

Bodmin Town Council



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Ms L Dunkeyson
Review Manager (Cornwall)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor
Millbank Tower
LONDON
SW1P 4QP

Date: 2 August 2017

Our Ref: SMF/CBR/2017

Your Ref:

Dear Ms Dunkeyson

Local Government Boundary Commission for England Electoral Boundary Review – Cornwall Council

Bodmin Town Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Local Government Boundary Review for Cornwall Council and in particular the number of Councillors within Cornwall Council. This matter was considered by Full Council when it met on 20 July 2017 and I have been instructed to respond making the following response.

These comments are made from the perspective that Bodmin Town Council is one of the largest and most proactive town councils in Cornwall. The Town Council provides a range of high quality services and facilities throughout the town and has a budgeted operational expenditure of £1.4 Million in the financial year 2017/18.

Bodmin is currently the fastest growing town in Cornwall and has an increased housing target figure within the Cornwall Local Plan of 3,000 additional homes over the plan period 2010 to 2030. The predicted growth and the increased demand for community infrastructure (schools, GPs, dentists and parks and opens spaces etc) to keep pace with that development will see the case work for any Cornwall Councillor increase significantly.

Bodmin Town Council recognises the issue of electoral variance across Cornwall and the need to achieve a fairer representational voice for the people of Cornwall. However, the Town Council is also very cognisant of the rural nature of the County and the travel distances between some of the more rural parishes to a Cornwall Council office or venue where meetings are held. A reduction in Cornwall Councillor numbers

could lead to a challenging situation for a Member to adequately represent their area if they are required to travel minor country roads to attend a number of parishes. Whilst electronic communication can break down barriers the public still expect there to be easy access to their elected representatives through face-to-face contact, particularly for more sensitive areas of community work. The County does not enjoy the level of public transport connections in comparison with other counties and is reflective of the amount of central government funding that does not cascade further than Bristol for transport network upgrades. It can therefore be an economic barrier and a difficult task for local residents at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale to engage given the costs and limited options the public transport network provides.

Bodmin Town Council would support a higher number than the council size of 87 being presented by the Commission and the Town Council would prefer the number of Councillors for Cornwall Council to be 99 as it considers that this number would achieve a fairer representational voice for the people of Cornwall across the varied and complex landscape that complex decision making and commissioning services and awarding contracts can bring. The 99 figure would likely lead to there being only 2 Cornwall Councillors for Bodmin but it is considered that this would be a reasonable fit for a town with a population of around 15,000 with a growth pattern towards 20,000 by the year 2030 (Planning Future Cornwall – Growth Factors: Bodmin Community Network Area v2 (February 2013 refers) and would not unduly affect the ability to achieve a good fit for the continuing role, function and work of the Community Network Area.

Bodmin Town Council hopes that this view and the many others that you are likely to receive is carefully considered as part of the review process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S.M. FACER". The letters are stylized and connected, with a small dot at the end of the signature.

S M Facer
Town Clerk