Local politics is in need of an overhaul

W ill it be done about local government? The blueprint of the new local government in Sheffield – the creation of the Sheffield City Region – is modeled on the London metropolitan structure. That doesn't mean the present system of local government is a good shape. When asked what is to be done, it is necessary to identify what needs addressing and then act on it.

The first problem is that there is little real political engagement with it by the general public. Electoral contests are merely exercises in numbers: to obtain seats in local authority chambers is something that concerns people only until an election is due, after which they lose interest. Even in Sheffield, where there is a strong tradition of local politics, the involvement of people outside those local councils has been limited to the few successful people in it.

Problems number two is that the main political parties are as indistinguishable in nature as they are in what they demand – a scene of mediocrity, mediocrity, mediocrity, and mediocrity, in which people's major concern is to do nothing to it. This is the problem with local government in Britain, and it is by no means limited to Sheffield.

The third and largest problem is that the major feature of local government in Sheffield – and elsewhere – is that it is both a political party and a political project. This is why the Sheffield City Region is of interest. The electors are not slow to understand that this for the local council have so few real in Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

Finally, there is an issue of scale. The trouble with local government is that it is too big and too small. The system is one where local government authorities covering the whole of West Yorkshire and most of Lancashire are part of the Leeds region – a region that is the size of a whole Malaysian state and has a population of just under a million. It is an area where local government is a complete failure, but a failure that is not visible to the people who live there. It is the same problem as the one that exists in Sheffield, where there is no real understanding of the problems of the city, and where the city's good name is lost.

Political parties have had to work for a living, and should be treated as such, rather than giving them the same.

Organizations like the Sheffield City Region have their uses, but they are not enough. They are not enough to change the system, and they are not enough to make people think about it. The Sheffield City Region is a case in point. It has been created to do nothing, and it will do nothing. It will be a long way back for the Sheffield City Region to become a real city, and it will not be an easy task.

Meanwhile at local government level, the parties work hard to keep the system as it is. They try to make it as good as it can be, but they cannot change it. The Sheffield City Region is a case in point. It has been created to do nothing, and it will do nothing. It will be a long way back for the Sheffield City Region to become a real city, and it will not be an easy task.

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