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21 May 2013

DRAFT

Dear Mr Keale

**REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS
RESPONSE TO DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

We write on behalf of the whole Council in response to the Commission's draft recommendations for the future warding pattern of the Borough, as published on 13 November 2012.

The Council warmly welcomes the significant regard the Commission has had for the Council's proposed future warding pattern which we submitted in response to your consultation on future warding patterns earlier this year. The Council particularly welcomes the Commission's support for a 41 member Council and the recognition that this offers the potential for a best match with the statutory criteria the Commission is required to have regard to.

Of the minor changes to ward boundaries that the Commission proposes when compared to the Council's submission, we support the proposed changes to the boundaries of: -

- Bestwood St Albans ward (moving the Leapool and Sherwood Lodge elements to Redhill and Calverton wards respectively);
- Calverton ward (transferring a smaller area from Woodborough parish than that we proposed originally);
- Redhill ward (moving the small numbers of electors on Cross Street from Daybrook ward)
- Coppice ward (moving the small number of electors into Plains Ward)
- Woodthorpe ward (moving the small number of electors in the Clumber/Beech/Birkland Avenue areas into here from Porchester Ward)
- Porchester ward (moving electors in the Simkin Avenue and Pilkington Road areas wholly into this ward)
- Carlton Hill (moving the whole of Morley Road into this ward)
- Cavendish ward (inclusion of Chesterfield Street in this ward)

/continued...

The Council would however urge you to reconsider the proposed changes to the boundaries between Netherfield and Carlton wards and between Gedling and Phoenix wards.

For the former, while we understand the Commission's desire to deliver improved electoral equality in the area, the proposed changes make no real sense in community identity terms. We have ourselves reconsidered our original submission in this area and would now suggest that Manor Road should be the boundary between the proposed Carlton and Netherfield wards. This would be much stronger in community identity terms, bringing Carlton Fire Station, Carlton Library and Carlton Ambulance Station into Carlton ward (all of which are situated on the western side of Manor Road). We are confident that this would still leave both wards within tolerance levels with regard to electoral equality, while much better reflecting community identity in the area.

For the latter, we would argue that using Priory Road as a boundary would better reflect community identity between the Gedling and Phoenix wards, but accept that the Friday Lane area fits better with Gedling ward (though the roads appear to connect on a map, there is in fact no through road between the two). We would therefore ask you to consider a revised boundary between the wards, whereby Priory Road and both sides of Third Avenue form the south-eastern boundary of Phoenix Ward, with the Friday Lane area remaining in Gedling ward in line with your proposals.

We have produced revised maps for both of these suggested changes and these are enclosed.

We are also asking you to consider a further very minor "sense" change moving one or two properties between Cavendish and Phoenix wards (two houses fronting onto Westdale Lane) – again maps of the suggested changes are attached.

Finally, there are two issues not mentioned in your report where your mapping suggests changes where the report does not. In both instances, we have enclosed copies of our original maps for reference.

To the northern end of Redhill ward, your maps appear to take out a small rural area at the ward's northern end, which we had suggested should form part of the ward. Our rationale here was and remains that Lime Lane represents a logical and defensible boundary for the ward and as such we would argue that Lime Lane between Dorket Head and the A614 should form the boundary between Redhill and Calverton wards.

Also, while your report makes no reference to any difference of view between our submission and your recommendations with regard to the boundary between Gedling and Plains wards, your map appears to propose a different boundary at the north western edge of Gedling ward to that which we submitted. The rationale behind our proposal was for all current and possible future development in that area (accessed from Mapperley Plains and/or Spring Lane) to be part of the Plains ward and the boundary we suggested reflected the likely extent of such development, having regard to the boundary of the proposed adjacent Gedling Country Park. This remains a key issue as the inclusion of any future development in that area in Gedling ward would make no sense in terms of either community identity or convenient local government. Could we ask that you check whether there has been an administrative error here and make adjustments as appropriate if this is the case.

Can we conclude by thanking you for the full and reasoned consideration you have given to

the issues raised in the review so far and ask that you give similar consideration to the two further changes we are suggesting here. If you have any further questions, please contact Stephen Bray, our Review Leader, in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

W John Clarke
Leader of the Council

Chris Barnfather
Leader of the Conservative Group

Paul Hughes
Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group