

Durham County Council

Personal Details:

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Comment text:

Re: a proposed reduction in the number of County Councillors from 126 to 98. The work of a County Councillor is already onerous, especially when considering it is not a full time job and elected councillors may also be following a professional career or engaged in other employment. Councillors participate in the governance of the Council (committees and as a representative on Council bodies such as AAP), casework (requiring time to visit constituents, assess the issue and follow up with the appropriate organisation), liaising with Parish Councils and the charitable sector (e.g. community associations). Councillors act as community leaders and their work is not confined to Council business (e.g. enquiries from housing association tenants). In the Belmont Division (consisting of 10,000 residents) pre-2009 there were 9 councillors drawn from District and County Councillors. This was reduced to 3 when the Unitary authority was formed. The current Belmont Division consists of Belmont Parish Council wards of Belmont, Carrville and Gilesgate Moor and unparished areas, broadly defined as Sunderland Road and Sherburn Road estates. Any less than 3 councillors to represent this Division would be an unmanageable task and may well lead to a dearth of candidates willing to take on such a burdensome role. Far from reducing the number of County Councillors, I believe there is a case for increasing the number of County Councillors to reflect the workload, bearing in mind that those who fill the role are effectively volunteers, who are paid a very modest allowance. Whatever the outcome of this consultation, it is imperative that the three wards of Belmont Parish Council be included in the same County Division.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded