

Electoral Review

**Wiltshire Council Submission to the Local Government
Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)
Stage 1 – Pattern of Divisions – 16 October 2018** 

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- A. Electoral Division Summary

Executive Summary

1. That 98 proposed electoral divisions be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (“The Commission”) as detailed in this report to provide electoral equality, community cohesion and effective and convenient local government.

Introduction

2. On 15 September 2017 the Commission informed Wiltshire Council (“The Council”) of its intention to carry out an electoral review in its 2018/2019 work programme.
3. This was because, as of 1 December 2016, 25 of the electoral divisions in Wiltshire had a variance from the average division greater than 10% and 2 divisions had a variance from the average of more than 30%. The last electoral review of Wiltshire Council by the Commission was in 2008 in preparation for the first unitary elections in 2009.
4. On 28 August 2018 the Commission announced the outcome of the preliminary stage of the electoral review in that it was minded to retain the existing council size of 98 members. The Commission reserved the right to vary the number by one or two should it consider that this would provide for a better division pattern across the council area.
5. The Commission’s decision to retain a council size of 98 was stated to be ‘*in the context of the Area Boards and their importance to the Council’s decision-making process*’.
6. The Council’s deliberations for the next phase of the electoral review were made taking into consideration the centrality of the Area Boards both to its submission in the preliminary phase, and the Commission’s acceptance of the importance of that structure when determining the overall council size.
7. Given the importance of Area Boards to the Council’s representation and decision-making as accepted by the Commission, and the distinct nature of community areas, the Council’s proposals retain all existing Area Boards, suitably adjusted to meet the necessary criteria for the review. The Area Boards are as follows:
 - Amesbury Area Board
 - Bradford on Avon Area Board
 - Calne Area Board
 - Chippenham Area Board
 - Corsham Area Board
 - Devizes Area Board
 - Malmesbury Area Board
 - Marlborough Area Board
 - Melksham Area Board
 - Pewsey Area Board
 - Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Board
 - Southern Area Board
 - South West Wiltshire Area Board
 - Salisbury Area Board

- Tidworth Area Board
- Trowbridge Area Board
- Warminster Area Board
- Westbury Area Board

8. The Council recognised that any proposed divisions still required explicit demonstration of how said divisions meet the statutory criteria for electoral reviews. The criteria against which the Commission will test any proposals before drawing up draft recommendations are as follows:

- To deliver electoral equality where each member represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the council area.
- That the pattern of divisions should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities.
- That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.

9. In drawing up its proposals the Council has focused on there being single member divisions only. As noted in its preliminary submission a single member division structure, with no multi-member divisions, provides clearer, more accountable and focused representation of communities.

Engagement with Communities

10. The Council positively engaged with the Commission to provide publicity and notification of the official consultation of the Commission, which runs from 28 August to 5 November.

11. In addition to providing the Commission with contact information for town and parish councils, political parties, community groups and other partner organisations with the council area, the following engagement was undertaken:

- A briefing note was published including links to the Commission's consultation, electorate projections, submissions made during the preliminary phase and technical guidance on preparing submissions for stage one.
- Town and parish councils were further contacted directly to alert them to the consultation, and the Council welcomed any representations if any wished to share those representations.
- A press release was provided on the Council's website, along with a new webpage dedicated entirely to information on the electoral review.
- Further engagement was made with local press outlets to ensure publicity for the review was maximised.
- Posters and leaflets provided by the Commission were distributed to Council libraries and hubs.
- Information gathering sessions were arranged for all councillors with the Chairman of the Electoral Review Committee to discuss the outcome of the preliminary phase and discuss local community and electoral implications.
- The Electoral Review Committee also held a series of workshops to discuss preliminary proposals, and all councillors were provided with details of public representations.

Division Size and Electorate Projections

12. As required for the preliminary stage of the electoral review the Council provided the Commission with the electorate for each polling district within the council area as predicted for 2024. The methodology for the calculation was included in the preliminary stage submission.
13. In September 2018 it was identified that the projected electorate in a number of polling districts may have altered as a result of significant changes to anticipated housing delivery at major development sites.
14. The projected electorate figures provided in the return to the Electoral Commission were assessed against more recent housing trajectories (which were updated in March 2018) to identify any significant movement on development sites where this difference would result in a significant change to the anticipated electorate.
15. These updated figures were then provided to the Commission. The overall implication was a reduction in the total projected electorate by 2024 to **417,881**. Therefore, the average division size required of the Commission's minded to decision of 98 members was **4263** electors.

Key Principles

16. In preparing its proposals for endorsement by the Council the Electoral Review Committee adhered to the following key principles:
 - i) Statutory Criteria - Electoral Equality: the abiding rule that was considered. Every effort was made to ensure all divisions were within a variance of 10% from 4263 electors.
 - ii) Statutory Criteria - Community Identity and Effective and Convenient Local Government: All community area boards would be preserved, while accepting some changes would be appropriate to achieve electoral equality, and to better reflect local identity to correct where previous reviews required some separation of communities because of electoral equality. Each councillor would be represented on one area board only, and each division by a single member.
 - iii) Previous Community Governance Reviews: Where the Council had carried out previous Community Governance Reviews it would be appropriate to adjust division boundaries and area board boundaries to reflect those changes, even where this would otherwise conflict with principle vii.
 - iv) Preservation of Parishes: The Council made every effort to avoid splitting any small parishes into different divisions. Parishes which already exceed to target electorate numbers would need to be split, and in some historic cases parishes have been split which would need to be considered carefully. Electoral equality would override the consideration where necessary.
 - v) Splitting Parishes: Where it is necessary or appropriate that a parish be split between divisions a focus on community cohesion will determine how it should be split. This may result in a simple split of 2 constituent parts, or a more complex split into divisions if that best meets the needs of and links in the community. Each community was likely to have unique factors when considering such a factor.

- vi) Urban/Rural split: Where possible divisions should be either urban or rural in nature, with split divisions created where the needs of electoral equality or community cohesion in doing so outweighs this factor, and larger urban areas should be clearly defined where this is possible and appropriate.
- vii) Urban extensions: Where there is known new development on the edge of an urban area the default position would be where it is possible to include said development within an urban electoral division to ensure appropriate community cohesion, rather than create a large rural division with a small area of urban development which reduces the effective governance of that area. It is recognised that as advised by the Commission this would require the warding of existing parishes, and would only be possible, if appropriate, where a minimum of 75 electors would be located in that area before the May 2021 local elections. Furthermore, it is accepted that parish boundaries would not be adjusted by such a division, and that any future community governance review would have to consider if any adjustment was appropriate.

Wiltshire Council Submission

17. The Council's Electoral Review Committee, a politically balanced committee of 10 members, met publicly on **5 September, 2 October and 8 October to develop recommend proposals** to Full Council. Workshops were also held for the Committee on 27 September and 1 October.

18. Full Council considered and approved the proposal on 16 October.

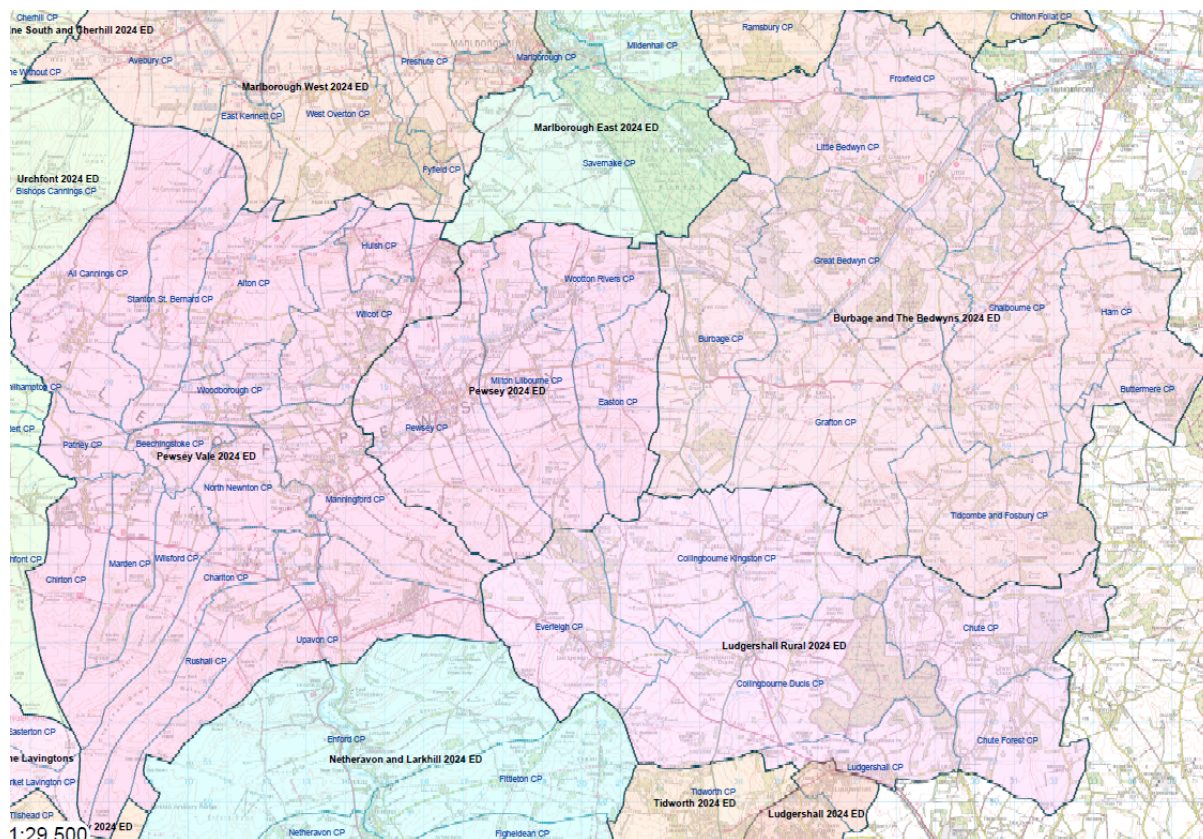
Summary of Proposed Electoral Divisions

Commission recommended	98 (+/-1)
Proposed number of councillors	98
Divisions where no change	xx
Divisions where changes encompassed whole parishes	xx
Divisions with significant change	xx
New divisions	x
Loss of division	x

Electoral balance and exception requests

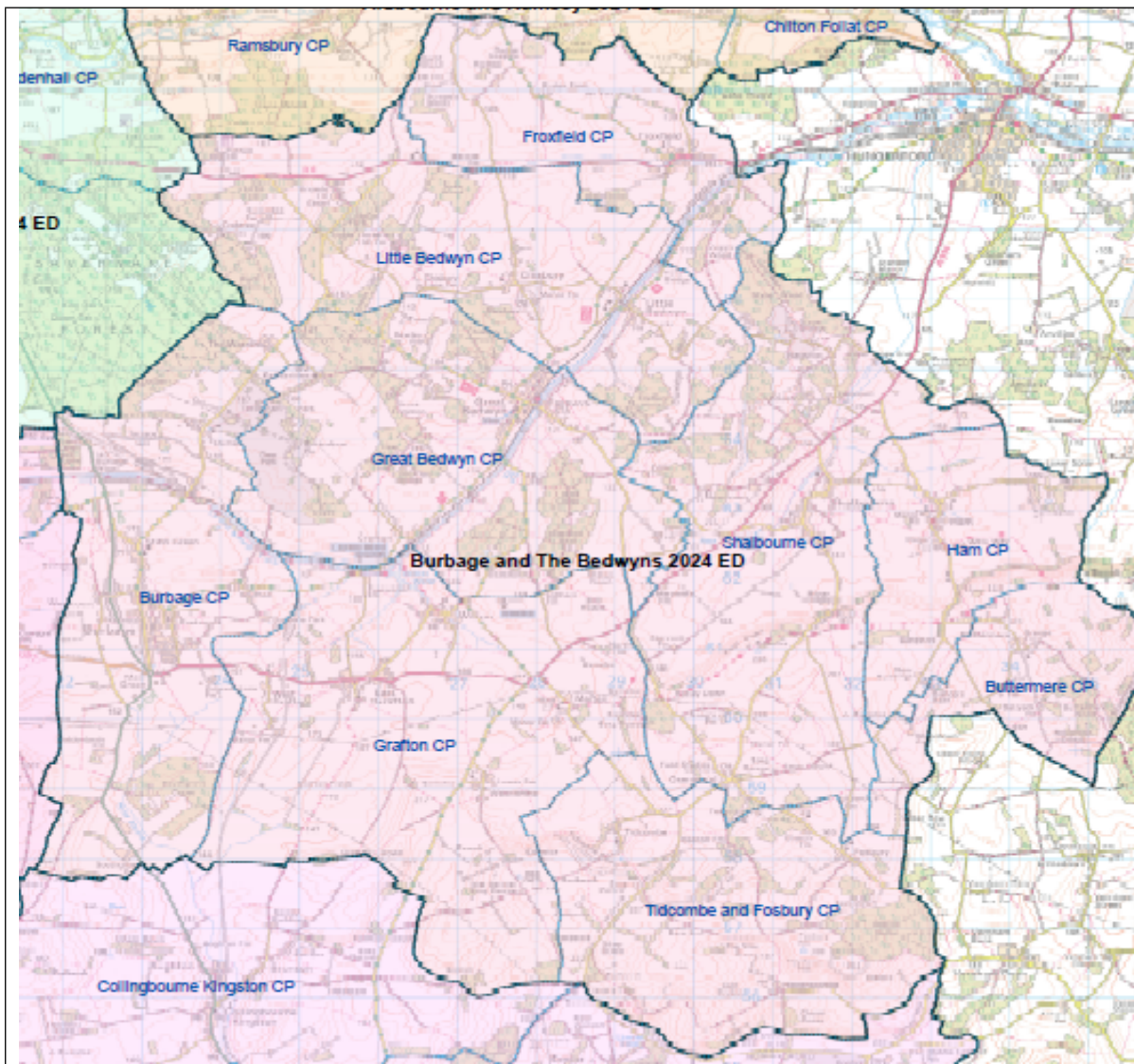
Variance	Existing Divisions in 2024	Proposed 2024 Divisions
30+%	8	0
20-30%	10	0
10-20%	28	1
0-10%	52	97
Average electorate	4263	4263

Proposed Electoral Divisions Pewsey Area Board



Pewsey is a large and almost entirely rural community area, without any towns, largely covered by a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Through the area board, community area partnership and other groups the small parishes are able to combine their voice into a cohesive whole for the distinct nature and needs of the local community.

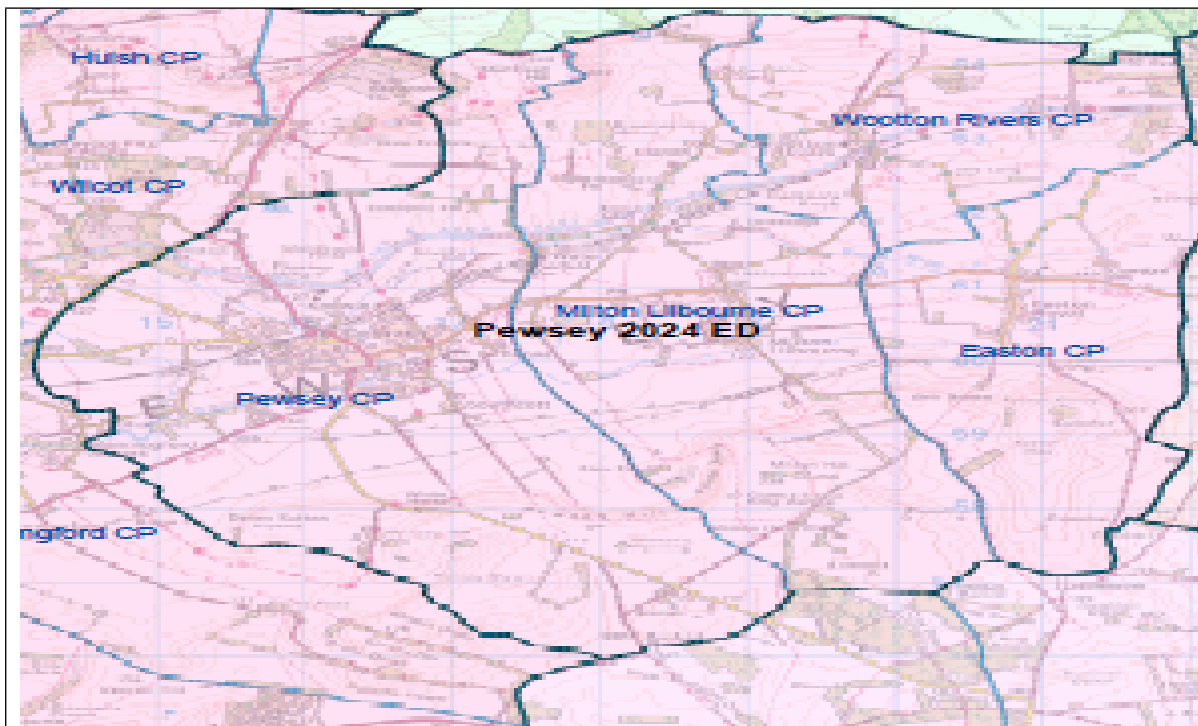
It is proposed that three divisions make up this area. All are within acceptable variance of the electoral average. A substitution arrangement would be in place with Tidworth and Marlborough for the purposes of ensuring quorate decision-making.



Division 10		No of Councillors: One	
List the parishes here: Burbage, Buttermere, Grafton, Great Bedwyn, Ham, Little Bedwyn, Shalbourne, Shalbourne, Froxfield, Tidcombe & Fosbury			
Forecast Electorate in 2024	4547	Variance	7%
Evidence and rationale that the proposals meet the three statutory criteria			
It is proposed that the parishes of Tidcombe and Fosbury (from Tidworth Area Board), and Froxfield (from Marlborough Area Board), be included with the parishes of the former Burbage and the Bedwyns Division. Froxfield and Tidcombe and Fosbury are both isolated areas of their former communities, and in the case of Tidcombe and Fosbury in particular has a stronger community link to the Burbage and Bedwyn area rather than the more urbanised, military area of Tidworth. Froxfield is also included to assist with the achievement of overall electoral equality across all council divisions, and on a community basis it is considered could sit within either area.			
Impact on Parish Council arrangements: None			

Polling district	Parish	Old Division	Electorate 2024
SL1	Burbage	Burbage and The Bedwyns	1573
WA2	Buttermere	Burbage and The Bedwyns	35
VI1	Grafton	Burbage and The Bedwyns	564
VJ1	Great Bedwyn	Burbage and The Bedwyns	1143
WA1	Ham	Burbage and The Bedwyns	145
WH1	Little Bedwyn	Burbage and The Bedwyns	208
YC1	Shalbourne	Burbage and The Bedwyns	39
YD1	Shalbourne	Burbage and The Bedwyns	456
VH1	Froxfield	Aldbourn and Ramsbury	307
YC2	Tidcombe & Fosbury	The Collingbournes and Netheravon	77

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Division 11	No of Councillors: One
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List the parishes here: Easton, Milton Lilbourne, Pewsey, Wootton Rivers

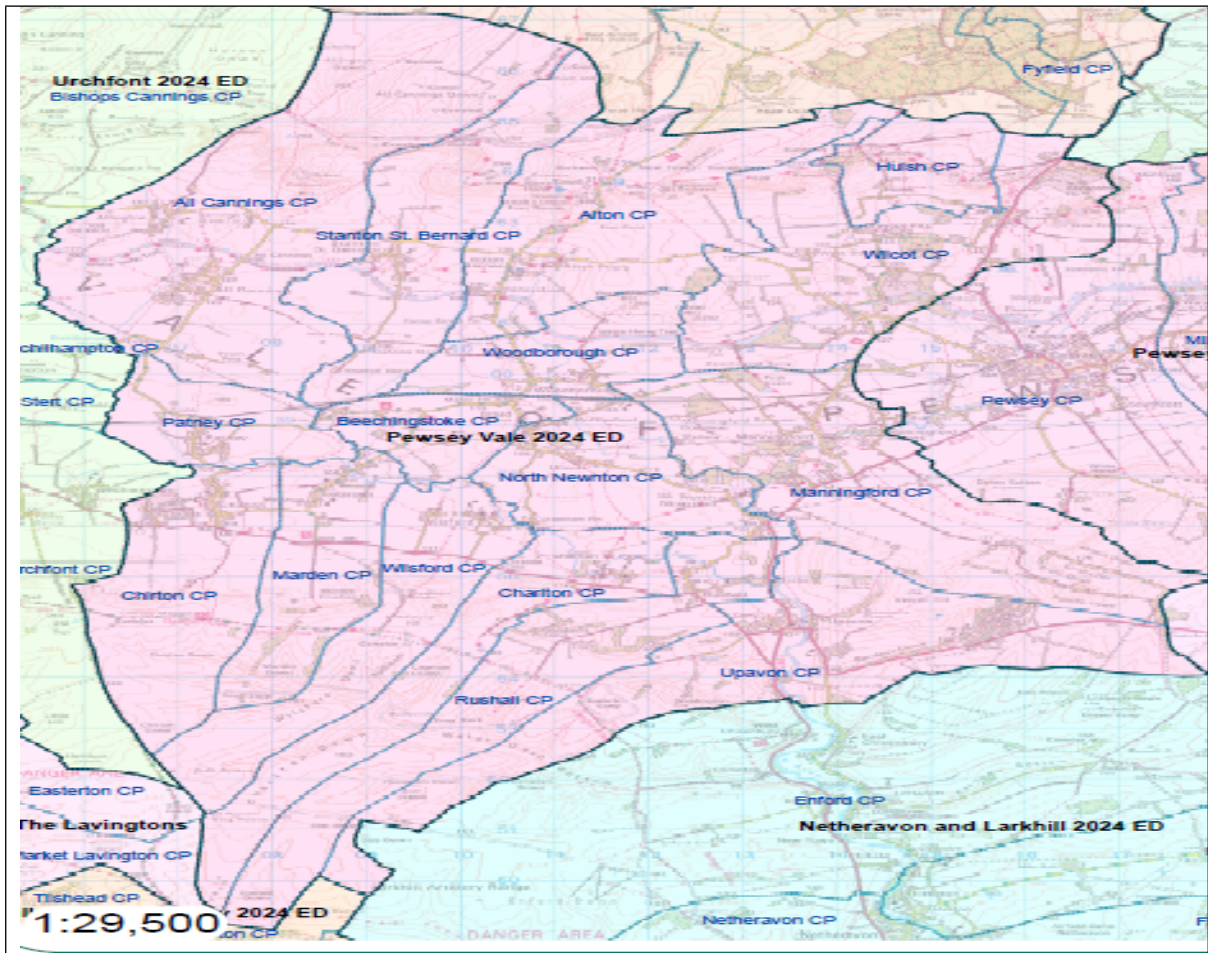
Forecast Electorate in 2024	4161	Variance	2%
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Evidence and rationale that the proposals meet the three statutory criteria

No changes are proposed from the existing Pewsey division. The electoral variance is acceptable, the combined villages have strong community links and governance would not be improved through the addition of further parishes around the largest village in the area, Pewsey.

Impact on Parish Council arrangements: None

Polling district	Parish	Old Division	Electorate 2024
VB1	Easton	Pewsey	215
WQ1	Milton Lilbourne	Pewsey	446
XF1	Pewsey	Pewsey	1837
XF2	Pewsey	Pewsey	1447
ZK1	Wootton Rivers	Pewsey	216



Division 12		No of Councillors: One	
List the parishes here: Alton, Beechingstoke, Charlton & Wilsford, Charlton & Wilsford, Chilton, Manningford, Marden, North Newnton, Patney, Rushall, Stanton St. Bernard, Upavon, Woodborough, All Cannings			
Forecast Electorate in 2024	4272	Variance	0%
Evidence and rationale that the proposals meet the three statutory criteria			
It is proposed to include the parish of All Cannings (from Devzes area Board) with the parishes of the current Pewsey Vale division. This would ensure the electoral variance is acceptable, and also reflects better the local community identity as All Cannings sits at the head of the Pewsey Vale and would be appropriately represented within such a division.			
Impact on Parish Council arrangements: None			
Polling district	Parish	Old Division	Electorate 2024
SC1	Alton	Pewsey Vale	208
SF1	Beechingstoke	Pewsey Vale	136
XN2	Charlton & Wilsford	Pewsey Vale	76
ZG1	Charlton & Wilsford	Pewsey Vale	62

TB1	Chirton	Pewsey Vale	330
WJ1	Manningford	Pewsey Vale	323
WK1	Marden	Pewsey Vale	102
XB1	North Newton	Pewsey Vale	371
TB2	Patney	Pewsey Vale	119
XN1	Rushall	Pewsey Vale	119
YG1	Stanton St. Bernard	Pewsey Vale	167
YO1	Upavon	Pewsey Vale	998
ZE1	Wilcot	Pewsey Vale	242
ZE2	Wilcot	Pewsey Vale	36
ZF1	Wilcot	Pewsey Vale	202
ZJ1	Woodborough	Pewsey Vale	248
SB1	All Cannings	Urchfont and The Cannings	533

Appendix 1 – Electoral Division Summary

Name of Division	Number of Cllrs per Division	Electorate 2024	Variance 2024 (%)
Division 1	1	4245	0
Division 2	1	4616	8
Division 3	1	4686	10
Division 4	1	4577	7
Division 5	1	4643	9
Division 6	1	4024	-6
Division 7	1	4675	10
Division 8	1	4671	10
Division 9	1	4671	10
Division 10	1	4547	7
Division 11	1	4161	-2
Division 12	1	4272	0
Division 13	1	4190	-2
Division 14	1	4293	1
Division 15	1	4413	4
Division 16	1	4110	-4
Division 17	1	4115	-3
Division 18	1	4579	7
Division 19	1	4619	8
Division 20	1	4167	-2
Division 21	1	4074	-4
Division 22	1	4011	-6
Division 23	1	4630	9
Division 24	1	4638	9
Division 25	1	4737	11
Division 26	1	4266	0
Division 27	1	3876	-9
Division 28	1	4039	-5

Name of Division	Number of Cllrs per Division	Electorate 2024	Variance 2024 (%)
Division 29	1	4001	-6
Division 30	1	3969	-7
Division 31	1	4272	0
Division 32	1	3876	-9
Division 33	1	3952	-7
Division 34	1	4653	9
Division 35	1	4635	9
Division 36	1	4593	8
Division 37	1	4161	-2
Division 38	1	4117	3
Division 39	1	3930	-8
Division 40	1	4538	6
Division 41	1	4383	3
Division 42	1	4425	4
Division 43	1	4497	5
Division 44	1	4174	-2
Division 45	1	4277	0
Division 46	1	4167	2
Division 47	1	4102	-4
Division 48	1	4136	-3
Division 49	1	4041	-5
Division 50	1	4276	0
Division 51	1	4131	-3
Division 52	1	4186	-2
Division 53	1	4002	-6
Division 54	1	4039	-5
Division 55	1	4088	-4
Division 56	1	4329	2

Name of Division	Number of Cllrs per Division	Electorate 2024	Variance 2024 (%)
Division 57	1	4112	-4
Division 58	1	4399	3
Division 59	1	4259	0
Division 60	1	3980	-7
Division 61	1	4170	-2
Division 62	1	3940	-8
Division 63	1	4242	0
Division 64	1	4324	1
Division 65	1	4425	4
Division 66	1	4296	1
Division 67	1	4091	-4
Division 68	1	4508	6
Division 69	1	4279	0
Division 70	1	4344	2
Division 71	1	4320	1
Division 72	1	4535	6
Division 73	1	4432	4
Division 74	1	4016	-6
Division 75	1	4382	3
Division 76	1	4417	4
Division 77	1	4435	4
Division 78	1	3978	-7
Division 79	1	4055	-5
Division 80	1	4057	-5
Division 81	1	3824	-10
Division 82	1	4211	-1
Division 83	1	4240	-1
Division 84	1	4160	-2

Name of Division	Number of Cllrs per Division	Electorate 2024	Variance 2024 (%)
Division 85	1	4490	5
Division 86	1	4356	2
Division 87	1	4453	4
Division 88	1	3965	-7
Division 89	1	4151	-3
Division 90	1	4464	5
Division 91	1	4599	8
Division 92	1	4296	1
Division 93	1	4260	0
Division 94	1	3952	-7
Division 95	1	3947	-7
Division 96	1	4077	-4
Division 97	1	4042	-5
Division 98	1	3972	-7