

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD
COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW RESPONSES**

POLITICAL PARTIES

Response 1

To whom it may concern,

Windsor Labour Party fully endorse a single Windsor Town Council.

What is the appetite for creating a new town council for Windsor? Is a parish council needed or desired?

Our members seem very keen to have our own town council. There is a democratic deficit in Windsor that is not there for other wards.

Is there a sense of community identity in the review area and should this community be represented by its own parish council?

As there is one single neighbourhood plan there needs to be one single council for the whole of Windsor

How could a new parish council take shape?

We would like to see this take shape as soon as possible. We heard 2023 being a possible date but this seems too far away – at least there should be a shadow committee of unelected people to start setting up processes etc.

Should a new parish council be warded to reflect the communities that exist in the review area? If so how should these boundaries be drawn?

It would have to be warded as the area would be too large but it might need to be separately warded from the borough to allow smaller communities to be managed at parish level

Yours sincerely

Secretary

Windsor Labour Party

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Response 2

Governance review Response - Windsor Town Council West Windsor Residents Association

The West Windsor Residents Association was formed in 1962 to protect the interests and well-being of residents living to the West of Windsor, we represent over 1000 member households. You have asked four questions relating to the possible creation of a Windsor Town Council which we **SUPPORT**.

1) What is the appetite for creating a new town council for Windsor? Is a new parish council needed or desired?

1.1 - The West Windsor Residents Association wholeheartedly support the creation of a Windsor Town Council. In our view this will enable greater representation of local views and provide opportunities for greater participation in the democratic process.

1.2 - The WWRA have worked with other local community organisations and have been impressed with the way people volunteer to support single issues and the level of engagement could be harnessed by a central local organisation to improve efficiency and mobilise the community.

1.3 - This move to issue based politics locally, demonstrates a desire for the Windsor Town Council to be non-political in its approach, divert power back to the people and be a true enabler of local activity.

1.4 - In our view a local Town Council will enable community projects, promote local issues and make for a healthier democratic process.

1.5 - Our deliverers and community activists have reported a very positive response on the doorstep as evidenced by the large number of petition signatures submitted by the residents of our community.

1.6 - Our local borough councillors have identified a significant increase in their caseload and consequently have asked for a layer of Government which brings representation to the people whilst enabling borough councillors to focus on the strategic improvements across the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

1.7 - There is a view that a Windsor Town Council will bring additionality to RBWM services, supporting the borough in delivering its strategic objectives.

1.8 - The online and paper petition generated interest with over 2000 signatures both online and on paper, with the whole community energised to support.

1.9 - A low level response to the consultation does not indicate low support, those who responded via the petition would reasonably think that this was a sufficient expression of local support and no further response is needed. It is also likely that the invitation to respond to the current consultation has not been widely noticed, given the current situation.

2) Is there a sense of community identity in the review area and should this community be represented by its own parish council?

2.1 - The combined boundaries of the Windsor Neighbourhood Plan and Windsor 2030 suggests a single community identity.

2.2 - Windsor is one town and one community, West Windsor Residents consider themselves proud Windsorians, reflected by the postal addresses which do not differentiate.

2.3 - Windsor Cricket Club, Windsor Rugby Club, Windsor Hockey Club, Windsor Football Club and other sporting institutions draw its members from the whole town under a single identity.

2.3 - The arts across the whole town are flourishing with facilities across the whole town providing opportunities for local residents in art, music, dance and drama. The Windsor Town Council will be enabler for these community organisations and help increase participation.

2.4 - The town centre provides goods, services and employment opportunities across the whole town. There are no boundaries in this offering and other services such as hospitals and open spaces are spread out across the whole geographical area. Windsor Racecourse sits in west Windsor, yet they draw a large proportion of its custom via the boat service from the central of Windsor. This is just one example of interdependency and shows Windsor as a whole jigsaw and not just an individual piece.

2.5 - The different residents associations and community groups across the town share the same pride in the town as a whole and there is a strong identity to this effect, as proved by the inclusion of West Windsor into the Windsor Neighbourhood Plan in 2014.

2.6 - Dividing the parishes would be inefficient and lead to division in the town, this MUST be avoided.

2.7 - Windsor is cut into two halves by the trunk road running south from the M4 to Lego Land and beyond. There is a tendency for some to regard the town as being two halves rather than one integrated town.

2.8 The excellent work undertaken over several years to create a Windsor Neighbourhood Plan has demonstrated that there is a keen interest in Windsor as an integrated community, with common interests, challenges and opportunities.

2.9 - The creation of a Town Council would strengthen this cohesion and bring further benefit to the residents of the town

3) How could a Windsor Town Council take shape?

3.1 - The disparate community groups which have grown over the past few years demonstrate a dissatisfaction with the current levels of representation. A body to co-ordinate their efforts would make their efforts firstly more efficient and would enable greater representation of their views, bring democracy to the local level.

3.2 - Planning applications would be considered by the Town Council and submissions made which represent the whole town and enable local and community groups a greater opportunity to voice their opinion, ensuring a more co-ordinated community response to developments.

3.3 - The Windsor Town Forum does not work as an enabler of local representation, it disenfranchises rather than emancipates and as a non-decision making body is irrelevant to ordinary residents as demonstrated by low participation levels.

3.4 - The Windsor Town Council would take over responsibility for the neighbourhood plans which both have now expired, forming a link between the NP and the borough and providing necessary expertise.

3.5 - This plan is supported by the Windsor and Eton Society which as a heritage group would have an influence with other community organisations from the whole town in planning matters and community engagement.

4) Should a Windsor Town Council be warded?

4.1 - There are many different communities within Windsor who all deserve representation. These wards should be equally weighted in terms of seats at the table regardless of size of electorate. Prioritising community identity over electorate parity will ensure all communities have the ability to participate in local decisions. An example could be, but not definitively.

- Laing Estate
- Dedworth Manor
- Tinkers lane
- Clewer Hill
- St Leonards Hill
- Clewer Village
- Parsonage Lane
- The Boltons
- Windsor Castle
- Windsor Town
- Trinity Church
- Vansittart
- Spital Croft

4.2 - The anomaly in West Windsor concerning the area between the West of the Willows Path and Oakley Green Road needs addressing as part of this review, especially in light of the proposed developments in AL21.

4.3 - The recent boundary review provided more problems than it solved with the Bolton's now considered a part of Old Windsor in terms of RBWM representation, this would need addressing as part of the process.

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Response 3

**Windsor Liberal Democrats Submission
on the Terms of Reference for the RBWM Community Governance Review**

Introduction

The terms of reference of the Community Governance Review (CGR) appears to heavily assume that if a Windsor Town Council (WTC) is created it will be based upon the existing Borough wards and synced with the Borough elections, starting in 2023i.

The Windsor Liberal Democrats (WLD) believe that while this would be the easiest course of action it would not necessary be the best.

There are 4 issues to raise:

- The timeline
- Elections

- The wards created
- Willows (WCDW 2)

The Timeline

Simply put the WLD believe the timeline stated is too long for the heavily implied use of the existing Borough wards, the simplest course of action.

The WLD believe there is time for an inaugural election for the WTC before 2023.

This would help highlight the separate nature of the WTC from the Royal Borough; the first term of the town council could be lengthened to sync with local elections going forwardii.

The implication that the precepts and assets for the new council must be created/transferred the first April (i.e. 2022) after the reorganisation order is issued would also support an earlier, inaugural election that same yeariii.

Elections

Although it is assumed within the CGR terms of reference and the notes on conducting a Community Governance Review that the elections of a WTC would be synced with those of the borough elections, it is our belief that parish councils can have their own separate election time tables, although at their own cost.

The WLD suggest exploring the legality of syncing them, eventually, with the Police and Crime Commissioner elections.

This would allow the WTC elections to be on Windsor specific issues rather than a part of the Royal Borough politics whilst saving costs, and taxpayers money, for all concerned.

Wards

The WLD have received negative feedback about the current Royal Borough wards in Windsor, with residents confused by the similar names and/or unhappy with their boundaries, believing they did not reflect local communities.

Parish and town councils are not constrained by the need to create electoral wards within a certain variance.

The Guidance on conducting Community Governance Reviews, although it does support a general aim of equal representation, does place an emphasis on creating wards based on recognised geographic or community identities.

If the stated timetable is used, then the opportunity arises to create such wards.

Equal representation could still be achieved by varying the number of councillors per ward.

Willows

The CGR terms of reference particularly state the consultation is for the currently unparished area of Windsor.

However, an anomaly exists with the polling district WCDW 2, known as Willows, widely regarded as part of Windsor, being within the boundaries of Bray Parish Council.

As stated in the notes for guidance, Community Governance Reviews are an ideal time to look at and remove such anomalies.

It would also be beneficial to do so in the process of creating the proposed WTC as ward and councillor numbers would be affected.

However, the WLD note:

that a review concerning Bray Parish Council was conducted recently and so another may have to wait.

The original grass roots petition for the creation of a WTC was for the unparished area.

Any change in existing boundaries must be with the consultation and agreement of Bray Parish Council and the residents of the Willows.

Summary

In summary, the WLD believe if the timetable outlined in the terms of reference is followed then the issues of the creating unique wards for the WTC and the boundary anomaly have the time to be considered.

If these issues are ignored, then the inaugural election can be brought forward to 2022 and the possibility of syncing the WTC elections with those of the Police and Crime Commissioner should be investigated.

i (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, 2020)

ii (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 31

iii (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 30

iv (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 164

v (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 166

vi (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 26-27

Sources

Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020. Community Governance Reviews: Guidance. [Online] Available at:

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National Association of Local Councils, 2020. Create a Council. [Online] Available at: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/create-a-council> [Accessed 23 10 2020].

Proposed Windsor Town Council Campaign Committee, 2020. Proposed Windsor Town Council. [Online] Available at: <https://www.windsortowncouncil.uk/>

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, 2020. Community Governance Reviews. [Online] Available at: <https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/media/1929/download/>

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Windsor Liberal Democrats
Submission to RBWM Community Governance Review Working Group for a
Windsor Town Council

Introduction

The Liberal Democrats as a party, nationally and locally in Windsor, have long advocated devolving power closer to the people.

A town council for Windsor has been a manifesto commitment of the party for at least two Borough elections, and more generally supported before that.

In many ways creating such a town council will merely make Windsor equal to the rest of the Royal Borough (with the obvious exception of Maidenhead); however, it also gives the residents of Windsor many possibilities to direct the future of their own town by creating a strong, cohesive community and voluntary sector.

The Windsor Liberal Democrats (WLD) therefore believe:

- there should be a single Windsor Town Council (WTC) for all the currently unparished area

- that it should be warded to represent as far as possible the recognised geographic communities within that area

- it should have 20-25 town councillors depending on the precise number and boundaries of the wards created

We have several issues with the Community Governance Review (CGR) terms of reference which will be explored in a separate submission.

The answers and recommendations set out below are within the current terms of reference.

Obviously if the terms of reference are altered, our recommendations will need to be altered as well.

**Q1: What is the appetite for creating a new town council for Windsor?
Is a parish council needed or desired?**

The lack of a town council for Windsor (and Maidenhead) appears to be somewhat of an historical oversight as both towns were/are surrounded by parish councils. Indeed, despite lacking a parish or town council the residents of Windsor still pay a precept in all but name.

Bodies like the town forums are a recognition of the democratic and governance deficit that exists but are a poor compromise and are disliked by many residents. The existence of a grass roots campaign in Windsor, with a popular petition to create a town council, is proof of a desire for a local democratic body.

Creating a WTC would do more than correcting an historical anomaly which left democratic deficit; it would enable the residents of Windsor to have a greater democratic say in the running of their town. This would create numerous possibilities to grow and strengthen their home to be a strong, cohesive community and voluntary sector.

**Q2: Is there a sense of community identity in the review area
and should this community be represented by its own parish council?**

The WLD believe there is a sense of community, that it extends across the unparished area, and it should be represented in a single town council. If asked to define themselves by a sense of place, a place with a 'positive' feeling for people and local distinctiveness, in a geographic or community-based sense, most residents within Windsor would call themselves Windsorians, particularly when delineating themselves from the residents of Maidenhead, and other surrounding towns.

There is also precedent in many of the political and business organisations that serve Windsor encompass the whole area.

The grass roots petition calling for a Windsor Town Council, which was the impetus for the setting up of the Community Governance Review, was for all the unparished area and is indicative of a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride in the whole of Windsor.

There are geographical communities within the overlaying community of Windsor such as Clewer and Dedworth and some sub-Windsor organisations, such as the West Windsor Residents Association.

However, such geographical communities and organisations, whilst important, are not effective and convenient sizes for separate councils compared to a WTC which can be reflective of the identities and interests of the community in the Windsor area as a whole, whilst avoiding unnecessary duplication of government structures (see answer to question 4 and other submission)

Q3: How could a new parish council take shape?

The WTC, as all local councils, must have an Annual Parish Meeting, an Annual General Meeting, and standing orders for the election of a Chair/Vice Chair and vote to accept its standing committees once a year.

The exact nature of the standing orders and committee structures must be tailored to the needs of the WTC and Windsor but can be easily based on existing local councils or with guidance from NALCiii.

Due to historical precedent and to further community cohesion and civic pride an honorary position of Windsor Town Mayor should be considered.

A code of conduct and terms of reference including a method for holding Windsor Town Councillors to public account should be drawn up. This will need to include use of Social Media and data etc in the digital age.

As per the Parish Charter, mechanisms and procedures for cooperation with the Royal Borough will need to be established, as well as the independent nature of the WTCiv.

A method(s) of reporting to and from the Borough Councillors elected for wards within the WTC boundaries and the WTC will need to be devised, such as written reports for full councils and /or Q&A sessions.

An important consideration will be the assets and responsibilities transferred from the Royal Borough to the WTC by the Government Reorganisation order.

They must be in proportion, and the WLD favour substantial transfer to create the necessary conditions for the positive opportunities the residents of Windsor desirev. If, as implied, the precept and nominated land/property is transferred/created the first April after the reorganisation order is issued then the relevant funds and assets must be ring fenced and administered by an interim body until the inaugural election of the WTCvi.

Apart from the minimum number of Councillors (five), there appears to be little to guide the number a town council should have

Too few risks the creation of a clique and loss of public engagement, too many risks it becoming unwieldy or having unfilled seats.

The recommendations cited would appear to indicate that a council between 13 and 25 councillors would be in order for a town the size of Windsorvii. Both of the models we have considered would end up with a number of 23.

The exact number would depend upon the number of wards created (See answer 4) but the low to mid-twenties seems sensible

Q4: Should a new parish council be warded to reflect the communities that exist in the review area? If so, how should these boundaries be drawn?

As stated, the WLD believe a council of 20 to 25 councillors would be desirable within the recommended guidance. Such a size of council would strongly suggest that it would have to be wardedviii.

One option is to create large wards from the Borough wards, or their polling districts, within the unparished area. This would create four wards with say 5/6 town councillors each and one, with the Old Windsor polling districts, with 2.

PD	PD Name	Electors PD	Electors Ward	Parish Councillors	Electors per Councillor
WCDE 1	Dedworth Manor	2128	5074	5	1015
WCDE 2	Clewer Hill	2164			
WCDE 3	St Leonard's	782			
WCDW 1	Dedworth Riverside	2510	4574	5	915
WCDW 3	Dedworth Green	2064			
WCE 1	Clewer New Town	1906	5178	5	1036
WCE 2	Spital	2264			
WCE 3	Clewer Village	1008			
WEC 1	Castle South	3587	5855	6	976
WEC 2	Castle North	2268			
WOW 3	Home Park*	98	1731	2	866
WOW 4	Boltons	1633			
(Electors as at 13.10.2020)		22412	22412	23	974

*It's anticipated that WOW 3 Home Park would form part of a Town Council Ward with a neighbouring Polling District (PD)

However, this suggestion has drawbacks; in that the current Borough Council Wards are not seen as representing natural communities or areas within Windsor.

An alternative which uses the current electoral infrastructure, would be to use the existing 12 RBWM polling districts as the basis of the wards for the proposed WTC. This is our suggested model.

Each having between 1 and 4 Town Councillors, depending upon the number of residents registered in the district/ward, would create the desired number of 20 to 25 councillors while being closer to the residents and existing communities.

PD	PD Name	Electors PD	Electors Ward	Parish Councillors	Electors per Councillor
WCDE 1	Dedworth Manor	2128	2128	2	1064
WCDE 2	Clewer Hill	2164	2164	2	1082
WCDE 3	St Leonard's	782	782	1	782
WCDW 1	Dedworth Riverside	2510	2510	3	836
WCDW 3	Dedworth Green	2064	2064	2	1032
WCE 1	Clewer New Town	1906	1906	2	953
WCE 2	Spital	2264	2264	2	1132
WCE 3	Clewer Village	1008	1008	1	1008
WEC 1	Castle South	3587	3587	4	897
WEC 2	Castle North	2268	2268	2	1134
WOW 3	Home Park*	98	1731	2	866
WOW 4	Boltons	1633			
(Electors as at 13.10.2020)		22412	22412	23	974

*It's anticipated that WOW 3 Home Park would form part of a Town Council Ward with a neighbouring Polling District (PD)

The low population number in WOW3 could mean its joining with another polling district to create a larger wardix. The choice of which polling district could be subject to consultation with the residents of the Home Park.

However, joining two distinct areas such as these undermines the emphasis placed on recognising existing communities within the larger Windsor identity, and may well lead to a clash of conflicting local interestsx.

The names are those of the districts as currently used by Electoral Services and found in a table provided by the Royal Borough; the names of the new wards should be a matter of consultation with the residents of Windsorxi.

Summary

The lack of a town council for Windsor not only places the town behind other areas of the Royal Borough but has also denied its residents a democratic say in deciding the towns future and direction.

Despite this, there is a strong sense of community within Windsor and the residents of Windsor believe it should be represented by a single town council; dividing Windsor between more than one town council would be at best inefficient due to duplication, at worst actively undermine community cohesion.

To do justice to the Windsorian desire to improve their town and community and create a civic sense of responsibility and pride it must be provided with the necessary resources to do so.

To ensure all residents and neighbourhoods are adequately represented the council will require a number of wards and between 20 to 25 councillors.

- i (Proposed Windsor Town Council Campaign Committee, 2020)
- ii (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 48.
- iii (National Association of Local Councils, 2020)
- iv (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, 2020)
- v (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 103
- vi (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 30
- vii (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 154-155

viii (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 159
ix (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 166
x (Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020) para. 162
xi PDF from RBWM – FOI request. See Appendix.

Sources

Department for Communities and Local Government , 2020. *Community Governance Reviews: Guidance*. [Online] Available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-governance-reviews-guidance>

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Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, 2020. *RBWM portal Parish and Town Councils Charter*. [Online] Available at:
<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/media/48/download/> [Accessed 23 10 2020].

Appendix 1

Relevant table from PDF sent from RBWM for Freedom of Information Request.

Property/Elector Statistics by Area/ID as of 13/10/2020

Printed: 13 October 2020

Street Details	As First Published		New		Current		Electors		Applicants		Current
	As First Published	Added to Register	Deleted	Current	As First Published	Added to Register	Deleted	Current	As First Published	Added to Register	
WAS1 - ASCOT	1,942	11	6	1,847	3,205	200	0	868	0	868	5,405
WAS2 - SOUTH ASCOT	1,520	8	1	1,530	2,578	210	0	783	0	783	2,788
WAS3 - SUNNINGHILL	1,226	4	2	1,228	2,015	171	0	510	0	510	2,137
WCDE1 - DEDWORTH MANOR	1,203	20	3	1,210	2,010	118	0	584	0	584	2,128
WCDE2 - CLEWER HILL	1,272	22	2	1,292	2,081	85	0	487	0	487	2,164
WCDE3 - ST LEONARD'S	384	2	0	386	767	15	0	176	0	176	782
WCOW1 - DEDWORTH RIVERSIDE	1,226	27	12	1,235	2,453	57	0	382	0	382	2,510
WCOW2 - WILLOWS	654	9	2	661	829	86	0	356	0	356	814
WCOW3 - DEDWORTH GREEN	1,155	26	0	1,181	2,022	42	0	373	0	373	2,064
WCEN1 - CLEWER NEW TOWN	1,187	13	-1	1,181	1,781	125	0	546	0	546	1,806
WCEN2 - SPITAL	1,228	0	0	1,228	2,179	135	0	578	0	578	2,264
WCEN3 - CLEWER VILLAGE	505	68	3	600	806	102	0	337	0	337	1,008
WDHW1 - DITCHET WEST	932	25	-1	956	1,834	109	0	385	0	385	1,843
WDHW2 - DATCHET EAST	1,105	4	1	1,181	1,802	98	0	445	0	445	1,851
WDHW3 - HORTON	380	0	0	380	712	66	0	228	0	228	778
WDHW4 - WRAYSBURY	1,681	5	1	1,685	3,118	118	0	600	0	600	3,236
WEC1 - CASTLE SOUTH	2,241	17	3	2,255	2,937	850	0	1,584	0	1,584	3,587
WEC2 - CASTLE NORTH	1,675	13	4	1,685	2,071	197	0	875	0	875	2,268
WEC3 - ETON	748	14	0	762	1,365	231	0	540	0	540	1,347
WEC4 - ETON WICK	972	2	0	974	1,897	63	0	324	0	324	1,760
WOW1 - GREAT PARK	138	0	1	137	226	23	0	80	0	80	249
WOW2 - OLD WINDSOR	1,841	18	1	1,858	3,220	187	0	728	0	728	3,387
WOW3 - HOME PARK	84	1	5	80	95	2	0	17	0	17	98
WOW4 - BOLTONS	990	2	1	991	1,607	126	0	517	0	517	1,833
WBC1 - CHEAPSIDE	384	29	1	422	542	37	0	264	0	264	598
WBC2 - SUNNINGDALE NORTH	1,508	23	4	1,525	2,288	244	0	705	0	705	2,510
WBC3 - SUNNINGDALE SOUTH	1,052	1	0	1,053	1,551	138	0	526	0	526	1,689
SOUTH EAST REGION	81,488	1,128	138	82,486	152,374	6,879	0	28,281	0	28,281	199,844
	81,488	1,128	138	82,486	152,374	6,879	0	28,281	0	28,281	199,844