

Brexit – what does it mean for parishes?

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NALC Annual Conference 2016

Opportunities and threats

- Change provides an opportunity for us – senior civil servant: “A great chance for parishes”
- We need to make our case
- Competing against other very powerful lobbies – NHS, industrial strategies and sectors (e.g farming)
- Influencing Whitehall
- Potential to create “log-jam” on national legislation?

The Whitehall Machine (Tony Travers at RSN)

- Department for Exiting the European Union (new) David Davis
- Department for International Trade (new) Liam Fox
- Foreign Office (partial reform) Boris Johnson
- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (partially new) Greg Clarke
- Pre-existing: Department for International Development Priti-Patel; Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Andrea Leadsom; Cabinet Office PM David Lidington; Treasury Philip Hammond
- Civil servant support – sucking resources from across Whitehall?

Opportunities

- Opportunity to broaden the scope of decision making in England – new legal base for local government (LGA)
- PM will consult local government (LGA)
- Role in community cohesion (LGA)
- RSN : Power moving from Brussels to Westminster, Westminster to localities.
“Enhanced role for parish and town councils – building on rural assets.”

Threats

- What happens to the £5.3bn EU funding for local areas? Big potential threat for our areas
- Access to European Investment Bank loans and other EU programmes?
- New Legal Framework : Environment; workforce; public procurement; state aid: regulatory services; finance; data protection and transport etc.

Localism must fill democratic deficit

- Desire to have more control featured in referendum
- Devo deals address strategic issues
- Brexit increasingly about parliamentary maneuverings
- Parishes can fill the democratic deficit, engage individuals and communities and make a difference
- We need to ensure our voice is heard!