

ALDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Council Document To discuss the proposed Governance Review by Hertsmere Borough Council regarding the Aldenham West parish boundary.	AGENDA item 7 Full Council Meeting 28th February 2022
--	---

Background

In 2018, the borough ward boundaries were changed following the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) review of Hertsmere. Aldenham Parish Council (APC) commented on the proposals when contacted by the boundary commission and stated it felt that the A41/M1 made permanent boundaries for the wards in Aldenham West.

In July 2017 APC response to the consultation was

- APC agreed that the part of the 'Birds Estate' that is currently within the Aldenham West ward would probably be best served as part of Garston. There was no linkage physically or culturally with the parish of Aldenham, and most residents will migrate to Watford for shopping etc.
- However, Patchetts Green (currently in Bushey North) does have a cultural link to Letchmore Heath, is geographically separate from the rest of Bushey North, and many residents go to Radlett for shopping etc

At the time the boundary commission could only consider the Hertsmere Borough Council wards, and these were amended for the 2019 elections. The result is that those in Bushey North vote for an Aldenham West Borough Councillor (used to be Bushey North) but not an Aldenham West Parish Councillor as they are not in the APC parish boundary - very confusing.

APC were advised that only Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC) can review the parish ward boundaries which they are now undertaking. This consultation is now taking place and should be concluded by November 2022.

The options currently being given in the consultation is

- a) That the area known as the 'Birds Estate' is removed from Aldenham West and becomes a parish meeting (in other words they look after themselves without a parish council) and possibly If you decide you wish to be included in the parish, there will be some extra council tax (but there is also a slight reduction in the Borough tax, as some services would be duplicated). We can give exact figures on the evening, but it would be roughly £100 per year (less than £2 per week) for a Band D property.
- b) That the APC ward boundary of Aldenham West is aligned with the HBC ward, with residents of Patchetts Green and Hillfield Road now being included.

HBC state the following points for and against

ADVANTAGES

- Restoring Aldenham Parish Council to its original historic boundaries.
- Less confusion at polling stations.
- Access to all services - Aldenham Parish Council provides (e.g. grass cutting).
- Inclusion to any amendments to the neighbourhood plan.
- Consultations and representations on planning applications that could affect your area.

- Could benefit from CIL money being spent in the area.

DISADVANTAGES

- Would have to pay a precept to Aldenham Parish Council

In 2018 at the conclusion of the boundary commission consultation APC wrote all residents affected in the area and stated the following:

We would like to have a discussion with you about what services you would like to receive from Aldenham Parish Council (APC) if you joined us. There would be some automatic services you would be entitled to, such as:

- Representation at our fortnightly planning meeting where we discuss all the forthcoming planning applications and will represent you at Borough Council meetings if you wish. APC is a Statutory Consultee of the Borough Council, so they must ask our views.
- Receipt of the "Around Radlett" Parish magazine with information about all local forthcoming events and council activities.
- As an elected body, we have good access to Borough and County Councillors and can help lobby for changes needed to your infrastructure (e.g. traffic issues)

But, in addition to these, you might wish to choose to have other services from us, such as

- Regular grass cutting. Hertsmere are cutting back on the regularity of cutting verges and public areas of grass, whereas APC cut grass fortnightly during the summer period. You may not know that we employ our own ground staff, and do not use outside contractors.
- We currently provide play equipment for children in Radlett and Letchmore Heath, and some could be provided for you also, as we own land in Patchetts Green.
- In Radlett we have the Christmas lights, and hanging baskets in the summer, and this is being extended to Letchmore Heath, so could also be an option for Patchetts Green.
- You may wish to consider a small community shop, and we could help with the setting up and obtaining grants for this.

However, there may be other services you would like from us, which we have not considered, and look forward to hearing your suggestions.

Financial Implications

If the number of households in the parish of Aldenham increase as a result of the proposals then this will either mean a reduction in precept amount reducing per household.

Any development in this new area will attract CiL funding for APC (15%) which currently is allocated to HBC.

Members are asked to consider this report.

Peter Evans
Council Manager