

Agenda – Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 2 – Senedd

Meeting date: 15 May 2019

Meeting time: 10.00

For further information contact:

Naomi Stocks

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6222

SeneddCommunities@assembly.wales

- 1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest**

- 2 Papers to note**
 - 2.1 Inquiry into the Blue Badge Scheme in Wales: Eligibility and Implementation – correspondence from Alzheimer's Society Cymru**

(Pages 1 – 2)

Paper 1
 - 2.2 Inquiry into diversity in local government – correspondence from various organisations**

(Pages 3 – 4)

Paper 2

- 3 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting and the meeting on 23 May**

- 4 Inquiry into the Blue Badge Scheme in Wales: Eligibility and Implementation: Key issues paper**

(10:00–11:30) (Pages 5 – 33)



Agenda Item 2.1

Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

15 May 2019 – papers to note cover sheet

Paper no.	Issue	From	Action point
ELGC(5)-15-19 Paper 1	Inquiry into the Blue Badge Scheme in Wales: Eligibility and Implementation	Alzheimer's Society Cymru	Inquiry into the Blue Badge Scheme in Wales: Eligibility and Implementation – correspondence from Alzheimer's Society Cymru
ELGC(5)-15-19 Paper 2	Diversity in local government report	Various organisations	Inquiry into diversity in local government – correspondence from various organisations



John Griffiths AM
Equality, Local Government & Communities Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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Dear John Griffiths AM,

Alzheimer’s Society Cymru
16 Columbus Walk,
Brigantine Place,
Cardiff, CF10 4BY

Website
alzheimers.org.uk

I am writing to place on record a point of clarification regarding the Minister for Economy and Transport’s evidence session to the committee on 1 May 2019.

During the session and under questioning from Jenny Rathbone AM, regarding issues with the appeals process raised by ourselves, Disability Wales and others, the Minister stated that there is an appeals process in place regarding rejected blue badge applications. The Minister stated that this was the Independent Advisory Service (IAS).

However, I would like to draw your attention to page eight of the Welsh Government’s ‘Who is eligible for a Blue Badge?’ document (May 2017) which explicitly states: “The local authority’s decision on eligibility is final. There is no appeals process.”

It is the understanding of Alzheimer’s Society Cymru that the IAS provides independent assessment services to local authorities to help them determine the outcome of an application. We are aware that this is the case in England, and would seek clarification on whether this is the case in Wales.

We would also seek clarification from the Minister that the above quotation from the Welsh Government’s ‘Who is eligible for a Blue Badge?’ document is correct and that there is no formal appeals process to local authorities.

Additionally we would seek clarification of what the appeals process to Welsh Government actually covers, and what is necessary to lodge an appeal against a local authority decision with the Welsh Government.

Finally, and pending the response from the Minister on this issue, we would seek clarification on whether the Welsh Government would be willing to explore the creation of an independent appeals process for the blue badges application process.

If you require any other information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Sue Phelps
Country Director, Alzheimer’s Society Cymru

Mae'r Gymdeithas Alzheimer yn elusen gofrestrredig yng Nghymru a Lloegr (296645) ac ar Ynys Manaw (1128)
Cwmni cyfyngedig gan warant, cofrestrwyd yng Nghymru a Lloegr (2115499) ac ar Ynys Manaw (5730F)
Swyddfa gofrestrredig: 43-44 Crutched Friars, London EC3N 2AE.

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Registered office: 43-44 Crutched Friars, London EC3N 2AE.



John Griffiths AM
Chair, Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA
2nd May 2019

Cc: Clerks and Members of the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

Dear John,

We are writing to you as a number of organisations who contributed to the Diversity in Local Government Report published by the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee in early April.

The report and your recommendations are to be welcomed. At a time when politics could be considered to be in a period of considerable flux it is even more important that councillors in city or county hall are as diverse as the people they are elected to represent.

There are a number of recommendations that we as a group support; particularly those around job sharing, political education and the implementation of Section 106 of the Equality Act.

However, we remain disappointed by some areas of the report and feel that many of the recommendations made could have been stronger.

While we recognise that the Committee has conceded that change is needed around positive action, the lack of a formal recommendation around introducing quotas for local government elections to ensure greater diversity is a stark absence from this report.

As the Committee heard from a number of witnesses during the course of this inquiry positive action, such as gender quotas, is vital if we are going to fully address the current inequalities present in our local government system. Furthermore this was supported by the Expert Panel on Assembly Electoral Reform, which recommended that gender quotas be inbuilt into the Assembly's electoral system.

We would urge the Committee to reconsider the recommendations of this report and go further on endorsing formal positive action for Welsh local government.

As the report states "The more representative of the people they serve, the better equipped our councillors are to carry out their duties and responsibilities". This report is a timely, and critical, piece of work in terms of ensuring that our local governments across Wales are made up of more diverse representatives from a range of perspectives and backgrounds.

We look forward to discussing this further with you.

Best wishes,

Jess Blair, Director, ERS Cymru

Catherine Fookes, Director, Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales

Louise Miles-Payne, Senior Programme Manager, UpRising Cardiff

Jackie Jones, Wales Assembly of Women

Mutale Merrill, CEO, Bawso

Eleri Butler, CEO Welsh Women's Aid

Lynne Tedik, Soroptimist International, Wales South Region

Frances Beecher, CEO, Llamau

Rachel Cable, Head of Oxfam Cymru

Maria Mesa, Director, Women Connect First

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By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

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