

Sunderland

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Organisation Name: Sunderland Labour Group (Political groups)

Comment text:

Related subject: City Wide Response

Hi,

Please find enclosed a copy of the response to your consultation from Sunderland Labour Group.

Best wishes

Cllr Paul Stewart

Attached Documents:

- second-review-of-draft-boundary-proposals.docx

Second review of draft boundary proposals - City of Sunderland

Can we once again thank the commission for their hard work in undertaking a review of the 25 wards within the boundary of Sunderland and allowing a further opportunity for consideration of your recommendations.

I can confirm that Sunderland Labour Group fully endorse the rationale behind your recommendations that Sunderland:

- be represented by 75 councillors, the same number as there are now.
- have 25 wards, the same number as there are now.

In relation to the specific ward boundaries and their naming, though we are disappointed in some of the specific proposals, we do feel you have made a significant attempt at balancing the size of individual wards and, where practicable, ensuring local communities are maintained. We particularly note and support your work in bringing together the communities of Silksworth and Hollycarrside.

We are therefore supportive of your proposed boundaries and are not intent on proposing any changes at this stage in the process. Indeed, we would strongly object to any further changes unless these are evidenced through direct correspondence from local community groups or individuals impacted. Where such changes are contemplated, we believe they should be only minor in nature and self-contained between wards, otherwise we would request a further opportunity to review any wider changes to your draft proposals.

In relation to ward names, while in most cases we again support the commission's proposals we do have some concerns in the naming of some wards as outlined later in this consultation response.

North West Sunderland

Sunderland Labour Group are supportive of your proposals in respect of North West Sunderland.

We are particularly supportive of the decision by the commission to amend the boundary of Redhouse and Southwick wards to better reflect community cohesion and would object most strongly to any further alteration to your proposals.

In relation to ward names, we note the recommendations of the commission and are supportive except in relation to the names "Hylton Castle" and "Redhouse" and would refer you to our previous submission in respect of these two wards. However, if the commission are intent on using the larger housing estates as ward names, then to be consistent you should consider amending "Redhouse" to the correct name of "Hylton Redhouse". A further alternative would be to reference the two largest estates of "Downhill and Hylton Redhouse".

North East Sunderland

Sunderland Labour Group are supportive of your proposals in respect of North East Sunderland.

We are particularly supportive of the decision by the commission to amend the boundary of Southwick, Fulwell and Roker wards to better reflect community cohesion and electoral equality and would object most strongly to any further alteration to your proposals.

We are supportive of the ward names proposed for North East Sunderland.

South Sunderland

Sunderland Labour Group are supportive of your proposals in respect of South Sunderland.

We are particularly supportive of the decision by the commission to amend the boundary of Grangetown, Ryhope and Silksworth wards to better reflect community cohesion and electoral equality. We are also supportive of the commission taking account of the significant barrier of the A19 where possible in your proposals for this part of the city. We would object most strongly to any further alteration to your proposals.

We are supportive of the ward names proposed for South Sunderland.

Coalfield

Sunderland Labour Group are supportive of your proposals in respect of the Coalfield area of the city. We are particularly supportive of, for the most part, the commission's recognition of the A19 as a significant barrier to the local communities in the coalfield area and would object most strongly to any further alteration to your proposals.

We are supportive of the ward names proposed for the Coalfield area of North Sunderland.

Washington

While your proposed ward boundaries are not our initial choice, Sunderland Labour Group have been convinced by your argument that what you propose better reflects electoral equality and community cohesion.

However, in relation to ward names for the Washington area we strongly object to the move away from compass points and question the evidence base upon which this decision was made. Both the Conservative and Liberal Democrat proposals were made without any local representation or knowledge of the area concerned. We understand that Washington & Gateshead South have made a submission in relation to reverting back to compass points and we are supportive of their arguments on this matter.

In addition to above, we would make specific comment regarding the proposed "Riverside" ward, which will create confusion within the city due to the "Riverside masterplan" that covers part of the City Centre. Washington South would be a good alternative we believe.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we would reinforce our support for your proposals and as previously stated object to any significant amendments at this stage. In relation to the ward names where we have referenced alternatives, we would ask you to take serious consideration of our suggestions.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Phil Tye,
Chair, Sunderland Labour Group