Cllr Gravatt, District Councillor for Bassingbourn and Litlington** - "would like to express my great concern at the proposal . to include Bassingbourn with Melbourn, Great and Little Chishill and Heydon.This makes no sense at all in the geographical disposition of the area, the communities involved and, most importantly, in the catchment areas of the schools. . I suggest the most sensible change to the Division, if any is needed, would be to take out Arrington and Croydon and include Whaddon and Barrington."
- **Mr A. H. Shepherd, Bottisham** - supports proposal detailed above, submitted by South Cambridgeshire Conservative Association and Cllr Reynolds.
- **Childerley Parish Council** - "You have done exactly as proposed and asked. On the face of it, Childerley sticks out on its own; but all Childerley contacts are with Bourn rather than Dry Drayton so that as it stands the proposal is exactly right, thank you."
- **Croydon Parish Council** - "is astounded at the suggestion that Croydon (and Arrington) should be moved into Gamlingay division. There is already an excellent working relationship between the District and County Councillors and the school heads - why change this?"
- **Eltisley Parish Council** - "It does not appear that Cambourne has been included in this document can you please explain the proposals for Cambourne."
- *The County Council notes that Cambourne is included in the proposals, falling under the parish and district ward of Bourn.*
- **Fen Drayton Parish Council** - ".has no specific comments to make at this time."
- **Fowlmere Parish Council** - ".welcome the changes for Fowlmere. It is more sensible that Fowlmere and Foxton are a new district ward."
- **Fulbourn Parish Council** - "There appears to be no change to the Fulbourn ward, and this we find acceptable."
- **Dr and Mrs M. A. Heazen, Haslingfield** - suggest that division 13 (Meldreth, Orwell & Barrington and Haslingfield & The Eversdens wards) seems to be composed of 'leftovers', since the villages "have nothing in common".

Secondary age children in the proposed division would go to three different village colleges, primary children from The Eversdens would not be educated within the ward - few parents would know school governors.

- **Hinxton Parish Council** - ".still vehemently opposes the proposal to group Hinxton with The Abingtons." Feels the district ward makes no sense, want to be grouped with Duxford and Ickleton. (Similar comments were also received from Dr Trudgill and Ms Roberts).
- **Horningsea Parish Council** - "These latest proposals. is well thought through and appropriate. This is a good scheme."
- **Litlington Parish Council** - ".Bassingbourn should retain its link with Litlington and the Mordens. . The present arrangement works very well - there is no need to change!"
- **Longstanton Parish Council** - ".feels very strongly that with the expected increase in population in the parish and locality owing to the planned development of the land surrounding and including Longstanton the division boundaries should reflect this proposed increase in population."
- **Melbourn Parish Council** - ".query the fact that it is understood that while the Cambridgeshire area has been marked for expansion the figures for the Melbourn ward show a decrease in the electorate by 2008."

The County Council notes a decrease in electorate would be expected in areas without significant development as overall household size is projected to fall by 2008 and because changes to the age structure have a commensurate effect on household size. In particular, as populations age, there is a general trend towards more single-person households, which lead to a fewer electors per dwelling.

- **Meldreth Parish Council** - ".Map 5a is missing from the booklet!"

The County Council notes there is no reference to a Map 5a and that there is not intended to be a Map 5a.

- **Mrs C. A. Murfitt, District Councillor for the Mordens** - "I write to protest at the proposed division of villages into the new electoral areas in the Bassingbourn and Gamlingay areas. To split up the feeder villages of Bassingbourn Village College into two electoral areas seems not only illogical but unworkable."
- **Orwell Parish Council** - does not wish feeder villages for Bassingbourn Village College to be disrupted.
- **Rampton Parish Council** - "feels very strongly that the current warding arrangements. should continue."
- **Swavesey Parish Council** - "wishes to object to the changes proposed" - reasons given are:
 - Long and historical links with Over and Longstanton.

- "The A14 is soon to be upgraded and will create an even bigger division between villages on either side."
- "In relation to highways and countryside issues, Swavesey Parish Council often liaises with Over and Longstanton Parishes. Very rarely in the past has Swavesey Parish had joint meetings with the villages in the proposed new ward."
- **Waterbeach Parish Council** - "endorse the proposals for Waterbeach and Landbeach to remain united under the electoral review. The Parish Council consider that the two villages have strong historic and pastoral links."

Countywide comments

- **Cambridgeshire County Labour Party** - strongly object to proposed increase in Council size on the grounds that it was not properly consulted on. ".in the absence of a closely argued case for 68 councillors, it must be assumed this is a strategy to ensure that the wards and electoral divisions in Cambridge are coterminous. We will be sending a copy of this letter to the Boundary Committee, requesting that they require you to consult properly with the public. It follows from the above that we reject your proposed electoral divisions and will in due course submit a set of proposals for 59 seats to the Boundary Committee."
- **North West Cambridgeshire Constituency Labour Party** - as submitted by Cambridgeshire County Labour Party.
- **Sibson-cum-Stibbington Parish Council** - are against the proposed increase in Council Size, feel that larger divisions would have "increased the flexibility on individual parcels.