

West Sussex County Council's Response to the Parliamentary Boundary Review by the Boundary Commission for England

July 2021

Report by the West Sussex County Council Electoral Review Panel

1. The Electoral Review Panel met as an informal virtual meeting on Wednesday 30 July 2021.
2. This report provides the Panel's recommended response to the Parliamentary Boundary Review being undertaken by the Boundary Commission for England from 8 June - 5 August 2021.
3. The County Council supports the Commission's proposal to treat Sussex as a sub-region and the Commission's conclusion that this means that Sussex should be entitled to 17 parliamentary seats in total, which means at least one parliamentary seat crossing the boundary between East and West Sussex.
4. The County Council would strongly oppose any other cross county boundary with any other constituency.

Proposed Chichester, Crawley and Horsham constituencies

5. The County Council supports the Commission's recommended scheme for the proposed constituencies of Chichester, Crawley and Horsham.

Proposed Bognor Regis constituency

6. The County Council supports the Commission's recommended scheme for the proposed constituency of Bognor Regis, but proposes that the name of the constituency should be '**Bognor Regis and Selsey**'. This is to recognise the significant town of Selsey which is to be included in the constituency and would draw instant recognition to the fact that the constituency will take in part of the south Chichester area, by naming the largest settlement.

Proposed East Grinstead & Uckfield and Mid Sussex constituencies

7. The County Council supports the concept that one parliamentary constituency in the Mid Sussex area should crossover between East and West Sussex. The Council does, however, recommend an alternative scheme for these proposed constituencies. The County Council proposes moving the wards of Ardingly & Balcombe and High Weald into Mid Sussex constituency. It also proposes moving the ward of Hassocks from Mid Sussex to the East Grinstead & Uckfield constituency. It also proposes moving the Hartfield ward in East Sussex from East Grinstead & Uckfield to the Hailsham & Crowborough constituency. The rationale is set out below.
8. The proposal would move two Mid Sussex wards into the Mid Sussex constituency at the loss of a single Mid Sussex ward. Therefore, more Mid

Sussex wards would be part of Mid Sussex constituency in this proposal. The population of High Weald ward is centred in the south of the ward, which naturally looks to Haywards Heath as its town, rather than East Grinstead. Residents in High Weald very strong community links with Haywards Heath and Lindfield. The main centres of population are in the south of the ward in the villages of Scaynes Hill and Horsted Keynes. There is a strong transport link in the A272, the main east-west road in the area. Scaynes Hill, for example is only two miles from Haywards Heath on the A272, whilst it is a journey of 40 minutes on minor roads to get to East Grinstead.

9. Both these villages have Haywards Heath postal addresses. Children go to secondary school and sixth form college in Haywards Heath and it is the main centre for shopping and leisure. For example, most gym users attend the Dolphin leisure centre. The doctors, dentists and other medical facilities used by these areas are all in Haywards Heath. It should also be noted that the parish council which encompasses Scaynes Hill is called Lindfield Rural Parish council.
10. Because of the proposal to move High Weald, it is also proposed to move Ardingly & Balcombe ward to Mid Sussex, to make a coherent northern boundary of the Mid Sussex constituency. Residents in this ward also have Haywards Heath postal addresses.
11. As a result of moving these two wards into Mid Sussex constituency, the resulting constituency has too large a population. It is therefore proposed that the best way to address this would be to move a single ward, Hassocks, into the East Grinstead & Uckfield constituency. While Hassocks is near to Burgess Hill as its nearest large town, Hassocks has close links with neighbouring East Sussex settlements such as Ditchling, Westmeston and Plumpton.
12. Because of the resulting increase in the size of the East Grinstead & Uckfield constituency, it is also proposed to move Hartfield ward to the Hailsham and Crowborough constituency. It is currently connected with them in the existing Parliamentary constituency.
13. The County Council understands that existing MPs in these areas of Mid Sussex and East Sussex are supportive of the County Council's proposal and believe that the proposals would be good for local communities.
14. If the Commission is not minded to support the County Council's proposals for Mid Sussex outlined above, the County Council believes that a more minimal change would still be beneficial - moving High Weald ward to Mid Sussex constituency, as outlined as part of the wider proposal above. This small change could be achieved with the electorate numbers in both East Grinstead & Uckfield constituency and Mid Sussex constituency within the limits set within the consultation.

Arundel & Littlehampton, Shoreham and Worthing constituencies.

15. The County Council recognises that this area is challenging to find an ideal solution. It welcomes the overall proposals for the three constituencies in

this area, but proposes a change between the three to improve the scheme for local communities.

16. The County Council proposes to move the Pulborough, Coldwaltham & Amberley and the Storrington & Washington wards from Shoreham to the Arundel & Littlehampton constituency. This would keep those wards linked at a parliamentary level with Arundel and has good transport and community connections between those wards and the Arundel area.
17. The County proposes to move the Peverel and Cokeham wards from Worthing to Shoreham constituency. This is on the basis that Peverel and Cokeham wards are in Adur district and by moving these to Shoreham constituency it would mean that all of Adur district is covered in a single Parliamentary constituency. Those communities of Sompting and Lancing would be part of a single Parliamentary constituency, which would work better because of their very close links.
18. The County Council supports the proposal for most of Worthing borough to be within a single constituency of Worthing but recognises that not all of Worthing will fit into a single constituency. It is therefore proposed that the two wards mentioned in 15 above be moved in Shoreham for the reasons above. This then means that one of the two wards currently showing as part of Arundel & Littlehampton could be included in Worthing constituency and it is recommended that Salvington is the ward that moves to Worthing constituency. Offington ward is proposed to move from Arundel & Littlehampton to Shoreham, as Adur and Worthing councils work closely together under a single officer structure, so it is felt that Offington would be better linked with Adur rather than Arun.
19. The Council acknowledges that this proposal would mean that the south Horsham district area is split as a result of this proposal, but it is felt that this is better than the splitting of Adur and moves a ward back into Worthing. The south west Horsham areas a natural affinity to Arundel, so are linked to that constituency and those areas in the east with a natural affinity to Shoreham are linked to that constituency.

Conclusion

20. The County Council's proposed scheme would be an improvement for local communities compared to the Commission's initial proposals.
21. A map of the West Sussex County Council proposed scheme is attached.
22. All of the proposed changes would ensure that the electorates of the West Sussex constituencies are within the levels set by the Boundary Commission.