

Eastleigh Borough Council

Electoral Review

Detailed submission for a warding pattern to the Local Government Boundary Commission

Introduction

This submission represents the Borough Council's preferred pattern of wards and electoral arrangements for implementation from 2018. It is based on the Council's submission for a 39-member Council with elections by thirds, in the context of providing electoral arrangements to accord with the Borough's Local Area Committee system of internal governance.

Background

The Borough Council has since 1976 seen substantial population growth yet has maintained electoral arrangements for 44 councillors throughout this period. Population growth is set to continue but as a consequence of wishing to achieve electoral arrangements to accommodate internal governance for the Council's Local Area Committee (LAC) system within recognised parish and community boundaries, the Council recommended that it proceed from 2018 with 39 councillors. The Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) endorsed this approach.

The Council's LACs are the building block for Borough's decision-making: they act as the primary contact point for Parish and Town Councils, have responsibility for determining all planning applications and licensing issues, and have delegated budgets from Cabinet for operational expenditure within their areas. They overview capital projects in their area and maintain relationships with the public sector from health to police and community safety, education and libraries, youth services and public transport. They matter: so their boundaries linked to natural and historic communities is at the centre of democracy in Eastleigh, and has been for twenty years.

The Council's submission for warding arrangements reflects its commitment to maintain and enhance its LAC system, achieving the LGBC's objective of maintaining 2021 future electorates for each ward within 10% of the average electorate for each councillor, and providing, in the majority of cases, 3-member wards. This 3-member ward arrangement works well for all except two parish council areas, as explained in this submission.

This submission therefore details warding patterns within each of the five LAC areas. It has been subject to consultation with each of the LACs including all members of the Council ahead of determination by the Council's Administration Committee.

Chandler's Ford and Hiltingbury

The Council's existing arrangements provide for four two-member wards. The overall electorate of this area is 17,389 at 2021, suggesting two three-member wards. No changes to parish electoral arrangements are required from the proposed that:

Hiltingbury

The existing Hiltingbury East and Hiltingbury West wards are combined to form a new three-member ward with 8,861 electors (8.1% above the average electorate for 2021).

Chandler's Ford

The existing Chandler's Ford East and Chandler's Ford West wards are combined to form a new three-member ward with 8,528 electors (4.1% above the average electorate for 2021).

The proposals are shown on Map CFH attached.

Eastleigh

The Council's existing arrangements provide for three three-member wards. The overall electorate of this area is 23,644 at 2021, suggesting three three-member wards are retained. The Eastleigh LAC area includes all of the unparished part of the Borough, together with the parish of Allbrook and North Boyatt and part of the parish of Chandler's Ford. It is proposed that:

Eastleigh North

The existing Eastleigh North ward is retained with the addition of the DF polling district from Eastleigh Central and that part of the DB polling district to the north of the Romsey-Fareham railway line (Barton Road, Bishopstoke Road, Chickenhall Lane and Dutton Lane, labelled DN on Map ELAC) totalling 7,556 electors (7.7% below the average electorate for 2021). This will form a new ward with a clear southern-boundary of the railway line that is easier to understand and better reflects community identity than the current ward. The parish of Allbrook and North Boyatt is contained within this ward.

Eastleigh Central

The existing Eastleigh Central ward is retained with the removal of the DF polling district from and that part of the DB polling district to the north of the Romsey-Fareham railway line (Barton Road, Bishopstoke Road, Chickenhall Lane and Dutton Lane, labelled DN on Map ELAC) totalling 8,332 electors (1.7% above the average electorate for 2021). This will form a new ward with a clear northern-boundary of the railway line that is easier to understand and better reflects community identity than the current ward.

Eastleigh South

The existing Eastleigh South ward is retained on its current boundaries totalling 7,746 electors (5.5% below the average electorate for 2021). It contains one ward of the parish of Chandler's Ford with no changes to polling districts.

Bishopstoke and Fair Oak

The Council's existing arrangements provide for two two-member and one three-member wards. The overall electorate of this area is 17,667 at 2021, suggesting two three-member wards are created. It is proposed that:

Bishopstoke

The existing Bishopstoke East and Bishopstoke West wards are merged with the removal of AG polling district in Fair Oak parish to the Fair Oak & Horton Heath ward along with the addition of part of the AH polling district (Hardings Lane, Olympic Way, Roselands Close and Stoke Heights, labelled AK on Map BIFOHH) totalling 8,719 electors (6.4% above the average electorate for 2021). This will form a new ward that provides for all the parish of Bishopstoke to be contained within one ward. As with the existing arrangements it is not possible to achieve all of Fair Oak & Horton Heath parish in one ward due to the total electorate of this parish. This proposal achieves unity of those roads from Olympic Way to the junction of Sandy Lane in the same ward, and is easier to understand and better reflects community identity than the current arrangements with a portion of Fair Oak & Horton Heath parish in Bishopstoke East ward. A new parish ward will be required for the AK polling district as Fair Oak North-West.

Fair Oak & Horton Heath

The existing Fair Oak and Horton Heath ward is retained with the addition of the AG polling district and the removal of part of the AH polling district (Hardings Lane, Olympic Way, Roselands Close and Stoke Heights, labelled AK on Map BIFOHH) totalling 8,948 electors (9.2% above the average electorate for 2021). This proposal retains the largest possible portion of Fair Oak & Horton Heath parish in one ward, removing that part of the parish with the strongest geographical linkage to Bishopstoke. The existing Fair Oak West parish ward can be re-accommodated in Fair oak, subject to the Borough's forthcoming Community Governance Review.

Hedge End, West End and Botley

The Council's existing arrangements provide for five two-member and one three-member wards. The overall electorate of this area is 32,172 at 2021. There is no way to achieve a uniform pattern of three member wards in this part of the Borough without creating wards that both cross parish boundaries with no community coherence. Hedge End's electorate of 16,703 in 2021 allows for two three-member wards. West End's electorate of 10,075 in 2021 allows for two two-member wards, with a two-member ward for Botley with 5,394 electors. These arrangements require no changes to parish warding. It is proposed that:

Botley

The existing Botley ward is retained on its current boundary with two councillors and 5,394 electors (1.3% below the average electorate for 2021). This ward contains all of, and only, the parish of Botley.

Hedge End North

The HE (Shamblehurst) polling district of Hedge End Wildern is added to the Hedge End Grange Park ward to form a three-member ward of 7,850 electors (4.2% below the average electorate for 2021). This ward contains all of, and only, the wards of Grange Park East, Grange Park West and Shamblehurst of Hedge End Town Council. No changes to parish electoral arrangement are required.

Hedge End South

The HD (Wildern) polling district of Hedge End Wildern is added to the Hedge End St John's ward to form a three-member ward of 8,853 electors (8.0% above the average electorate for 2021). This ward contains all of, and only, the wards of Freegrounds, St Helens, St Johns and Wildern of Hedge End Town Council. No changes to parish electoral arrangement are required.

West End North

Two roads (Atlantic Park View and Carpathia Close) of the HK polling district are added to HH polling district as the only change to the existing ward of West End North to form a two-member ward of 4,982 electors (8.8% below the average electorate for 2021, Map HEWEB refers). This ward contains all of the wards of Allington, Hatch Grange and Moorgreen of West End Parish Council. Moving Atlantic Park View and Carpathia Close achieves a more understandable boundary to the ward including all of this part of Townhill Farm north of Townhill School west of Townhill Way in one ward. No changes to parish electoral arrangement are required.

West End South

Two roads (Atlantic Park View and Carpathia Close) of the HK polling district are removed to HH polling district with the addition of BD polling district from Bursledon & Old Netley ward as the only changes to the existing ward of West End South to form a two-member ward of 5,083 electors (7.0% below the average electorate for 2021). This ward contains all of the wards of Chartwell, St James and Telegraph Woods of West End Parish Council. The addition of BD (Kanes Hill) ward of the parish reunites the entire parish in two wards, as was the position before the last electoral review. No changes to parish electoral arrangement are required.

Bursledon, Hamble and Hound

The Council's existing arrangements provide for two two-member and one three-member wards. The overall electorate of this area is 15,669 at 2021, suggesting two three-member wards are created. It is proposed that:

Bursledon & Hound North

The BF polling district of Hamble & Butlocks Heath is added to the existing Bursledon & Old Netley ward with the removal of electors south of the Southampton-Fareham railway line to BH polling district (2-16a Hound Road and the Royal Victoria Country Park, Map BHH refers) to the new Hamble & Netley ward and the BD polling district to West End South ward to form a new three-member ward with 7,398 electors (9.7% below the average electorate for 2021). This proposal contains all of Bursledon parish in ward, with the addition of the northern two settlements in Hound parish (BC Old Netley and BF Butlocks Heath) and allows the removal of part of West End parish from this ward. No changes to parish electoral arrangement are required.

Hamble & Netley

The existing wards of Netley Abbey and Hamble & Butlocks Heath are merged to form a new ward with the removal of those parts of BF polling district north of the Southampton-Fareham polling district (2-16a Hound Road and the Royal Victoria Country Park) to BH polling district to form a new three-member ward with 8,271 electors (0.9% above the average electorate for 2021). This proposal contains all of the parish of Hamble-le-Rice and the southern settlement in Hound parish (BG and BH Netley Abbey) and reunites the Country Park with Netley Abbey ward from which it was removed at the last electoral review to equalise numbers. The Country Park's principal access is from Netley Abbey, not Butlocks Heath. No changes to parish electoral arrangement are required.

Future Proofing

The Council is aware that the Commission can only take account of electorate projections through to October 2021. The proposals here do however try to take account of future-proofing by linking under-sized wards to areas with current development proposals from the Local Plan most recently taken to the Planning Inspectorate by the Council. Under-sized wards Botley, Bursledon & Hound North, Eastleigh South, Hedge End North, West End North reflect this pattern.