

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

November 2022

Report by the West Sussex County Council Electoral Review Panel

1. The Electoral Review Panel met as an informal virtual meeting on Tuesday 22 November 2022.
2. This report provides the Panel's recommended response to the Parliamentary Boundary Review being undertaken by the Boundary Commission for England from 8 November - 5 December 2022.
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 further constituencies crossing county boundaries.
5. The County Council also supports having as much of a district council area within one constituency where possible, although recognises that this cannot work in every part of West Sussex.

Proposed Crawley and Horsham constituencies

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

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 notes that its alternative proposal was rejected by the Commission, but does, however, still recommend a minor alteration for these proposed constituencies. The County Council proposes moving the High Weald ward into Mid Sussex constituency. It also proposes moving the Buxted ward near Uckfield to the East Grinstead & Uckfield constituency. The rationale is set out below.
8. The proposal would move a Mid Sussex ward into the Mid Sussex constituency. 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 have 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 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. As a result of moving the High Weald ward into Mid Sussex constituency, the East Grinstead & Uckfield constituency would become too small. Adding Buxted to the East Grinstead & Uckfield constituency would solve this problem. Most of Buxted's population is closely aligned to Uckfield and it is understood that the Parish Council would support this move.
11. The County Council recommends this change as part of all three options that it gives below for the rest of the county.

South of West Sussex

12. It is recognised that it is not possible to find a perfect layout of constituencies in the rest of West Sussex due to the population distribution. The County Council considers that the revised scheme may help in some regards – uniting Selsey with Chichester and linking all of South Horsham to Arundel – but at the expense of splitting Worthing, the largest town in the area.

Option 1

13. The County Council believes that the scheme it recommended in 2021 for this area would better serve the residents of those areas. The benefits of this are that:
 - all of Adur district is in one constituency,
 - nearly all of Worthing is in one constituency with the remaining Offington ward linked to Adur.
 - All of Littlehampton is in one constituency
 - All of Bognor Regis is in one constituency
 - Most of the northern part of Chichester district is in Chichester constituency.
14. A map of option 1 demonstrates the proposed ward changes between constituencies.

Option 2

15. The County Council hopes that the Commission will accept option 1 as best for the majority of residents in this area. If the Commission doesn't accept this and wishes to keep its current main proposals, the County Council recommends a number of minor alterations to make improvements to the scheme:

- Move Bersted and Pagham wards from Chichester constituency to Bognor Regis & Littlehampton constituency.
- Move Rustington East and West wards from Bognor Regis & Littlehampton constituency to Worthing West constituency.
- Move the remainder of Goodwood ward, all of Harting and Midhurst wards and Easebourne ward (excluding Lodsworth) from Arundel & South Downs to Chichester constituency.
- Move Angmering & Findon ward from Worthing West constituency to Arundel & South Downs constituency.
- Move Ford Parish (polling district BFOR) from Bognor Regis & Littlehampton constituency to Arundel & South Downs constituency and Felpham East vice versa.
- Move High Salvington, Salvington Ward from Worthing West constituency into Arundel & South Downs constituency
- Move part of polling district WC3 from Worthing Central in Worthing West constituency to East Worthing & Shoreham constituency.

16. The major benefit of this is the uniting of Bognor Regis and getting more of Chichester district into Chichester constituency and this improves the overall split of constituencies between districts.

Option 3

17. If the Commission does not agree with the various minor changes, the County Council recommends a final, smaller change option.
- Move Bersted and Pagham wards to Arundel & South Downs constituency rather than Chichester constituency.
 - Move the rest of Goodwood Ward, all of Harting and Midhurst wards and Easebourne wards (Excluding Lodsworth) to Chichester constituency rather than Arundel & South Downs constituency.
18. This would mean that Bersted and Pagham wards are linked with other parts of Arun district and parts of Chichester district are then able to be returned to Chichester constituency.

Conclusion

19. The County Council recognises that the Commission has a difficult job to do with the criteria set and that there is no perfect solution for the area.
20. Maps of the West Sussex County Council proposed schemes are attached.
21. All of the proposed changes would ensure that the electorates of the West Sussex constituencies are within the levels set by the Boundary Commission.