

Communities, Equality and
Local Government Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

By 31-1-12

29 November 2012

Dear Sir / Madam

Consultation on the *Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Bill*

As part of its Stage 1 consideration, the National Assembly for Wales' Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee is calling for evidence on the general principles of the *Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Bill*.

What is a Bill?

Under Part 4 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 the National Assembly can pass laws in areas where it has legislative powers to do so.

When a proposal for a new law is introduced in the National Assembly, it is called a 'Bill'.

There is a four stage process for the consideration of a Bill. Stage 1 involves consideration of the general principles of the Bill by a committee (which includes the taking of written and oral evidence from interested parties and stakeholders), and the agreement of those general principles by the Assembly.

When a Bill is passed by the National Assembly and receives Royal Assent it becomes an 'Act of the Assembly'.

What does this Bill seek to achieve?

See on National Assembly's
website →

The Explanatory Memorandum that accompanies the Bill states:

"The overarching objective of the Bill is to ensure local democracy operates as efficiently as possible and to improve the democratic process in local government. It is intended to ensure local authorities are democratically representative of their communities, are organised

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in the most effective way and communicate well with the public. Robust local scrutiny will be a strong driver for the improvement of public services and allow the public to have greater confidence in the democratic system.”

What is the committee’s role?

The role of the committee is to consider and report on the general principles of the Bill. In doing so, the Committee has agreed to work within the following framework:

To consider:

- i) the need for a Bill to deliver:
 - reform to the organisation and functions of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales;
 - amendments to the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 in relation to the responsibilities of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and the structure of local authority audit committees;
 - provisions concerning the public’s access to information concerning town and community councils;
 - amendments to Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 to facilitate the creation by local authorities of joint standards committees;
 - provision concerning the role of the Chairman or Mayor of principal councils; and
 - recasting and consolidating existing local government provisions in relation to the Boundary Commission and therefore progresses the development of a Welsh Statute Book.
- ii) the key provisions set out in the Bill and whether they are appropriate to deliver its stated objectives;
- iii) potential barriers to the implementation of the key provisions and whether the Bill takes account of them;
- iv) the views of stakeholders who will have to work with the new arrangements.

How you can help – the consultation questions

Further details of the Bill and the accompanying Explanatory Memorandum can be found on the National Assembly's website at:

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=5052&AIID=8648>

The Committee would like to invite you to submit written evidence to assist in its scrutiny of the Bill. In particular, we would welcome your views on the questions attached at **Annexe 1**.

If you wish to submit evidence, please send an electronic copy of your submission to CELG.committee@wales.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can write to:

Leanne Hatcher, Deputy Committee Clerk, Legislation Office, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA.

Provisional consultation deadline: 31 January 2013 (subject to change). It may not be possible to take into account responses received after this date.

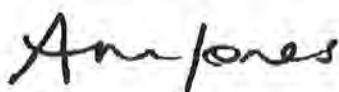
When preparing your submission, please keep the following in mind:

- your response should address the issues before the Committee.;
- the National Assembly normally makes responses to public consultation available on its website and responses may also be seen and discussed by Assembly Members at Committee meetings. **If you do not want your response or name published, it is important that you clearly specify this in your submission;**
- please indicate whether you are responding on behalf of an organisation, or as an individual; and
- please indicate whether or not you would be prepared to give oral evidence to the Committee.

The Committee welcomes contributions in Welsh and English.

If you have any queries, please contact Bethan Davies, Committee Clerk on 029 2089 8120 or Leanne Hatcher, Deputy Clerk on 029 2089 8147.

Yours faithfully



Ann Jones AM

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Annexe 1

Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Bill

Consultation Response Form

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As part of its Stage 1 consideration, the National Assembly for Wales' **Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee** is calling for evidence on the general principles of the **Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Bill**.

Please return this form to the National Assembly for Wales, by 31 January 2013. Should you have any queries please contact Bethan Davies, Clerk 02920 89 8120 or Leanne Hatcher, Deputy Clerk 029 2089 8147.

Responses should be sent to:

CELG.committee@wales.gov.uk

Or by post:
Leanne Hatcher
Legislation Office
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Your name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Email address:

Telephone number:

Your address:

The Local Government Boundary Commission

Question 1: Is there a need for a Bill to make changes to the constitution and functions of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales ("the Commission") and to make various provisions relating to local government?

Yes

No

Please expand on your answer

Question 2: Do you think the Bill will improve the delivery of the statutory roles and functions of the Commission? (paragraph 3.1 of the explanatory memorandum)

Yes No

Please expand on your answer

Question 3: Do you think the changes being made to the Commission are appropriate? (Part 2 of the Bill)

Yes No

Please expand on your answer

Local Government arrangements

Question 4: Do you think the provisions relating to procedures for local government reviews are appropriate? (Chapter 4 and 5)

Yes No

Please expand on your answer

Question 5: Do you think the arrangements for local government in relation to:

- Duties of the Commission
- Duties of a principal council

are appropriate? (Chapter 1)

Yes No

Please expand on your answer

Question 6: Do you think the arrangements for local government in relation to:

- Democratic Services Committees (Section 56)
- Audit Committees (Section 57)
- Standards Committees (Section 63)

are appropriate?

Yes No

Please expand on your answer

Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Question 7: Do you think the provisions relating to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales are appropriate? (Chapter 5, Sections 58-62)			
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please expand on your answer			

Access to information (Town and Community Councils)

Question 8: Do you think the provisions relating to improving access to information (Town and Community Councils) are appropriate?			
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please expand on your answer			

Chairing of Principal Councils (Chairs and Mayors of Principal Councils)

Question 9: Do you think the provisions relating to the Chairing of Principal Councils (Chairs and Mayors of Principal Councils) are appropriate?			
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please expand on your answer			

General Provisions of the Bill

Question 10: What are the potential barriers to implementing the provisions of the Bill (if any) and does the Bill take account of them?			
Please expand on your answer			

Question 11: What are the financial implications of the Bill, if any? In answering this question you may wish to consider Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum (the Impact Assessment), which estimates the costs and benefits of implementation of the Bill.			
Please expand on your answer			

Question 12: What are your views on powers in the Bill for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation (i.e statutory instruments including regulations and orders) (section 5 of the Explanatory Memorandum)?

Please expand on your answer

Not necessary.

Question 13: Are there any other comments you wish to make about specific sections of the Bill?

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