

Mr Ironside
West Sussex County Council
Room 21, County Hall
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RQ

16th July 2015
PH/ZT/A3a

Dear Mr Ironside,

Boundary Review of West Sussex – Arun Update

I am writing to feedback the initial comments of Littlehampton Town Council on the Review of West Sussex County Council's Electoral Divisions. We propose one small change that will achieve a lot for the Town Council and will also simplify matters greatly for our constituents.

Littlehampton was seriously impacted (sadly for the worse) by the recent Arun District Review. The consequence of that process was that 10 District Councillors remained in the Town, but spread over 4 wards rather than 5. The five wards had previously elected 2 District Councillors each and 3 Town Councillors. Once the decision to move to 4 District wards was taken this conflicted badly with the County Divisions and therefore 8 Town Council Wards were created of wildly differing electorates, causing significant confusion to the Town and a lack of democratic fairness.

Using the latest electoral figures (1st July 2015) the Town Council wards are set out below, together with how they fit into their District equivalents:

Town Council Ward	Electorate	Number of Town Councillors	Electors per Town Councillor	Variance from Average	District Council Ward	Electorate	Number of District Councillors
Beach	3826	3	1,275	-10%	Beach	3,826	2
River	5212	3	1,737	+22%	River	6,857	3
Wick	1645	1	1,645	+16%			
Courtwick with Toddington	2973	2	1,487	+5%	Courtwick with Toddington	5,884	3
Ham	2911	2	1,456	+3%			
Brookfield	4002	2	2,001	+41%	Brookfield	4,707	2
Elm Grove	461	1	461	-67%			
Cornfield	244	1	244	-83%			
TOTAL	21,276	15	1,418	0%		21,276	10

Whilst it is recognised that this Review cannot make changes to District Wards, It is also understood that the Wards of Town and Parish Councils can be changed. It is our hope that this opportunity can be taken.

Currently, the Town Council wards align with the County Divisions as follows:

County Division	Electorate (1/7/15)	Littlehampton Town Council Wards	Arun District Council Wards
Littlehampton East	7,828	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brookfield • Beach 	Brookfield Beach
Littlehampton Town	8,584	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River • Ham • Elm Grove 	River Courtwick with Toddington Brookfield
Arundel and Wick*	4,862 (Littlehampton figure only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtwick with Toddington • Cornfield • Wick 	Courtwick with Toddington Brookfield River

*** Arundel and Wick also includes the parishes of Arundel, Burpham, Houghton, Lyminster and Crossbush, South Stoke and Warningcamp.**

The proposal set out in your e-mail below proposes moving the Town Council's Cornfield Ward from the Arundel and Wick Division to Littlehampton Town. The explanation given is "– this would better balance the electoral numbers in both divisions and provide better community interest for those living south of the A27." The first of these two points may well be true, but the second is surely tenuous given that the adjacent Town Council Wick ward, which lies South of the A259, is proposed to remain in Arundel and Wick!

Ideally the Town Council would like to work with you to try to resolve some, if not all, of the issues that we face as a result of the last review. However, your proposal does offer a way forward to address the Town Council's biggest headaches, namely the two mini-wards of Cornfield and Elm Grove. With one small change to your proposal, they could be removed. This would be as follows:

1. If the Town Council's Cornfield Ward, along with Elm Grove Ward, was moved to Littlehampton East, rather Littlehampton Town, the following could be achieved:
 - a. There would be a better balance of electorates (using 1st July 2015 electorate figures) – Littlehampton East (8,533) and Littlehampton Town (8,123). Under your proposal Littlehampton East would remain at 7,828 and Littlehampton Town (where there is a much greater chance of increased housing) would grow to 8,828.
 - b. The sense of community referred to in your rationale is better justified along the Horsham Road than the A 259 and this would then bring this area into line with the District Brookfield ward. Indeed, Littlehampton

East would once again comprise the District's Beach and Brookfield wards in their entirety.

- c. The name Littlehampton Town would more clearly reflect its Division.
 - d. By losing its two "mini-wards" the Town Council would have much better electoral equality
2. This would necessitate some other changes to balance out the Town Council figures. A revised ward structure would need to be introduced. This could look like this:

Town Council Ward	Electorate	Number of Town Councillors	Electors per Town Councillor	Variance from Average	District Council Ward	Electorate	Number of District Councillors
Beach	3826	3	1,275	-10%	Beach	3,826	2
River	5212	4	1,303	-8%	River	6,857	3
Wick	1645	1	1,645	+16%			
Courtwick with Toddington	2973	2	1,487	+5%	Courtwick with Toddington	5,884	3
Ham	2911	2	1,456	+3%			
Brookfield	4,707	3	1,569	+11%	Brookfield	4,707	2
TOTAL	21,276	15	1,418	0%		21,276	10

- 3. It is accepted that the figures being used are current. However this is not really a problem for the Town Council given the frequency of County and District reviews and the ability to seek a Community Governance Review.
- 4. Given the opportunity to look at this afresh, the Town Council would be looking to bring together their Ham and Wick wards and also include the "Ham" part of River Ward which has ironically been left out of Ham Ward!

Other than on these points, the Town Council is supportive of your proposals, but would very much like to achieve electoral fairness and community buy-in to the important matter of ward boundaries. We would greatly appreciate your support in progressing this with the Boundary Commission.

Yours sincerely

Peter Herbert
Town Clerk