
RUSHCLIFFE ELECTORAL REVIEW

Nottinghamshire County Council response

General comments

Large areas

The Council has some concerns about the large size of some proposed rural Wards and the number of parishes that they incorporate. While these are often proposed to be multi-Member Wards, this would not necessarily mean the workload could be shared. This is partly driven by concerns about being seen and accessible. There are also barriers where seats within multi-

Member Wards are not held by a single political group. In these circumstances it significantly increases the number of parish councils and parish meetings each Ward Councillor would need to attend. Having to attend so many meetings may deter potential candidates for election.

3 member wards

In preparing the response to the Commission's proposals, several Members expressed strong objection and concern to multi-Councillor Wards. Reasons included concerns around workload; Councillors within a multi-Member Ward felt that there was an expectation that they respond to everything and attend all relevant meetings within their area. There was also concern that this could lead to a lack of accountability.

There is some acknowledgement that, in some urban areas where there are large communities and few distinct boundaries, three Members Wards may be necessary.

Population growth and the Councillor : elector ratio

Concern was expressed about the expected population growth in Rushcliffe by 2027 and the impact this would have on the Councillor : elector ratio.

The electorate in 2020 was 90,558 and is projected to increase to 107,012 by 2027 (18%). With the Council size proposed to remain the same, this will have a significant impact on the Councillor : elector ratio, increasing it from 1 : 2,058 to 1 : 2,432. Noting comments about multi member Wards, that would mean that on average, Councillors in three Member Wards would be serving an

electorate of 7,296 electors, who could be spread out over a significant area. This could place large demands on individuals where there is Councillors for the area represent multiple parties.

Retaining the same number of Councillors over the larger electorate would lead to the Councillor : Elector ratio exceeding comparable areas within Nottinghamshire, for example the ratio in Gedling is currently 2,198 electors per Council, while the average for Newark and Sherwood is 2,379 electors per Councillor. In Bassetlaw the ratio is even lower with an average of 1,845 electors per Councillor.

Aligning boundaries

Councillors felt it would be helpful that, wherever possible, Ward boundaries should align with Division boundaries to avoid confusion and create a sense of place.

Proposed Warding arrangements

Ward	Comments
Abbey	<p>The Council feels that the proposed Ward is too large without natural boundaries. Rather than reflecting local communities, the proposals feel arbitrary with the sole basis being electoral equality. They remove a sense of place from a suburban area. There is no community hub within the proposed Ward to provide a sense of identity. No significant development is planned within the area.</p> <p>The Council would suggest revising the boundaries of neighbouring Wards.</p>

One suggestion identified neighbouring Wards with one or two members, the boundaries of which could be redrawn to provide a more manageable area. A specific suggestion was made to redraw the proposed Abbey, Musters and Lutterell Wards creating three Wards each with two Councillors.

One suggestion identified Davies Road as a natural geographical boundary for the Ward, bringing Eltham Road and Blake Road into Abbey Ward and all of the Priory Road and Foundry Road area into the Trent Bridge Ward as it has an affinity with Henry Road and Millicent Road. The issues affecting residents in those areas are considered similar. Within this suggestion, Carnarvon Road was also identified as having greater affinity with the Trent Bridge area because of the location of the school at the boundary. As part of this suggestion, a preference was expressed for moving the boundary from Gordon Road to Burleigh Road or Stamford Road (or further north as determined by the numbers). The current boundary at Leahurst Road was considered appropriate with residents on both sides of the road being in the same Ward. This suggestion also recognised a feeling that the houses in Alford Road, south of Leahurst Road, have a greater affinity with Edwalton.

Aslockton & Cropwell

The Council does not support this proposal. Its vast geographical size is not conducive to effective and convenient local government. Instead, the Council suggests that Aslockton and Cropwell should remain as two separate Wards. The Council also asks that Barnstone is moved into Nevile and Langar Ward and suggests locating Upper Saxondale within Radcliffe on Trent as its natural centre for amenities.

Some comments received in the drafting of the response supported the suggestion of Aslockton and Whatton Parish Councillors, which was to retain an enlarged Cranmer Ward incorporating: Aslockton, Whatton in the Vale, Scarrington, Flawborough, Orston, Elton and Granby. There was also an indication that there was a strong local connection to the name Cranmer Ward, named for being the birthplace of Archbishop Cranmer.

This would sit alongside an amended Cropwell Ward featuring Cropwell Butler, Cropwell Bishop, Tithby and Wiverton and Colston Bassett.

Barton in Fabis

The Council recognises the significant development that is planned for Fairham Pastures in coming years and the complexities of finding a solution that is viable in both 2022 and 2027. The Council is aware of strong local feeling about the proposals as they currently stand because they do not respect the historical links and established identities of existing communities.

The Council supports the requests of local communities that Sutton Bonnington, Normanton on Soar and Stanford on Soar should be grouped together and Gotham, Thrumpton, Ratcliffe on Soar, Kingston upon Soar and Barton in Fabis (including the Fairham Pastures development) be grouped.

	<p>The current proposals will see Barton in Fabis village being separated from four similar villages with which it has historic links that are reflected in modern day community links. The Council has seen evidence of parochial church links, joint parish council meetings, joint campaigns relating to matters of local interest, shared amenities and social connections amongst the communities. This evidence is set out in the submission that is being made by all of the local parish councils and parish meetings.</p>
Bingham North	<p>The current proposal is to rotate the boundary for Bingham by 90 degrees from an East and West Ward to a North and South Ward. This would cut across county divisions and would cause confusion. The East/West approach fits with the surrounding villages, with the East side taking the whole of the centre of Bingham. This would mean that the town centre would be represented by one set of Councillors only. By changing the orientation, the town centre would split. This would be confusing for residents, particularly as they would then follow a different pattern to the county divisions.</p> <p>If retaining an East/West split was affected by the number of electors, there is the potential for Mill Hill Estate to be moved to provide greater electoral equality.</p> <p>The view of a majority of Members who were involved in drafting the response was that the proposal was not supported, and it was requested that where possible any changes to Ward boundaries should be consistent with county division boundaries.</p> <p>In drafting the response, an alternative view was also expressed, which understood and accepted the proposals.</p>
Bingham South	See comments for Bingham North.
Bunny	<p>The proposed Bunny Ward would comprise small parishes that share similar characters that sit well together. With limited development planned in this area, the Council is supportive of the proposal.</p>
Compton Acres	<p>Compton Acres and Lutterell run together. With no community hub in Lutterell, residents in this area look to Compton Acres, which has its own facilities. The Council therefore suggests that the proposed Compton Acres and Lutterell Wards be combined into a single 3-Member Ward. Notwithstanding comments elsewhere in this document expressing concern about the challenges of 3-Member Wards, it is considered in this instance to be the most convenient solution. It would avoid imposing artificial boundaries on a community, separating it from its amenities.</p>

Cotgrave	While having some concerns about three Member Wards, the Council acknowledges the number of houses within this area, which makes the proposal logical. Bringing in Normanton on the Wolds and Clipstone also makes sense as it reflects the county division.
East Bridgford	<p>The Council does not support the proposals for East Bridgford as it does not consider that the size of the area is conducive to effective and convenient local government.</p> <p>A more suitable proposal would be the use of the A46 as a natural boundary, creating a one Member East Bridgford Ward and a one Member Thoraton Ward. Small settlements around the boundary (the Flintham and Newton areas) would sit comfortably in either Ward and provide some flexibility for ensuring electoral equality.</p> <p>An alternative was also put forward which would see the creation of two Wards:</p> <p>Newton & Saxondale: Upper Saxondale, Saxondale village, Newton, Shelford, Car Colston and Screveton East Bridgford & Flintham: East Bridgford, Kneeton, Flintham, Sibthorpe, Shelton, Hawksworth and Thoraton</p>
Edwalton	<p>Overall, the Council accepts the proposals for the Edwalton Ward. Keeping the new housing estate at Sharp Hill with the rest of Edwalton is logical as it does not have its own facilities and would share the services available in the wider Edwalton area.</p> <p>The Council notes the proposal to move a part of Edwalton into Gamston Ward; there is concern that this may cause confusion amongst local electors but recognises it may be necessary to provide for better electoral equality in the new area.</p>
Gamston	The Council has already expressed some concern about moving some residents from Edwalton into the Gamston Ward because of a lack of affinity. It is recognised that the only way to resolve those issues would be by redesigning this area and Abbey Ward, creating 2 Member Wards and with Gamston exceeding the average Councillor / elector ratio.
Keyworth and Wolds	Overall, there are no specific objections to the proposed boundaries, however the Council is aware that housing growth is planned for Keyworth which will have a significant impact on the relevant Ward Member's workload. This could prevent people putting themselves forward for election.
Leake	The Council agrees with the current recommendation to combine East Leake and West Leake into one three-Member Ward.

Lutterell	The Council does not agree with the proposal for Lutterell (see comments in Compton Acres).
Musters	The Council does not wish to suggest any changes to the proposed Ward. The geography of the Ward is sensible, based on a spine road and those roads running off it. Local residents identify with living in that area; this was evidenced during a recent by-election.
Nevile and Langar	<p>While there is mostly support for this proposal, the Council has concerns about splitting the parish of Langar cum Barnstone. On the ground, this proposal does not make sense, separating a community with a strong local identity.</p> <p>If necessary, to provide better electoral equality, one suggestion made during the drafting of the response would see a slight revision to the proposed Nevile and Langar Ward: Barnstone, Langar, Hickling, Kinoulton, Owthorpe and Upper Broughton.</p>
Radcliffe on Trent	Overall, the Council supports these proposals. If necessary, to accommodate other suggested amendments it would have no issue with Radcliffe on Trent retaining Upper Saxondale, as Radcliffe would provide the focal point for amenities for residents living in that area. The Council does request that the whole Upper Saxondale area is contained within a single Ward rather than split across two.
Ruddington	The Council supports the proposed Ward as presented.
Soar Valley	See comments within Barton in Fabis.
Tollerton	The Council supports the proposed Ward.
Trent Bridge	<p>The Council has concerns about the proposed Trent Bridge Ward. There is particular concern about the Lady Bay area, which the proposals subsume within Trent Bridge. Lady Bay is a tight-knit urban village which has its own identifiable community.</p> <p>Suggestions about how Lady Bay could be separated are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reconfiguring Trent Bridge and Abbey Wards to separate out Lady Bay

- Taking Kendall Court and everywhere north of Radcliffe Road and west of Regatta Way, which would follow geographical and psychological boundaries in the area. While Ella Road could be separated with Priory Road, this area also feels like Lady Bay as it is cut off by the Parks.

The proposal to move part of Lutterell to Trent Bridge is noted.

A further comment made during the preparation of the Council's response was that the area either side of Melton Road, just south of Rectory Road, is linked by the shops and shares similar issues and would sit well together.