

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau Petitions Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

September 2011

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Petitions Committee of the National Assembly for Wales has received two petitions relating to local authority activities.

We are interested in hearing the views of individuals, groups or organisations on the subject of this petition. These views will be used as evidence by the Petitions Committee in its consideration of these petitions.

The petitions under consideration are:

1. Filming and Recording of Council Meetings

'We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to place a statutory requirement on all local authorities in Wales to record, broadcast or livestream all Council meetings which are open to the public, via their existing websites to ensure openness and transparency. This requirement should allow members of the public, as responsible observers, to record or film such meetings without the need for prior permission and to re-use the material freely to provide a direct and wider line of communication to the electorate'.

Questions you may wish to consider in responding

1. Do you feel that public meetings should be filmed? Why is this important?
2. What are the barriers to public meetings being filmed?
3. Do any of the Standing Orders of Wales's local authorities specifically prohibit the filming of public meetings?

2. Local Authority Spending Details over £500

'We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to place a statutory requirement on all local authorities in Wales to publish details of all spending over £500 in the interest of openness and transparency. The details should be published online and in a format accessible to the public with the freedom

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to re-use the data.

Many English Councils now publish this information on their websites. The information is already available on various internal council databases so would merely need to be collated centrally and in a form suitable for access and in compliance with the Data Protection Act.. Initial costs would be offset by a reduction in the volume of Freedom of Information requests received by Local Authorities concerning spending details.'

Questions you may wish to consider in responding

1. Do you feel that local authorities should publish details of spending? If so, should this be mandatory or encouraged as best practice?
2. What are the barriers to providing this information publicly?
3. Do you feel that £500 and over is the appropriate level of spend to be published.

If you would like to submit evidence, we would be grateful to receive it by **3 November 2011**. Further guidance on the submission of evidence is attached.

We would be grateful if you could share this request with other interested parties or, where appropriate, any of your member organisations.

Yours faithfully,



Abigail Phillips
Clerk to the Petitions Committee

Advice on Submitting Evidence

- The Committee may call on those who have submitted written evidence to supplement it in oral evidence to the Committee. Please indicate in your response whether you would be prepared to give evidence in person.
- Witnesses should be aware that once written evidence has been submitted to the Committee it is treated as the property of the Committee. Written evidence will be published on the Committee's website, and extracts may subsequently be included in the report.
- The Assembly will not publish information which it considers to be personal data. If you are providing any information, other than personal data, which you feel is not suitable for public disclosure, it is up to you to stipulate which parts should not be published. You should provide a reasoned argument to support this. The National Assembly will take this into account when publishing information or responding to requests for information.
- In the event of a request for information submitted under UK legislation, it may be necessary to disclose the information that you provide. This may include information which has previously been removed by the National Assembly for publication purposes.