



William Powell  
Chair of the Petitions Committee  
Tŷ Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

02/09/2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter and additional information regarding the petition calling for the provision of an info pack for all the people of in Wales explaining how they can stand as electoral candidates.

I believe that the petition's aims are worth supporting, ie how to encourage more people to take part in the democratic process as representatives of political parties or independent candidates.

Although the idea of sending a pack to every house in Wales has its merits, I believe that further consideration is required of the existing obstacles that prevent more people from taking part in the democratic process and putting their names forward as candidates, particularly among underrepresented groups.

There is a need to gain a better understanding of the current impact of such obstacles, eg the financial/time pressures faced by potential candidates who are serious about standing for election. This is by no means an exhaustive list but the effects of factors such as the candidate's deposit, petrol costs, childcare costs, the flexibility of current employers and understanding of electoral law all need to be considered. These can pose a substantial obstacle when trying to ensure that a broad cross section of people stands for election, without mentioning the unfairness of the present electoral system.

I certainly believe it would be worth considering producing a leaflet for every young person in Wales before they turn 18 to explain the democratic system and how they can take part in the democratic process.

We have recently made an effort to advertise opportunities for members of the public to stand as Plaid Cymru representatives. We have also recently made an effort to attract more people to express an interest in standing as candidates for the National Assembly and Westminster using Twitter and Facebook. This has had a positive impact on the number of people expressing an interest in standing as candidates.

I would be happy to work with the appropriate body to discuss this further; I assume that the relevant body would be the Electoral Commission along with the Assembly Commission.

Rhuanedd Richards,

Chief Executive  
Plaid Cymru

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