Blakelaw and North Fenham Community Council – written evidence (CCE0099)

Submitted by V Rook, community councillor on behalf and with permission of said community council.

The constitution shows and gives direction to enable trust in each decision and future proof the word of parliament and whose who try to establish a country where it is safe, caring and just. This balance is then illustrated in national, regional and local government and all the works of the nation for health education, and commerce. Giving the citizens the example of fairness and a just conscience to face the world.

The British Constitution is composed of parliamentary legislation, case law and precedent and common law dating back to beyond the Norman Conquest. The idea of checks and balances is uppermost in the structure. Any change needs to reflect and continue these checks and balances to provide a democracy and fair system.

The Community Council is foremost in promotion of the idea of equality and diversity locally, regionally and nationally. Individuals need to trust and have the opportunity to express their views honestly and trust these will be respected.

Many citizens in Newcastle and the Parish Community Council area have been involved in partnership committees set up by the City Council to encourage diversity and cohesion where members of the said committees had a voice in civic strategy and could inform their communities of the workings of local government. Representatives from many backgrounds and cultures joined together. This involved working with the community and voluntary sector which benefited all concerned, with training in administration, funding and representation and safeguarding being provided.

The Community Council consider education is the key to encouragement of citizens to be more actively involved. At the moment few are taught about Parliament and the methods of law making and how law is produced. There is a need to promote education of the British Constitutional structure and method similar to the publicity given to that of other countries such as the USA. This would provide understanding and positive comment. We therefore would indicate the following positive methods in regard to promotion of the basis of citizenship in the 21st century.

**POSITIVE ENCOURAGEMENT OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**

Inclusion of how the state works in the National Curriculum throughout school lifetime-British Constitution and structure of laws, legislature, executive, judiciary at O and A level GSCE. Mandatory involvement of all Councillors and Members of Parliament in regard to visits to schools annually.

Local and regional councils to have video links to Parliament and MP’s to express residents views on some committee discussions.

Voluntary and community sector to play a role in connecting all citizens in society to play and active part in civic involvement.

Lifelong education should be encouraged also in regard to how other governments work and parliamentary visits by all citizens at least once upon gaining the vote-this would give a balanced view in regard to future developments.

*7 September 2017*