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Cyngor Gwledig LLANELLI Rural Council

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Please ask for:

24 July 2006

Local Government & Public Services Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Assembly Offices
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Sir/Madam

ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS IN WALES

I refer to the above consultation document and respond as follows:

Q1 - The Council is in favour of penalties for non registration. Penalties already exist but are hardly ever used because of the process. Electoral Registration Officers don't have the time or the resources to pursue cases through the Courts. There needs to be a rethink on the use of penalties. More people need to be fined/penalised so that others sit up and take notice. Whilst it is a legal requirement to fill in the Electoral Registration Form, nobody pays any attention to the warnings printed on it.

It may be that people who fail to register could be referred on to a central body for further action. Failing that, the penalty process could be streamlined and speeded up. This would encourage Electoral Registration Officers to pursue action against offenders.

Q2 - Perhaps private landlords should complete the Electoral Registration Form or at least endorse individual returns so as to corroborate the information being returned from rented accommodation.

Q3 - We agree with the statements.

Q4 - Yes. Electoral Registration Officers should be given permission to search any public database to verify household information.

Q5 - Education and more direct communication.



Mae Cyngor Gwledig Llanelli yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg
Llanelli Rural Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English



Q6 - In theory an all postal vote could work in Wales, but the current system needs to be reviewed so that it is easy to complete the paperwork whilst eliminating fraud.

Q7 - We agree with using modern technology to encourage electronic voting. Anything which makes the process of voting more accessible and convenient for electors warrants investigation. The benefits of electronic voting will eliminate traditional process and procedure, making elections cheaper and possibly quicker to run. However, the downside is validating individual electronic votes so systems must be robust.

Q8 - Yes alternative venues for polling stations should be used. Perhaps also voting could be staggered over a defined period instead of the traditional fixed hours on a Thursday. Why not spread the election over several days?

Q9 - General apathy and lack of interest. Does an individual vote make a difference? The decision making process at a local level has been speeded up but as a result there appears to be less public accountability and scrutiny. Likewise at a national level some people hold the view that the National Assembly has no real power of its own and is merely a talking shop.

Q10 - No - there should be some effort to include voting in the school curriculum.

Q11 - No.

Q12 - No the process should be curriculum lead.

Q13 - Yes local youth council/forum.

Q14 - Not sure.

Q15 - Not sure.

Q16 - Yes.

Q17 - Yes we support the concept of mobile ballot boxes.

Q18 - Yes this should be mandatory.

Q19 - Local experience is positive, however we are unaware of experience elsewhere in Wales.

Q20 - Education and more direct communication.

Q21 - No.

I hope these comments aid the consultation process.

Yours faithfully



Clerk to the Council