

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Recently closed consultation on the proposed reduction of Members of the Brecon Beacons National Park.

The Brecon Beacons National Park is neither like Snowdonia or Pembrokeshire Coast National Parks and any proposal to allocate a "one size fits all" approach is fundamentally wrong and will cause significant issues for our communities, businesses and residents. BBNP is more akin to the working relationship of the Wye Valley AONB in that it is multi authority but even that does not straddle 9 different authorities like the BBNP (although that model straddles two countries).

I have spoken at length to most of the new members of the BBNPA (there are ten newly elected members out of sixteen which should give some indication of the level of change that the local communities and residents are hopeful of and have voted for), and most are against the principal of a reduction in numbers. The workload for the remaining numbers would be too great given that they are also members of their own authority; an increased workload would lead to poor service and a reduction in good governance. That is not a fair deal for those who live and work in the park.

The difference between the opportunities for residents living in the confines of the BBNP compared to the residents immediately to the south, living within the local authorities who are working together and forming a wide strategic approach to resolving and improving issues will be stark. We have the SE of Wales (unilaterally across all local authorities) looking to become a hub of international business with the City deal and the development of the silicon wafer manufacturing business whereas on the other side of the hill an imposed reduction in member governance would equate to us turning off the lights and walking away from good and fair representation.

This needs to be managed with much more careful thought and deliberation. This should not be about saving £40k when it affects so many lives. The wealth of knowledge and ambition of the existing members should be harnessed at this critical time, not pared-back, not at this juncture. The farming communities across the Parks have significant changes ahead, quite possibly some of the most significant changes since the second world war; your report last week picked up on these very points.

To reduce the governance of the Brecon Beacons National Park at such a fundamental and critical time is almost a dereliction of duty by us all and most certainly is not the mood of the new members or the constituents.

There are other ways to reduce costs which the new members and some of the older members do not believe have been considered, and most certainly not by them. I have spoken to many members who would be willing to give-up their remuneration and so give their time and service free of charge (the same as the AONB structure). This is a game changer and maintains the correct level of governance for such an important landscape, but more importantly ensures that the communities, businesses, families, young and old

understand that Welsh Government is standing beside them to manage change in the most effective and most democratic way possible.

I urge you to please consider these points for your consultation response and at least ask the Brecon Beacons Park Authority to consider all of its options and to ensure a full and inclusive discussion of its new members and of all the stakeholders.

Kind regards,

