

Metheringham-Owlett, Jessica

From: Michael Ward [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 August 2010 14:19
To: Metheringham-Owlett, Jessica
Subject: Hartlepool Review Comment
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Red

Jessica Metheringham-Owlett,
Review Officer(Hartlepool),
LGBCE,
Layden House,
London

Hartlepool Electoral Review

Comments on the size of Hartlepool Council:-

The current number of councillors is 47 (plus the elected Mayor). This is made up of 3 councillors for each of 15 wards and 2 councillors, one for each of two village wards. I think that the number of councillors should be **reduced by 15 councillors to a total of 32 representing 16 Wards**. This could be achieved by combining the two village wards (part of the Greatham Ward includes South Fens and although included in the Greatham Ward it is part of a large housing estate and is not connected to Greatham Village either physically or community wise. South Fens could be joined to the Fens Ward. This will be discussed further in the next part of the consultation which deals with Ward boundaries)

My reasons for reducing the number of Councillors are as follows:-

- Hartlepool has an Elected Mayor who chooses a cabinet from Councillors to help him make the decisions. The remainder of the Councillors can advise the Mayor, can be involved in scrutinising decisions made by the Mayor and the Cabinet but except for being a member of Planning or Licensing, have no real decision - making role. The Full Council does occasionally make decisions but most of the councillors sit on meaningless committees. By reducing the number of non-statutory committees there will be less need for Councillors to sit on them and therefore less need for as many Councillors.
- Fewer Councillors will make the Council more streamlined and less bureaucratic.
- The Councillors do represent their Wards and local communities but it does not need 3 Councillors to do this.
- A smaller number of councillors will make it much easier for the electorate to know who is actually doing the work on their behalf both within the Ward and in the Council as a whole. With 3 councillors per ward, it is too easy for some councillors to hide behind their fellow councillors, only coming to the fore when there is an election on the horizon.

Michael Ward
[REDACTED]