

Gateshead

Personal Details:

Name: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: Saltwell Ward

Local Government is responsible for millions of pounds of expenditure. Representing people is important and the availability of councillors to fulfill that role is critical. As is the scrutiny of the work of council officers.

Councillors are not full-time. They are not paid, although members of the public believe they receive significant salaries. People confuse the Leader of the Council with the Chief Executive. Democracy suffers because of lack of knowledge over what a councillor is and what they do.

The number of councillors in my ward is about right given that this is a part-time unpaid role. I disagree with any reduction in councillor numbers.

I believe that unless and until being a councillor is properly salaried then we remain badly served by local government. Having "part time" democracy is no democracy at all.

Only if we have full-time salaried councillors with job descriptions and definition can we begin to decide how many we should have. At that point we will have stats on the workload.

Too few people vote. Voter id regulations deter voters. In order to best represent a majority of voters we need a proportional system of voting. This is because, in my ward, a majority of those voting cast ballots against the winning candidate. The winning candidate achieved 58 votes more than the next candidate but not a majority of votes cast.

We have a 19th century system of local government relying on citizens who can afford time to stand for council. We have a 19th century voting system. Unfortunately, we have 21st century problems. Messing with lines on a map and reducing councillor numbers is like shuffling deck chairs on the Titanic. Not addressing fundamentals.

Attached Documents:

None attached