

# Somerset

## Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: Exeter University (Member of the public)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** All

This review undermines democracy. I note with interest that the “previous Stage” was the creation of the Somerset Council Unitary Authority. The electorate in Somerset was consulted on that and rejected the idea. One factor in that vote was the substantial reduction in the number of local councillors.

There is no good basis for a further reduction in the number of councillors within a couple of years of the creation of the unitary authority.

The argument that it will save money is marginal.

If the justification is the need to adjust boundaries so that there is roughly equal representation per voter this is the wrong time to do it. It is based on population projections to 2030. They cannot be accurate as the government has announced changes in NPPF to promote the building of a substantial number of extra homes by 2030 and a mandatory target for that. Those figures and their locations are not known. They are likely to create a much greater variance than the population figures in this exercise. When they are this process will have to be run again. For example, E-DZ Selwood West presently has a population of currently has a predicted population of 221, but there is a pending application for 1,700 homes (c.4,000) which is outside the current Local Plan, but may well have to be included in the new Local Plan under the proposed NPPF.

For the reasons above I see no point commenting on the detail of the proposals as within a few years they will be wrong.

## Attached Documents:

*None attached*