

Julie James AM
Minister for Housing and Local Government

5 December 2019

Further information following the meeting held on 27 November 2019

Dear Julie,

Thank you for your appearance before the Committee on 27 November for scrutiny of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill. During the meeting, you agreed to write to the Committee on the following points listed below:

- to provide details of any analysis that has been undertaken by the Welsh Government or elsewhere in relation to petitions schemes, the potential increase in their use by the public, and long-term cost implications for principal councils of running a scheme.
- to share the timetable for the ‘co-production’ of the guidance and regulatory arrangements created by the Bill.
- to share examples or evidence of effective self-assessment arrangements that are currently in place around the world.

During the meeting you were unable to provide detailed responses to our questions on the financial implications of the Bill due to restrictions on the timing of the Welsh Government’s draft budget and local government settlement. Following the session, we agreed to ask for written responses to these questions and for some additional information on some other areas discussed during the meeting.

Firstly, could you outline what financial support the Welsh Government will be providing to local government to cover the additional costs falling on authorities as a result of provisions for extending the franchise in this Bill? Could you also outline how the Welsh Government will be supporting local authorities to ensure the necessary systems are in place to enable the use of remote attendance for council meetings, including any financial assistance?



During the meeting you confirmed that guidance on the implementation of the Bill's provisions would be jointly produced by the Welsh Government and WLGA, please could you also provide details of how the other service users, including citizens, will be able to influence the design and delivery of the guidance. It would be helpful if the timetable for producing the guidance could be made available to us in advance of our deadline for reporting on the general principles of the Bill.

You will recall that we also discussed potential financial incentives for local authorities who wish to change their voting system to STV. Could you clarify whether the Welsh Government would consider providing financial assistance to any principal councils wishing to change their voting system to STV ?

We appreciate that you are not able to respond to all of these points until after the draft budget and local government settlements have been published, but would be grateful for a response as soon as possible after 16 December.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



John Griffiths AM

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

