



27th April 2018

The Rt. Hon Sajid Javid MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Rt. Hon Sajid Javid MP

Re: Representation Regarding Buckinghamshire's Local Government Reorganisation

Edlesborough Parish Councillors were very disappointed and alarmed to discover that the Minister is minded to implement a single unitary authority for Buckinghamshire to absorb the functions of the existing five district councils and the county council.

The Parish Council's experience in recent years is that Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) has struggled to manage its current responsibilities effectively and that Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) in contrast has shown itself to be progressive, adaptable and relatively efficient in delivering services. The ability of a council to adapt to the changing economic environment of today's world is crucial and it would seem that AVDC are far more capable in that respect than BCC.

The Parish Council's principal interface with the County Council has been with Transport for Bucks (TfB). Despite successive reorganisations and claims by the County Council that it would improve services and reduce costs, TfB has in reality delivered a progressively worse service. This failure to deliver has resulted in the Parish Council finding it necessary to take on a number of activities under devolved services, previously the responsibility of the County Council, in an effort to restore standards.

Whilst the Parish Council has little experience of the other services provided by the County Council (we have no library and a very limited public transport), it would appear that Central Government's assessment of BCC's child care provision also falls well short of expectation according to recent Ofsted Reports.

The Parish Council strongly believes that the twin unitary authority proposal put forward by the five district councils is infinitely preferable to the single authority proposal that the Minister is apparently minded to approve. If BCC cannot cope effectively with its currently responsibilities, extending those responsibilities will inevitably result in a reduction in the delivery of those services currently provided by AVDC. The Parish Council recognises that the declared financial savings generated by the single authority proposal are greater than alternative proposed by the district councils, but it is extremely important that any savings are not at the expense of service delivery. We believe that the twin unitary authority proposal would not only reduce costs, albeit to a lesser extent, it would in all probability improve the delivery of services.



EDLESBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

All the indications are that a single unitary authority the size of Buckinghamshire (less Milton Keynes) is just too large geographically to manage effectively and efficiently, regardless of the dedication shown by councillors and officers. It must be recognised that non-metropolitan Buckinghamshire is only slightly smaller than the neighbouring authority of Northamptonshire and yet the Inspector's recommendation for that county is that it be split into two unitary authorities. North and South. Why should what is appropriate for Northamptonshire not be equally appropriate for Buckinghamshire?

Yours sincerely

P E Pataky

Miss P Pataky
Clerk to Edlesborough Parish Council

CC
Martin Tett, Leader of Buckinghamshire County Council
Rt. Hon John Bercow MP (Buckingham)
County Cllr Anne Wight (Bucks CC)
District Cllr Chris Poll (AVDC)