

Dear John,

Thank you for your email dated 27 June requesting further details in order to assist your Working Group regarding the Community Governance Reviews (CGR's) of Corsham and Chippenham.

Firstly, the position regarding the Chippenham CGR is that Corsham Town Council has no objection in principle to Corsham's boundary with Chippenham to the east of the A350 being reviewed and possibly re-aligned but that any change cannot be supported until details of a proposal are known.

Regarding the Corsham CGR, this is much more complex and a number of our reasons and justifications are set out below. You already have a copy of the plan regarding Corsham I sent previously and this has not altered. Further explanation and supporting material will be provided once Wiltshire Council's formal review process is underway.

Corsham's existing parish boundaries are not based on the current reality of where communities are, and planned to develop. A CGR would be able to address this. The case for a CGR is made more urgent by wishing to set sensible boundaries for our Neighbourhood Plan (NP). A failure to get boundary changes will not remove the need for a NP but would diminish its effectiveness in an area of considerable importance to the Town.

Corsham's current boundaries have little relevance to our current communities or planned development under the Draft Core Strategy or the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Economic Plan. The Planned development of Chippenham to our East and developments to the West of Corsham demand a logical review of where community boundaries lie. The Government believes that effective local government should be judged on its ability to deliver high quality services economically and efficiently and give a democratic voice to the people who use them. The Town Council, which already serves both the town and surrounding villages, is in a strong position to deliver services to an expanding community in a very cost-effective and sensitive way, reflecting the needs of different communities. New boundaries will provide the basis of greater integration of our communities, around a common vision of how we meet the challenges and benefits from the opportunities the future offers.

A key feature, which the legislation and guidance sets out for boundaries, includes a 'No Man's Land' between Parishes. Any look at local maps would indicate that such a boundary can be identified to both the East and West of Corsham. To the East we will need to respond to Chippenham's view of their aspirations to the East of the A350 and we would wish to include the whole of the Rudloe community and the area around MOD Corsham in plans, leaving a clear, undeveloped area of countryside with sparse population between us and our neighbours.

The Town Council has the desire to provide the very best service possible to all the communities which can clearly be identified as being part of Corsham today and as it is earmarked to develop in line with the principles set out in the Draft Core Strategy and Swindon and Wiltshire Local Economic Plan. We are not a Council fixed in the past, but one seeking to achieve the very best possible outcomes from change. The

Town Council aims to realise the aspirations and needs of our whole community through protecting our heritage and environment, and being proactive in providing the required homes and economic growth, supported by the necessary infrastructure. We are not seeking to simply increase our revenues, indeed we would seek to reduce the burden on all our council tax payers by improving the services we provide while achieving economies of scale.

Several of the advantages of a CGR for Corsham are identified below. The list is not exhaustive.

A Community Governance Review of Corsham could:

- Correct parish boundary anomalies through Rudloe and Westwells
- Replace the arbitrary parish boundaries which dissect and divide Rudloe housing estate and would avoid people living in different parishes to their neighbours
- Put in place clearer settlement boundaries and identities for Corsham and Box, based on fixed features which are likely to remain in place for many years. The current proposal follows the established and recognised AONB and A365 as boundaries
- Facilitate the future sustainable development and expansion of Corsham
- Provide clearer and effective governance of Corsham and Box, with more inclusive participation, representation and leadership
- Offer more efficient, cost-effective and convenient delivery of council services at a local level
- Enable a clear and effective Neighbourhood Plan to be produced for Corsham
- Build a stronger, cohesive and more engaged Rudloe community which feels part of one place
- Improve democracy, electoral accountability and representation with increased elected representation in a new/merged ward
- Update out-of-date historic boundaries which have not been reviewed in over 100 years
- Strengthen relationships with MOD Corsham and businesses to the west of Westwells Road, promoting an economically vibrant community
- Align the boundary to likely changes in housing and employment land as indicated in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Wiltshire and Swindon Strategic Economic Plan

- Bring Corsham Primary School (Broadwood site) into Corsham, where the majority of pupils reside
- Provide a building block for the unitary council division ward boundaries
- Allow Chippenham parish to have a clearer settlement boundary, using the A350 as a boundary

I hope this information is sufficient to enable your Working Group to commence a CGR for Corsham at the earliest opportunity. Please let me know if you require anything else from me.

Kind regards
Dave

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