

# Report of North Devon Councillor

July 2025

It's really good that we have a proper Town Crier back in our area again with Dan Day-Robinson ringing his bell and leading groups around Lynmouth as well as appearing, in the future, at relevant events and giving us all the benefit of his stentorian voice.

After a gap caused by me clumsily breaking my ankle Councillor surgeries have restarted. They will be on the first Saturday of each month in the Jubilee Room of Lynton Town Hall. I'll be there from 11am to 1pm, and Adrian Hobbs, the Mayor of L&L, will be there from 10am to midday. So as you visit the monthly farmers market please pop in in and see if one of us can help .

You might have heard that local government is being reorganised, except for Town and Parish Councils that will remain the same.

District Councils, County Councils, Unitary Councils - what a mess! Who could possible create a national system of local government like that? Well the culprit is central government, of whatever political colour, sitting in the centre of London. And now they have come up with another cunning plan ..... to sweep them away and all across England have a single Council for each area. So far so good.

But there is a problem, which is how they are doing it .... in a tearing rush and by asking the present councils to come up with the answer. And they are also asking all the councils to agree on a single answer.

In Devon this means that 8 District, 2 Unitary, and one County Council are supposed to come up with the answer by November this year. But they don't agree. The Councils were asked for a first guess by March, and in order avoid an unseemly squabble they came up with something that everyone disliked equally. It includes a massive new council stretching from Lynton to Hartland to Axminster, and includes Exeter. The problem is that it doesn't recognise the difference between the relatively affluent and built up south and the relatively hard-done-by rural north and centre, and it completely ignores cultural differences between the two.

In my view the answer is rather simple. Devon is the only county with two coasts so there should be two authorities with one facing each coast. If that happens it will avoid the needs of the south being catered to at the expense of the rest of us. You might ask why. It is because the number of voters in an area determines the number of councillors so the southern places will get more councillors who will make decisions that benefit their electors. But I know I live in the north of Devon, not the south and I want to keep it that way

We need to say that this just shouldn't happen because we will become a forgotten outpost and we deserve much more of a say in our future. So write to Ian Roome your MP or the Minister for Local Government whose email address is [jim.mcmahon.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:jim.mcmahon.mp@parliament.uk)

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