

From: reviews@lgbce.org.uk [mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk]

Sent: 29 November 2010 10:21

To: Reviews@

Subject: Custom Form Submission Received



- Custom Form Submission Notification

Custom Form Submission Received


Contact us Email,

A new custom form submission has been received. The details of the form submission are as follows:

Submission Information

Custom Form: Contact us (#212)
Form URL: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/about-us/contact-us>
Submission ID: 297
Time of Submission: Nov 29th 2010 at 10:20am
IP Address: ::ffff:86.130.108.120

Form Answers

Your name: Andrew Crisp
Your email: 
I am: a member of the public
Comment/enquiry type: relating to a current review
Comments: I have only just become aware of the review on the size of Surrey

30/11/2010

County Council, yet I see that it closed last week. It seems that there was little publicity locally and I am unsure if you were seeking views of residents or whether this will occur at another time.

If it is appropriate for residents to comment then I would wish to suggest that Surrey County Council is too large. With the direction of change that has occurred over the last 20 years the role of the council has been diminished, especially the greater independence given to schools. This trend seems only likely to continue under current government policy.

The current council has 80 members for a population of just over 1 million people. There are then a further 11 borough and district councils and many parish councils. Neighbouring Surrey is London, where 25 members of the London Assembly represent more than 7 million people with a host of Borough councils spread across the city. It doesn't seem to make sense that Surrey, operating a similar two-tier system, is so over-represented with Councillors.

A reduction in the number of Councillors in Surrey would have a number of benefits. The cost of running the Council would be reduced, albeit marginally when compared with the total budget. The current system of Cabinet government leaves many Councillors feeling disenfranchised. A smaller Council would give remaining Councillors greater responsibility and involvement in the running of the authority. The Councillors would also be likely to have a higher profile in their communities, making local people more aware of who they were and how they could help. Decision making should be quicker and it would make sense to integrate members on borough and district councils in to decision making, which happens little at present.

I have not specified a number of Councillors for a reduced Surrey County Council, but if a change were to be made I would suggest it be at least halved in size. I would be happy to submit further details if it were appropriate.

I feel that any review worth its while needs a radical option, if for no other reason to measure less radical options against. It may be that with detailed research such a radical option is rejected, but at this time I believe it should at least be considered.

I should add that I stepped down as a Surrey County Councillor in June 2009 after two terms, so come to this issue with some knowledge of the system.

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