



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-650  
Ein cyf/Our ref LA -/00599/15

William Powell AM  
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14 September 2015

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your letter of 12 August regarding the petition to scrap Local Government Councillor's Salaries.

In Wales, Councillors salaries are set by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (the Panel). The Panel produces an Annual Report which sets out the type and level of payments that Local Authorities may or must make available to their members (councillors) and co-opted-members. In preparing its reports the Panel is required to take into account the likely financial impact of its decisions on the authority in question. In the 7 years since the Panel was established, it has developed a national framework which is applicable across Wales and allows control of the amount and number of payments to Councillors. The Panel is independent of both Welsh Government and Local Government

In the recent consultation on reforming Local Government (the White Paper, "Power to Local People") the Welsh Government recognised the tensions surrounding the role of a councillor between those that can devote all their time to it and those that have other commitments, and that no person should be out of pocket through serving their community. If Councillors were entitled to no remuneration for their time and efforts there is a danger that the democracy would be dominated by those who could afford to give their time for free. The future merger of Local Authorities will mean fewer councils and a reduction in the numbers of Councillors. This will result in a significant reduction in the costs of Local democracy.

Elected members of local authorities are there to represent the interest of local people, undertake the governance of local communities, and secure value-for-money public services for local tax-payers through effective scrutiny. Publicly funded remuneration is made available to encourage a range of willing and able people to stand for election.

This diversity is essential to ensure people feel they are appropriately represented.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leighton Andrews". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the signature is a long, thin horizontal line that ends in a small arrowhead pointing to the right.

**Leighton Andrews AC / AM**  
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus  
Minister for Public Services