



The Honourable Company of Gloucestershire

Dear Secretary of State,

I have been a resident of Gloucestershire since 1996, when I was appointed to manage the Smiths Aerospace, Electronic Systems businesses, these companies are currently part of GE Aviation, they are now and were then a significant employer and contributor to the Gloucestershire economy, with a turnover in 2010 of £600 million. After retiring in 2011, I have been actively involved with a number of charities and am currently the Warden of the Honourable Company of Gloucestershire, which promotes and support Gloucestershire via its charitable trust. Recently we have, as part of our trust launched a bursary which is awarded annually to support craft apprentices, with the objective of retaining Gloucestershire craft skills and assisting apprentices remaining in their chosen profession. More details of the Honourable Company can be found on our website <https://www.honcoglos.org/>

I have been asked to respond by David Owen Director of Economy and Environment for the GCC. Due to my back ground I feel particularly qualified to do so, moreover, I have studied the proposal in detail and fee that a single Unitary Council is clearly the better viable solution for both County and Government. I tabulate several reasons below as follows:-

1. Economy of scale for a single unitary authority of around 600000 residents has clearly an overriding cost benefit.
2. Health, police, fire and highway services are already organised on a county bases and to have them divided is an unnecessary cost.
3. Currently, our voluntary services mostly work on a Gloucestershire basis
4. Our Universities Hartpury, the Royal Agricultural University and the University of Gloucestershire already work in partnership on some issues of further education. However, it must be said that they are all are relatively small players and there is a case for more cooperation or amalgamation.
5. There is a strong sense of community within Gloucestershire, which is supported by business, sport, social life and entertainment. The potential of division through a non-unitary structure would be destructive in further developing a cohesive community.
6. The increasing regulations in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty need to be applied consistently across the County and this is better served within a unitary authority
7. The senior appointments of High Sheriff and Lord Lieutenant are already bused upon a border Gloucestershire which included South Gloucestershire and the Forest of Dean.
8. Similarly, the Kings awards for industry, export and innovation are based on the broader Gloucestershire.

9. The proposals for two separate counties or even a hybrid is party politically motivated and reduce the cost benefits available in a unitary proposal
10. A two county or hybrid systems will lead to many disputes, for example borders and infrastructure.
11. A two county or hybrid system requires duplicate organisations structures which has been covered to an extent regarding cost implications, but duplicate structures lead to uncoordinated or separate policies even to the extent of being different for the sake of autonomy.
12. A two county or hybrid system will not drive common policy or efficiency in highways, policing and health.

I hope, you find these comment of help.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Jones', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Jones

Warden

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