

Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a
Llywodraeth Leol

Communities, Equality and Local Government
Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



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Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Local Government (Wales) Bill: Stage 1

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay

Request from the Committee for additional information

Caerdydd / Cardiff

Daniel Hurford

CF99 1NA

Welsh Local Government Association

4 March 2015

Dear Daniel

Local Government (Wales) Bill evidence session – 26 February 2015

Thank you for attending the evidence session on the Local Government (Wales) Bill on 26 February, along with your colleagues representing local government.

There are a number of issues that the Committee did not have an opportunity to explore with you and your colleagues during the session, due to time constraints. These are set out below:

- To what extent are you content with the provisions in the Bill relating to establishing transition committees and the way in which they will operate?
- Do you agree that the Minister needs to be given a power of direction over transition committees, and if so, why?
- Is it appropriate that audit and scrutiny committees of local authorities will not be able to exercise their functions in relation to anything done by a transition committee? If so, will transition committees be sufficiently accountable, and to whom?
- As only members will be allowed to vote on transition committees, what role do you envisage senior officers having as those committees make preparations for merger?
- Can the WLGA expand on its comments on the July 2014 White Paper that the merger programme “could impact negatively on general officer capacity and expertise as well as on-going service delivery”? How could this be addressed?
- Are there any other particular issues around staffing that would cause concern to local government in respect of mergers, including their views on the role of the Staff Commission?

- In its comments on the July 2014 White Paper, the WLGA raised concern that there were no details about council tax and that “the Welsh Government will have to be clear what its council tax policy is regarding harmonisation”. Have these concerns been addressed?
- What are your views on how issues around the use of the Welsh language should be dealt with when authorities merge, and what role will there be for the WLGA and leaders in this?

It would be helpful if you could submit a co-ordinated response by Friday 13 March.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine Chapman'.

Christine Chapman AC / AM

Cadeirydd / Chair