

[REDACTED]

From: John Holmes [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 January 2016 12:37
To: reviews
Subject: Re:SLDC Proposed Alterations to Ward Boundaries in South Lakeland District Council.

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Dear Sirs,

Firstly can I say that I cannot understand why it is necessary to carry out any significant changes to the existing procedures in SLDC which work reasonable well.

Neither I nor my Group (The Conservatives) agreed with the Councils decision to accept the creation of much larger wards each with 3 members to avoid having "All Out Elections" every four years. This in my opinion was a totally political decision on the controlling Lib Dems part.

As a Group we support "All Out Elections" and indeed I was Chairman of a Task & Finish Group on this some 2 years ago when the all-party group recommended that the number of councillors be reduced and that we should have all out elections. This would have made a significant reduction in cost to the residents of South Lakeland. Needless to say our recommendations at that time were completely ignored.

Instead we are now effectively asking every constituent to vote every year (to include County Elections) instead of twice every four years.

This principle of 3 member wards may well work in urban areas but certainly does not work in rural areas of which mine is (Lyth Valley & Lindale)

At the moment as a single councillor ward I can become very involved with my approx. 1500 constituents. Increasing the number to 5000 or so and canvassing virtually every year over a proposed area which exceeds that of many major urban areas will mean that I will be spending all my time simply canvassing ,which in turn means I will have little time to be involved in representing them.

It is difficult enough finding new Councillors without imposing this liability on them.

For my part I have no intention of being involved in the new proposals as they are currently indicated. I will continue to the 2018 Elections and "retire" at that point.

In the meantime I accept that the decision has already been made as to the adoption of three member wards and as the best of a "bad option" support the alternatives which the Conservative Group have submitted against those of the Lib Dems.

I certainly hope that even at this stage "common sense"- if any still exists - prevails and you will consider maintaining substantially the existing system.

Yours faithfully

John M Holmes.
District Councillor for Lyth Valley

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