

03/04/2013

Dear Mr Powell
Chair of Petition Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to respond and apologise for delay have been snowed under with work due to my masters.

My main concern with the consultation on MCZ was the process and how it was conducted. There was no input from the view of the socio economics that in turn resulted in many people having to worry about their livelihood. It did feel like a mammoth task to get the voices of the citizen heard due to having to go up against extremists within CCW and also Marine Conservation Society. The funding MCS had from CCW £40,000 made the task harder as the idea of HPMCZ had funding to be sold to the public with no regard of the economic impact.

The consultation paper set out 10 options that could have resulted in areas going against each other in a dog eat dog way to not have their area included. This I am glad did not happen and in truth it bought the North Wales area together, united and strong and a new group called Cragen LLyn a Mon has been created. Cragen to which I am the chair does have a seat and voice on the steering group and the vice chair Phil Hollington attends.

I was very disappointed in the way Welsh Government dealt with the concerns that were being raised and felt the Minister Mr John Griffiths could have done more to control the situation. It was the same message repeated in regards to being only in the first stage of consultation, however did not feel that the message was understood by the public and did fuel fear.

I was disappointed in the way the minister would not agree to talk or meet yet would meet with MCS. I do feel that if it was not for the public realising the threat and reacting in the way they did in regard to responses then I do wonder what stage 2 would have looked like.

I realise why you wanted to put all three petitions together regarding MCZ however it did surprise me to see the against put with the for. I am thankful that the Welsh Government does have ways for the citizen to engage when there is a consultation and think it is excellent that people in Wales can make a difference. I do hope that the MCZ consultation will serve as a reminder of how if you do not involve communities from the onset then it can result in anger and confusion. I do hope that the whole process is now working for everyone's benefit.

The science that was used to justify HPMCZ was weak and the reasons given for protecting each area could not be justified in my opinion with the information presented. The consultation paper was only available in English and no welsh copy could be requested. The argument of too technical did not hold water when a consultation paper by your own rules must be written in an easy to understand format that a child of I believe 12 can understand. When Welsh Government attended a meeting in Beaumaris no translation facilities were available and had I not of bought the point up then WG would have attended 2 meetings in Pen Llyn with no translation facilities.

When the public meeting was held in Caernarfon I did think that the choice of chair Ex CCW chair was by far the wrong choice. It was evident he was not unbiased, and this did get proven on quite a few occasions when he protected CCW, but interestingly would not WG.

I put hope that the old way of CCW will be a thing of the past, and that the new single body will protect the people of Wales as well as the environment.

I do feel that there were legal issues in the consultation that had not been addressed but will not go into this now.

Many thanks

Claire Russell Griffiths.