

COUNCIL 12th July 2023 Item 33 Ward Boundary Review Appendix A

– Extract from Boundary Commission Document

Kettering

Avondale Grange, Brambleside and Kettering Central

59 The Labour Group submission for Kettering, which mirrored that of the Kettering CLP, provided evidence of community identity to support its proposals. The Conservative Group proposals also provided some evidence but, as discussed previously (paragraphs 51–52), placed a significant number of electors from Kettering in a ward reaching the outskirts of Corby, which we have not adopted. The knock-on implications of this across Kettering means that we have not adopted a number of other Conservative Group proposals.

60 Without proposing any specific boundaries, the submission from Kettering Town Council provided broad support for the Labour Group’s proposal, particularly with respect to the distinctions of community identity within the town, and the suggestions that these areas could best be represented with wards of fewer than three councillors.

61 We have adopted the Labour Group/Kettering CLP proposal for Avondale Grange and Brambleside wards. Evidence was provided that the Brambleside estate in particular is a broadly self-contained community, which faces different issues from the Town Centre. Avondale Grange was described in terms of the links created by schools and Weekley Glebe recreation grounds, with services provided in a hub along Stamford Road. Our proposed boundaries for this ward run along Lancaster Road, Connaught Street, Rutland Street and to the south of Elizabeth Road.

62 We have broadly adopted the Labour Group’s proposal for a Kettering Central ward, which keeps the entire Town Centre together in a single ward, with boundaries running along and the north of St Mary’s Road, and along Windmill Avenue. In contrast, the Conservative Group proposed a boundary running along Montagu Street, Silver Street and Horse Market, resulting in the division of the Town Centre in a way which we do not consider would reflect community identity, or provide for effective and convenient local government.

63 We have modified the Labour Group proposals slightly, to provide a boundary continuing south along the railway line as far as Kettering Station, before running along Station Road as far as Northampton Road. This allows for both Kettering Central and St Peter & St Michael wards to have improved electoral equality.

Barton Seagrave & Burton Latimer and Ise

64 Both the Labour and Conservative groups’ proposals retained the existing boundary between Ise and Wicksteed wards, splitting the recent housing development south of Cranford Road in a way which we do not consider

reflects the community identity of this area, or offers a strong and clear boundary. We have instead modified the boundary to run to the north of this area, allowing the development on the north side of Cranford Road to be included with their future neighbours in Barton Seagrave & Burton Latimer ward, as well as ensuring that electors on the Grange Farm site have access to the remainder of their ward.

65 The Conservative Group proposed a three-member ward covering Barton Seagrave and Burton Latimer, while the Labour Group proposal was for a two-member Burton Latimer ward, with Barton Seagrave parish added to Ise ward. While we consider this decision is finely balanced, we have adopted the Conservative Group proposal as part of our draft recommendations, based on both the good electoral equality offered, and the excellent evidence provided of community links between Burton Latimer and Barton Seagrave. Evidence was provided of links between churches, schools and community groups across the two parishes.

66 Our proposed Ise ward joins two communities on the western side of Kettering, joined by Barton Road. It broadly follows the proposal of the Labour Group and Kettering CLP, with the exception of Barton Seagrave which is placed in a ward with Burton Latimer as discussed above. We considered creating single-member wards for the two sections of this ward, but the electoral equality would be very poor, with variances in excess of 50%. We also considered merging this ward with Pipers Hill to create a three-councillor ward, but consider that the boundary between Pipers Hill and Ise along the River Ise is strong and clear, and note that this boundary was proposed by both the Labour and Conservative groups.

67 We accept that, in isolation, the links between the communities in the different sections of our proposed Ise ward are less strong than we might wish. However, we consider that this ward is necessary to provide for a good pattern of wards that balance our statutory criteria across the wider Kettering area.

68 The Headlands Area Residents' Association suggested leaving the existing Wicksteed ward intact. We note that the existing ward ranges from Barton Seagrave to Central Kettering, and has the same issues in the area around Cranford Road as discussed above (paragraph 64). We have therefore not adopted this proposal.

Pipers Hill and St Peter & St Michael

69 We have adopted the Labour Group proposal for Pipers Hill ward. Evidence was provided of community hubs such as Kettering Science Academy and Kettering Rugby Club, and it was noted that the proposed ward offered relatively strong boundaries throughout. The Conservative Group proposal was for a larger, three-member ward covering the eastern portion of Kettering Town Centre, together with the Avondale Grange area. As discussed above (paragraph 62) we have not adopted this proposal.

70 The Labour Group proposed separate, single-councillor wards for St Peters and St Michael's, retaining the existing boundary to the south of Abbots Way. A number of residents noted that this boundary would split Thurston Drive, and requested that the southern section of this road be placed in a ward with the remainder of the area. The Labour Group proposal for St Michael's also offered poor electoral equality, with 11% more electors than average.

71 We propose merging the proposed wards of St Peters and St Michael's into a two-councillor ward, which allows all of Thurston Drive to be together, and offers good electoral equality. As discussed above at paragraph 63, we have further improved the electoral equality of this ward by moving the boundary of this ward with Kettering Central southwards to Station Road. We would welcome further evidence during consultation on these draft recommendations regarding whether our proposed ward shares a community identity, or if a split into two single-member wards with adequate equality might be a better fit for our statutory criteria.