

APPENDIX 6 – HRA CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND



7th May 2020

Dear Boundary Commission,

I am writing on behalf of Havering's Residents Associations, to bring to your attention a clear case of 'gerrymandering' by the Leader of Havering Council, Councillor Damien White.

You will find attached an enhanced recording of a Conservative Party meeting, and a transcript that have been shared with us by a Conservative Party Councillor, who has subsequently resigned from the Conservative Group.

The key areas of concern are:

- Restricted debate on the 4 Council Options. Controlling the options by getting the Chief Executive to agree discussion of the 4 options at a Governance Meeting rather than Full Council, ensuring their option was the only one to go forward to the Boundary Commission.
- MP Andrew Rosindell was invited in to discuss the proposals suggesting "if I am honest, what they are proposing, some of them would be disastrous. If we don't influence it we would never ever win ever again"
- Suggestion Chief Executive Andrew Blake-Herbert was aware, that Councillor Joshua Chapman's cousin a Boundary Commission employee had entered into discussions with the Leader, outside of the formal process, which is a clear conflict of interest .
- The suggestion of manipulating wards in South Hornchurch.
- The suggestion of introducing 2 Councillor Wards, that would work in their favour for leafleting.
- The suggestion by the Leader that Central Office had advised him on 2 Ward Members to gain 'political advantage'.
- The suggestion they need to work with the North Havering Residents Association, and Councillor Darren Wise, to get their support and how they have included their wishes.
- The Suggestion the Administration option will be 'politically advantageous to the group'.
- Collaboration with the Chief Executive Andrew Blake-Herbert in manipulating numbers to work in favour of 'bolstering up' Romford and MP Andrew Rosindell.
- Manipulation of % for Conservative wards compared to other party wards

Due to the serious nature and extent of the Leaders political manipulation of the Local Government Boundary Commission process, we recommend the Councils submission be considered null and void.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Chair of H.R.A Councillor Gillian Ford
Deputy Chair of the H.R.A Councillor Graham Williamson
Leader of the RA Councillor Ray Morgan
Leader of the UCRA Councillor Linda Hawthorn

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Leader of the Independent Residents Group Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Deputy Leader of the UCRA Chris Wilkins



HAROLD HILL
INDEPENDENT



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30/06/2020 at 09:08

URGENT Complaint in relation to Havering Councils Submission

To: "haveringra@gmail.com" <haveringra@gmail.com> Cc: "Buck, Richard" <richard.buck@lgbce.org.uk>, "McDonald, Glynn" <glynn.mcdonald@lgbce.org.uk>

Dear Councillor Ford,

Thank you for your letter in relation to Havering Council's submission as part of the current electoral review of the authority.

I do think it important to stress that this electoral review is being carried out by the LGBCE and we will decide the pattern of wards for Havering. As you recognise in your letter, we are an independent body and we treat all submissions with equal weight, regardless of who has submitted them.

While politically neutral, we are not politically naïve and accept that any change to electoral boundaries will have a political consequence. However, when drawing up our recommendations, we consider all evidence received and take decisions solely based on what will provide the best balance of our statutory criteria. This sometimes means that we adopt the proposals submitted to us during consultation, or develop our own warding pattern should we consider it necessary. We also publish all submissions received on our website in order to ensure there is transparency.

I note your concerns about how the Conservative Group, council officers and others have approached the electoral review. However, this is not a matter for the Commission and I would not wish to comment on your allegations. If you have concerns of this nature, they should be addressed to the Council directly through its own complaint procedures. It is not possible for us to control how stakeholders choose to engage with the electoral review process, but I am content that we have strong procedures in place which ensure our transparency and independence. Our draft recommendations are published on 28 July 2020 and there will be another round of consultation where anyone can comment on our proposals. This consultation will close 5 October 2020 and we would urge all those interested in the outcome of the review to engage with our consultation.

I hope this addresses your concerns and highlights how we ensure the transparency and independence of the review process.

Yours sincerely,
Jolyon Jackson.

Jolyon Jackson CBE

Chief Executive
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
1st Floor, Windsor House

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COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND**

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haveringra@gmail.com

01708 641317

1st July 2020

Dear Mr Jackson,

Thank you for your letter and response in relation to our complaint.

We certainly had no intention of bringing the LGBC's independence into question, we were merely bringing to your attention the development of Havering Councils Submission which has not been based on the natural communities we have in Havering but based entirely on political bias on behalf of the current administration.

Whilst we accept your impartiality in this process could you please confirm that the people responsible for undertaking Havering's review will be made aware of the contents of our submission. This will assist your officers in viewing Havering's official submission in context and the information we have provided will support the analysis of the submissions, culminating in a robust and fair, recommendation from the LGBC.

Kind regards

Chair of H.R.A - Councillor Gillian Ford

Deputy Chair of the H.R.A - Councillor Graham Williamson

Leader of the Residents Association - Councillor Ray Morgon

Leader of the Upminster & Cranham Residents Association - Councillor Linda Hawthorn

Leader of the Independent Residents Group - Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Deputy Leader of the Upminster & Cranham Residents Association - Councillor Chris Wilkins



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