

Sir Michael Lyons
Room 3/12,
1. Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

8th March 2006

Dear Sir Michael,

I have pleasure in enclosing the submission to your Commission by the Cornish Constitutional Convention. It sets out the considered position of the Convention following wide consultation, liaison with local authorities and other public service providers, with the voluntary sector and business over the past five years. The campaign mounted by the Convention both in Cornwall and in Parliament has been consistent in

- seeking a form of governance for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly which builds on the success of the economic regeneration partnership,
- seeking to embrace the generally high standard of public service delivery evident in Cornwall,
- responding to the widely held view that the delivery of services can be effectively integrated and successfully managed both operationally and strategically within this geo-cultural area.

The Convention's proposals offer a structure aimed at achieving efficiency, cohesion and sustainability in public service delivery and leadership in an intelligent way for this peripheral region. It may also offer a model for the post-North-East era which is responsive to emerging Government thinking, and complements the concept of city-regions, which could usefully evaluate and demonstrate how the benefits of a regional perspective in governance can be applied to non-metropolitan areas.

Recently, Cornwall County Council hosted a stakeholders conference which was attended by one of your officials. It is clear from that conference that there is an acknowledgement of both the necessity and desire for a radical change in how Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is led and governed. It is important that the consensus for change is carefully developed, and that the conceptual proposals bring people together. The Convention detects that there is the strong potential for doing this if the strategic and delivery roles are clearly defined, and the principle is adhered to that democracy should lie at the heart of the governance of public services and leadership. We also detect that there is positive receptivity to our thinking in the Government, both because it recognises the distinctiveness of Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly in geo-cultural terms, and also acknowledges the marked success of socio-economic regeneration achieved when the region is able to function and develop as such.

As I write we see the Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust shedding 300 jobs to try and address its deficit. There is growing anxiety in Cornwall that we could do things much better if we are able to bring the whole public service delivery spectrum together. There is confidence that we can do good things if confidence is shown in us to take up the challenge.

If the Convention can further assist in any way, please do not hesitate to ask.
Gans gorhemynadow a'n gwella

Bert Biscoe
Chairman, Cornish Constitutional Convention