

I write regarding the consultation on second homes for Assembly Members.

I write with no agenda, nor on behalf of any political party or group and I write in a purely personal capacity.

It has been suggested that AM's whose home/main home is outside of Wales should be bared from claiming for overnight accommodation in Cardiff/Cardiff Bay.

Currently only members representing the regions of Mid & West and North Wales or constituents within those two regions can claim up to the full amount for Cardiff accommodation. I have no issue with this as commuting from those distances everyday is frankly ridiculous.

I do not think that the AMs normal place of residence should come into play, simply the constituency/region to which they were elected.

Mid & West Wales and North Wales are both big geographic entities in themselves and both are a substantial distance from Cardiff. All members from those areas should be given the same treatment in terms of options available for overnight accommodation. It does not matter whether an AMs home is in Llanelli, Aberystwyth or Llanymynech, consequently it should not matter which side of the English/Welsh border an AM lives on. AMs have all been elected by their constituents and it is their constituents who hold them to account.

There has been press speculation about an English based AM for Mid and West Wales who if the rules are changed would benefit from an allowance for a Cardiff Home. If he lived in his region there would be no question about him claiming for accommodation. Therefor I see no reason why he could be excluded from claiming. There is nothing in law that states a candidate must live/work in their seat in order to stand (nor should there) but slimily that they secure enough votes from the people they want to represent.

It should not concern the institution of the Assembly where an AM choses to live, be it in their region, or hypothetically across the border in England. If the AM has been elected to represent a seat far enough away from Cardiff to warrant accommodation, then they should be entitled to it.