

Robert Howe



Whitchurch Parish Meeting

Representative of a community group/organisation



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"Chairman of Whitchurch Parish Meeting [not a councilor].

I would like to express my concern that whilst there may be some scope to reduce the number of district councilors. I can see that the SDC cabinet does enable decisions to be taken effectively. But that does not necessarily relate to the number of councilors and it also means that some councilors have more influence than others.

I have at the moment 4 letters and a telephone call to which I have no replies and the ward member did not attend the last 2 Parish Meetings. I have looked at the SDC submission on your website and find they have skipped over issues they have had difficulty with in the past. In this electronic age they expect outsiders to opt into consultation as opposed to consultees being sent notice (as happened in this case). Very often we in a rural parish are left out.

There are several parishes without a separate parish council in the south of the district. So (when I find out and I think the matter important enough) I complain to the ward member and so we arrive at the situation above which is not yet resolved.

Clearly with the cuts the situation is not getting easier but enlarging the wards can only make matters worse. The SDC submission says they would have enough members but I have been at planning Committees where they have struggled with numbers because the ward member is not on the committee and one or two were absent.

The reduction of elected members moves more to an elected professional class which is what they say about the Westminster village. "