



LORD HARRISON

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Jessica Metherringham
Review Officer (Cheshire West & Chester)
The Boundary Committee for England
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW

26th July 2009

Dear Jessica Metherringham,

I write regarding the review of wards for the new council of Cheshire West & Chester. I am strongly of the view that **single member wards** will best serve the new authority.

From 1981-1990, I served as a county councillor in the single member ward of Sealand/College division of the predecessor Cheshire County Council; from 1989-99, I served in the single member constituency of Cheshire West and Wirral in the European Parliament; and for the past decade I have been a 'working peer' in the House of Lords but have continued to live and retain my local and political interests in my former EP constituency.

The benefit of single member constituencies is that one, identifiable representative serves a local and discrete community. This is of enormous benefit to the community and also serves to strengthen the lines of accountability: if the community is poorly or ill-served the single current elected member is vulnerable member is directly accountable to the electorate.

In contrast, multi-member constituencies confuse electorates, muddy the lines of accountability and afford lazy or incompetent members the excuse that it was thought that another councillor was dealing with any matter arranged. It also means that political sparring continues after election day, as

members pick and choose between taking up popular issues whilst ignoring or palming off other low-profile onto others or indeed onto no-one.

Harry S Truman's truism that the "buck stops here" has equal force for all elected members serving single constituencies.

One final comment on my experience in the European Parliament and on the succeeding decade where the North-West has served as a monster region for local people in Cheshire. It is almost universally acknowledged that the system has failed the electorate; I point no further than to indicate the political offices of the various parties are located in the crowded centre of the NW Region at the expense of further-flung areas, like my old patch of Cheshire West and Wirral.

I would be grateful if you could take my thoughts into account.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,


Lyndon Harrison