

LGF (S20) 31

Bil Cyllid Llywodraeth Leol (Cymru)

Local Government Finance (Wales) Bill

Ymateb gan: Ted Sangster

Response from: Ted Sangster

Dear Sir/Madam,

I understand that Clause 20 of this bill could, if implemented reduce or remove the publication of some or all public notices in local newspapers.

Whilst the intentions may well be to reduce costs and/or improve administration, if it comes about then I believe it could well have unintended consequences that would reduce public information and accountability to the detriment of our communities and parts of our society.

The requirement to publish public notices in local newspapers is an important part of our democratic system in keeping the public informed of important matters and intentions and giving the opportunity for views and concerns to be expressed by citizens and taken into account by policy makers.

To solely rely on the use of websites etc. to inform the public about changes and intentions would deny many people the opportunity of being aware of the intent and detail of public notices and remove their opportunity to question and express concerns about their content given that :

- Not everybody has access to the internet, particularly those in certain groups such as the older members of our society.
- Secondly unless one is aware of the possibility of public intentions and assiduously looks to check on what is happening by trawling websites etc then most people will just not be aware and therefore miss their democratic right to air their views and ask questions which would rather defeat the object of having public consultation in the first place.
- Many people still buy a local paper to keep informed of what is happening in their local area and therefore naturally come across public notices that could be of interest and/or concern as a result. To withdraw the requirement to air such notices in local papers would be reducing, in fact in many cases taking away peoples right to be kept informed of changes in policy and public administration that could have an impact on their lives.

I am therefore strongly of the view that the existing requirement to publish public notices in local papers should remain.

My address and contact details are given below as I am submitting these comments on my own behalf rather than for an organisation – I am over 18 years old. I am happy for my views to be used in any way that you see fit.

Regards

Ted Sangster