

Hinds, Alex

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 December 2012 13:00
To: Reviews@
Subject: Shepway consultation

I am responding as a Shepway District Councillor.

I support the need to redraw boundaries so that councillors represent an equal number of councillors.

I urge the commission to have single member wards as this allows the electorate to be clear about who represents them and ensures that the workload doesn't fall unevenly as it can do in multiple member wards (particularly on the councillor whose name is shown first on any listing).

I believe we can reduce numbers and the size of our committees but I also believe the reduction from 46 to 30 is too large and would prefer a reduction to 38. After all the roles with special responsibilities are taken out of the proposed 30 there will be a much reduced pool of people to conduct a scrutiny role. More crucially the number of constituents per councillor will rise markedly in a council. I am a backbench councillor at Shepway and most of my work is to do with individuals and with planning applications. It is impossible to predict the workload on this and a controversial planning application is always very time-consuming. Our residents expect to contact councillors at any time and there is no doubt that such a radical reduction in councillor numbers will lead to an increased workload. It is also likely that the larger areas will take in several parish council areas in the rural areas making it harder to attend parish council meetings. My present ward takes in four parish councils and I already have diary clashes which mean I can't attend all their meetings.

I also serve as a Kent County Councillor and my KCC area takes in an area with 15,000 electors and a dozen town/parish councils so I know the extra workload caused by a larger electorate. I gave up my full time job when I was elected to KCC as I found it too difficult to fit work around my council commitments. By reducing numbers at Shepway and increasing workloads I fear we are making it harder for people in full time work to be a councillor.

Susan Carey
District Councillor, Tolsford
Shepway District Council