



Paul Kingsley (Review Officer – North Lincolnshire)  
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Dear Mr Kingsley

**Re: Electoral Review of North Lincolnshire**

As a  all of which fell within the boundaries of North Lincolnshire, I would like to make a short contribution to the current electoral review.

I wish to contribute a view on the appropriate size of the Council in terms of the number of elected members (section: part one and council size).

There was a huge reduction in the number of elected members when the unitary authority came in to being as part of the process that replaced Humberside County Council, Scunthorpe Borough Council, Glanford Borough Council and Boothferry Borough Council with North Lincolnshire Council. At this point 117 councillors were replaced by 42 unitary authority councillors.

After the 2001/2002 review this number was increased slightly in 2003 to 43. This figure has been used for all subsequent elections. The fact that it is an odd number has the additional benefit of making a tied council very unlikely.

Given the need for unitary councillors to deliver all the functions of the different tiers in the former two tier system and the Government's renewed emphasis on devolving more powers to local and regional level I would be concerned about the impact of reducing the size of the council below the 43/42 it has always had. Significant reduction would in my view risk the council being unable to effectively carry out its community leadership, Executive and Scrutiny functions as well as individual councillors delivering appropriate ward representation.

The current pandemic has underlined the importance of having a strongly performing Executive alongside robust, effective scrutiny and proactive local representation in the ward councillor role.

A councillor to elector ratio of around 1 to 2,750 for 2000 with a projection of around 1 to 3,000 for 2005 was used for the 200/1 review.

The present ratio (2020) remains around 1 to 3,000 as per the elector registers published on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

This small increase in ratio over the years is not significant in my view and I would argue that council tax payers would continue to be well served by a Council of 43 members without the additional burden on the council tax purse that an increase in the size of the council would bring.

The planning decisions in relation to future housing growth suggests that over the next 10-20 years population growth is likely to be concentrated in the urban area of Scunthorpe. Having represented

a mixed urban/rural constituency that included the towns of Bottesford, Kirton-in-Lindsey and Scunthorpe I also know that the level of under registration has always been higher in the urban areas yet unregistered people still demand and deserve a service from both their MP and their councillor.

All things considered I consider the argument is strong to maintain North Lincolnshire Council at its current size of 43. If issues around equitable numbers, community matters or other relevant criteria mean that this is not possible I hope any change can be absorbed within a flexibility of one additional or fewer councillor.

Thank you for considering my representation alongside the rest that you receive.

Yours sincerely

