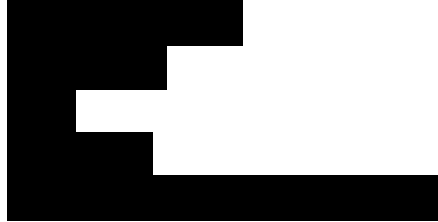


Name:



Hugh Barker



Area your submission refers to:

Shepway

Organisation you belong to:

other (please specify in your submission)

Your feedback:

Dear Sirs

I am an elected member of Shepway District Council, representing the Harvey Central Ward that is one of the most deprived wards in both the county and the country. I am also the Cabinet Committee Member for Communities and a self-employed optician running my own single-handed full time business.

The number of councillors was last reduced from 56 to 46 and my ward representation was reduced from 3 to 2 members. Detailed examination of the present size led the District Council to recommend a reduction in number to 38 members in view of the proposed reduction of wards and change in boundaries.

While I agree that a reduction in member numbers would be more efficient under our cabinet system, the proposal to reduce numbers to 30 will require a very considerable increase in workload and time commitment. Such an increase will make it impossible for me to continue as a councillor. It will prevent business people from offering their valuable experience and create a council only of retired members or, if allowances are increased to allow it, full time councillors. This would be a retrograde step and prevent the council from representing a cross-section of the community.

I urge you to adjust your recommendation to 38 members.

Your faithfully

Hugh Barker