

Malvern Hills District Council

Personal Details:

Name: Dean Clarke

E-mail:

Postcode:

Organisation Name: MHDC

Comment text:

'Hi Dean' is the usual greeting I receive from residents of Hallow Ward when I am out and about. Rarely (and then I suspect only ironically) am I spoken to as Councillor Clarke. My children and grandchildren have grown up having attended the local primary and high schools, scout groups etc in the area. As an individual Councillor I am very grounded in my communities' needs. During lockdown for example I knew those in each of our sub communities who would know of needs of the vulnerable and I was able to assist and keep a watching brief on these. On my daily morning walk I usually receive a few waves from motorists and verbal greetings from those I pass. Knowing who their local Councillor is they can see that I practise what I preach in the monthly Parish Mag, picking up litter and communicating with others around you. I am part of my excellent engaged community. I always try to lead and encourage by example; sometimes there are others there before me! The present Hallow Ward gives many opportunities for those I represent to talk to me, either when I am walking, cycling or having a drink in the pub. A larger area would of necessity make this more difficult. At a recent Councillor safety briefing I was able to answer the question of how do you deal with a irate resident knocking on your door? My reply was... I would invite them in, give them a cup of tea, a slice of cake and most importantly offer a listening ear; far easier to do so when you are able to know individuals in your community. I together with my wife and family attend and engage in many of the social activities within the Hallow Ward. My ward budget is shared between Hallow and Sinton Green to support local initiatives which benefit members of those communities to encourage social cohesion. I feel I would not be able to continue this community and personal based approach if Hallow Ward were to become part of a mega sized 'Broadheath' Ward which is being proposed. I feel such a large sized Ward would become too large for me to make more than a token presence in each of its parts and thus reducing my effectiveness as a District Councillor. The projected new mass housing for Broadheath will also present its very own unique challenges that would detract from the personal attention I give to my existing Ward at this time. I do not believe that the Hallow community would identify itself with Broadheath. I would suggest that you look again at adding Holt to the Hallow district... a natural amalgamation that confirms geographically existing family, educational, church and community ties. As an alternative Wichenford Parish is again a natural addition to Hallow Ward with strong connections and similarities to Monkwood, Sinton Green and Grimley At each of my elections I have rejoiced at the high proportion of voters choosing to cast their vote. Whether for me or against it shows how individuals value having a Councillor they can identify with. It is my belief that single member communities are the most effective in not only representing it's residents but in building the community ties that are so important in reducing one of the greatest problems for our rural community... social isolation. I would ask you to look again at your proposals, as they stand they will harm Hallow.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded

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I have already submitted a preliminary response to these latest proposals but the very strong negative submissions from both Hallow and Grimley Parish Councils, together with the very many verbal comments I have received, all opposing the proposal to conjoin Hallow Ward with Broadheath Ward to share two Councillors, has prompted me to make a more analytical comment. MHDC requested the review in order to: i. Reduce the number of Councillors ii. to more fairly apportion the electorates representation. iii. Increase the number of single member wards iv. Reduce the number of three member wards It has significantly failed to achieve the last two of these aims and in so doing has formulated proposals that I believe will reduce the effective representation of Hallow Ward. There seem to me to be three options: 1. The present proposal to merge Broadheath and Hallow wards. 2. Joining Holt Parish into Hallow Ward 3. Joining Wichenford Parish into Hallow Ward Merging Broadheath and Hallow Wards. This present proposal is not only Harmful to Hallow but also ignores the imminent great growth in both Broadheath and Rushwick Parishes. Under the present SWDP over 2000 houses are to be built in Broadheath, many of these under construction at present. Over 1000 new houses are proposed for Rushwick in the SWPR with other developments now approved under appeal by Inspector. I see no consideration of this in the current proposals; these already give the new proposed Broadheath Ward as being 9% above the average... at the top end of the acceptable variance. I note that Worcester City is proposing an increase of Councillors because of an increase of population that will have a lower impact. I would suggest that the number of Councillors proposed may need to be revisited, a single Councillor ward for Rushwick as previously proposed could then be built. At the moment the interests of Rushwick are being sacrificed in favour of Leigh and Alfrick. Joining Holt Parish into Hallow Ward This seemed because of geographic and social grounds the most sensible manner in which to increase the Hallow Ward electorate to above the average. I understand that Holt PC and one member of the electorate submitted an objections to this proposal on the basis that Holt is more rural than Hallow. As the overwhelming population of Holt is situated in a nuclear village, similar to Hallow and the rest is similar in its distribution to Grimley Parish this seems a somewhat overstretched argument If Holt were to be added to Hallow it would of course decrease the already much below average population of the proposed Baldwin Ward, though some adjustment could be perhaps in the proposed makeup of Martley as this is oversubscribed by 5%. Joining Wichenford Parish into Hallow Ward A popular alternative is to add Wichenford to Hallow Ward. This parish is very similar to that of Grimley. Its major settlement similar to both Sinton Green and Grimley, its other more diffuse elements similar to those in the present Hallow Ward. Importantly it would still be represented, as at present by one Councillor. This would achieve a Ward where the number of voters is almost exactly on target of 2300. Whichever option is taken I would ask that you reconsider and move away from the retrogressive step of forming a dual Councillor mega ward with Broadheath. Dean Clarke: District Councillor for Hallow Ward MHDC

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded