



defra
Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

Website: www.defra.gov.uk

Email: governance.consultation@defra.gov.uk

Date: 8th March 2012

Dear Consultee,

Consultation on changes to National Park governance

The Government's commitment to "...review the governance arrangements of National Parks in order to increase local accountability" was honoured by a public consultation which closed on 1 February 2011. The outcome of the review was a wide range of improvements in the way that National Park authorities (NPAs) operate. Some of these relate to individual NPAs and some are general; some can be carried out under existing powers and others need new legislation. Others build on existing good practice by NPAs. In particular, there are five areas of development requiring changes to primary legislation which the Government proposes to make by use of an Order-making power in the Public Bodies Act 2011.

We therefore invite your views on the following proposed changes to primary legislation through use of a Public Bodies Act Order. The proposed changes are to:

- make it possible for National Park authorities to include some directly elected members,
- remove the need for the Secretary of State to appoint the parish members,
- relax the political balance requirement on local authorities when appointing their members to a National Park Authority,
- make it possible to allow parishes in subsequently specified National Parks to choose non-councillors for their seats,
- apply a maximum length of service of 8 years.

The full consultation paper is available to view at www.defra.gov.uk/consult/open/. All responses, including those which propose an alternative to the Government's preferred option, will be given due consideration.

Responses should be sent by email to governance.consultation@defra.gov.uk, or by post to: **Governance Consultation, Customer Contact Unit, Defra, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR**. In your response, please provide your full name and appropriate contact details, including whether your response is on behalf of an organisation.

If you have any comments regarding the consultation process itself, rather than on the substance of the consultation, please address them to Defra's Consultation Coordinator at consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk, or by post to: Consultation Coordinator, Defra, Area 7C Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR.

I look forward to hearing your views.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Kilner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

John Kilner
Protected Landscapes Team