

Consultation Response

on

Draft Recommendations of New  
electoral arrangements for Fareham  
Borough Council

to

The  
Local Government  
Boundary Commission  
for England

15 November 2022



## INTRODUCTION

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the Commission) is tasked to periodically review electoral arrangements for every council area in England. The last review in Fareham took place in the year 2000 and this review is scheduled to be completed in time for the 2024 local elections.
2. At its meeting held on Thursday 16 December, Fareham Borough Council resolved to submit a recommended council size to the Commission that would slightly increase the number of Fareham Borough Councillors from the current 31 Councillors to 32 Councillors.
3. This Council Size proposal was submitted to the Commission on 20 December 2021.
4. On 11 July 2022, Fareham Borough Council submitted its proposals for a new pattern of warding arrangements which described:
  - The number of wards
  - The names of wards
  - Where the boundaries between wards should lie
  - The number of councillors for each ward
5. In drawing up its proposals for the new warding arrangements, Fareham Borough Council considered the Commission's main rules for proposing new ward boundaries as follows:
  - **Delivering electoral equality for local voters** – ensuring that each local councillor represents roughly the same number of people.
  - **Reflecting the interests and identities of local communities** – establishing electoral arrangements which, as far as possible, maintain local ties and where boundaries are easily identifiable.
  - **Promoting effective and convenient local government** – ensuring that the new wards can be represented effectively by their elected representatives and that the new electoral arrangements as a whole allow the local authority to conduct its business effectively.
6. This consultation response is the final submission by the Council for the second stage of the Electoral Review process and provides a reply to the Commission's [Draft Recommendations on New electoral arrangements for Fareham Borough Council](#).



7. The consultation response working draft has been prepared by Officers on behalf of the Council in consultation with a Member Working Group made up of five Councillors representing both political groups of the Council.
8. Initial drafting was presented to the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee on 11 October 2022 with the working draft of the consultation response being reported to and reviewed by the Council at its meeting on 27 October 2022.

## CONSULTATION SUMMARY

9. Fareham Borough Council is pleased to note that the Commission recognised the Council's "proposed pattern of wards resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used identifiable boundaries" and that the Commission's draft recommendations are therefore based predominantly on the Council's proposal.
10. It is also worthy of note that the Commission has accepted the Council's proposals for name changes to eleven of the wards and that the significant anticipated development at Welborne has been agreed within the forecast figures meaning that the Uplands & Funtley ward will maintain good electoral equality post 2028 when further development will take place at the site.
11. Whilst the Council accepts that there are some necessary amendments recommended by the Commission which would alter the Council's proposals, there are some recommendations which the Council fundamentally disagrees with.
12. In particular, the Council's proposal focussed on creating accurate boundary lines which would support existing communities and provide a realistic boundary at ground level. A key component of this was to avoid putting a boundary through the middle of a road, which results in neighbours in the same street being represented by different ward councillors.
13. This approach necessitates drawing boundary lines around property and garden footprints and ensures that streets with access roads flowing off main roads are taken into account as part of that community. The result of this detailed mapping can appear visually jagged, particularly where property boundaries are not level.
14. The Council is disappointed to see that the Commission has sought to "smooth" these jagged boundary lines by creating a straight line, often through the middle of a street contrary to the Council's intention. The specific examples of this will be covered in the following section under the relevant heading.

## RESPONSE TO PROPOSED WARDING PATTERN

15. The Commission's draft recommendations are set out in four groupings and so for ease of reference the Council's response will follow those groupings, as set out on pages 8 – 18 of the Commission's report (see Appendix A).



Portchester cluster  
Portchester Wicor  
Portsmouth & Castle

16. The Council is pleased to note that the Commission is content with the proposals submitted in July and has largely adopted the new wards which remove the previous 3-seat ward at Portchester East.

Fareham cluster  
Avenue  
Fareham Park  
Fareham Town  
Fort Fareham  
Uplands & Funtley  
Wallington & Downend

17. The Commission has recommended significant modifications to the Council's proposals in this area resulting in substantial changes to the electorate figures.
18. The Council disagrees with the proposal to include Catisfield Road and all the tributary roads running off it in the Avenue ward. Catisfield has long established community ties with the village of Titchfield and the Council firmly believes that the Catisfield Road area should remain in the Meon ward.
19. The Commission has redrawn a boundary line cutting through the middle of The Avenue which results in residents of the same street being represented by different ward councillors. The Council's policy was to avoid this splitting of roads and is therefore objecting to this change.
20. The Commission has redrawn a boundary line, extending from the railway line continuing southwards in a straight line just south of The Avenue/ West Street roundabout, resulting in all electors to the east of the railway line (Mill Road and its tributaries) be located in Fareham Town. The Council's plan includes these electors in the Fort Fareham ward because the access to Mill Road from Redlands Lane connects these residents with the Fort Fareham ward. The Council's submission extended the Fort Fareham boundary to the Gosport Road, meaning that both ends of the access point for these residents would be contained within the same ward.
21. The Council disagrees with the Commission's recommendation to include Deane's Park Road within the Fareham Town ward. Whilst the Council can understand the area containing the High Street and East Street to be included in Fareham Town, it considers that the Deane's Park Road residents are linked to the Cams area as it overlooks Fareham Creek and the Cams estate.



### Hill Head, Meon and Stubbington cluster

Hill Head

Meon

Stubbington

22. As set out in paragraph 18 above, the Council disagrees with the recommendation to include the Catisfield Road area in Avenue ward and would strongly urge the Commission to locate it with the Meon ward. The Commission's proposals result in an electoral variance of -10% in the Meon ward. With minimal anticipated development sites and multiple conservation areas, it is not necessary to create this ward with such a low variance. It could therefore easily accommodate the residents of Catisfield Road and surrounding area.

### Western Ward cluster

Hook-with-Warsash

Locks Heath

Park Gate

Sarisbury & Whiteley

Titchfield Common

23. The Commission has drawn a boundary line down the middle of Church Road creating properties to the north in Park Gate and properties to the south in Titchfield Common. The Council is opposed to this concept of road splitting and would urge the Commission to adopt the Council's proposal for this area. This particular example demonstrates the points set out in paragraph 14, as this appears to be an attempt to smooth out a jagged boundary line. The Council is convinced that a more suitable boundary is one which follows the pattern of property curtilage especially in a highly populated area such as this.
24. An additional issue has resulted from the same straight line through Church Road where the Commission has annexed St John's Church from Locks Heath ward and placed it in Titchfield Common. However, St John's is the parish church for Locks Heath and should remain within the Locks Heath ward.
25. The Commission has suggested a small modification to the southern end of Hunts Pond Road by including electors in the Meon ward for the convenience of following the existing county division boundary. Fareham Borough Council is wholly opposed to this concept because the Borough ward boundaries should be drawn to create the best solution for the district authority. The postal address for residents at this area is Titchfield Common and it would be wholly unnecessary to move this small area to the Meon ward.

### SUBMISSION CONCLUSION

26. In developing the warding arrangements submission, the Council considered how the council should operate in governance terms; reflected on what made our communities self-identify with strong links and have carefully planned an arrangement of wards which will last over the next 20 year period.



27. The Council appreciates that on the whole, the Commission has agreed with the Council's proposals and that good levels of electoral equality have been achieved across the Borough.
28. The Council is particularly pleased that the Commission has recognised the significance of the development of the Garden Village at Welborne which will impact on the forecast electorate for the Borough and specifically the Uplands & Funtley ward.
29. The Council encourages the Commission to reconsider the points raised above when it produces its final ward boundaries recommendations in January 2023.

**Enquiries:**

For further information on this submission please contact:

Leigh Usher

Head of Democratic Services

Fareham Borough Council

[lusher@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:lusher@fareham.gov.uk)

01329 824553

