

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

*No Response*

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

It would allow for better savings across north wales but sensitivity is required.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Abandon the Flintshire Wrexham merger. Wrexham wishes to keep its central base so the best option would be merging southern Denbighshire with Wrexham. Local business already support initiatives around Llangollen such as the eisteddfod and Flintshire have already suggested a merger with debshire to for a be coastal community.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

Travel times for council operations would be greater reduced with a Wrexham/south denbighshire and Flintshire/ north Denbighshire merger. You only have to look at the transport links to see this. I wouldn't take the a483 and a55 into consideration due to persistent traffic delays at the border.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

*No Response*

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

*No Response*

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*No Response*

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

**Name** Adam scott

**Organisation (if applicable)** -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

*No Response*



Strengthening Local Government  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

Annwyl gyfeillion/Dear colleagues,

5 June 2018

**Response to Welsh Government green paper “Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People”**

1 The Association of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (ALACE) welcomes the opportunity to submit a response to the Green Paper. We look forward to being consulted further about some of the detailed matters raised in the Green Paper that affect our members in Wales, if the Government decides to proceed with reform.

2 ALACE is the only union that represents exclusively local authority chief executives and senior managers including monitoring officers, chief financial officers and, in Wales, the heads of democratic services. ALACE provides the staff side of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities.

3 ALACE would reiterate the points that it has made on previous consultations as reform (if proceeded with) will raise the same issues as highlighted previously. Given the impact that mergers of councils would have on senior managers, and the cost and disruption that this could entail in respect of such posts (not to mention services and locally responsive democracy generally), we would observe that there should be a clear business case for structural change. If there is to be structural change, then a clear assessment of costs of change and benefits is needed together with provision of additional Welsh Government resources to support successful implementation. The business case would be founded on clarity about the role and purpose of local government rather than rushing to debate lines on maps, cognisant of the direction of travel on local government funding but also taking advantage of opportunities that could be afforded by greater freedoms and flexibilities.

**Consequence of merger of whole councils**

4 A merger of two or more councils means that their whole economic undertakings will be transferred into the new council and therefore that all employees should be transferred to the new council in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 or, failing that, in accordance with the Cabinet Office Statement of Practice on Staff Transfers in the Public Sector (December 2013). We would welcome the Welsh Government’s confirmation of its stance on this issue, which we have sought before in response to earlier consultations.

## **Timing of elections**

5 Many ALACE members in Wales act as returning officers. The impact on returning officers and their staff – not to mention potential voter fatigue – will need careful consideration if the Government pursues the suggestion that elections to councils should be held in June 2021, the month after elections to the National Assembly. The experience of holding major local government elections in May 2017 with an overlapping election period for the General Election in June 2017 shows the difficulties that this creates. We would urge the Government to consider carefully any representations it may receive about ensuring a proper gap between the two electoral processes if reform is pursued.

## **Getting the best from people and protecting staff**

6 We welcome the recognition of the importance of supporting staff through a process of change, and the commitment to involve trade unions in that. ALACE would wish to be consulted on detailed proposals in this area. ALACE has no objection to using existing social partnership arrangements including the Workforce Partnership Council and the Local Government Joint Council in order to provide support and guidance, as it seems unnecessary to incur the expense of creating an alternative statutory body.

7 There will need to be early clarity that any further reforms to public sector exit payments in Wales is to be delayed to beyond the point of structural reform, and that the full extent of exemptions from the £95k cap will be provided. It would be unacceptable if staff facing loss of employment as a result of structural reform were to receive less generous termination payments than those who might leave employment now.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir/Yours sincerely,



Ian Miller  
Honorary Secretary, ALACE

Address for correspondence: c/o Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster DY11 7WF or [alacehonsec@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alacehonsec@yahoo.co.uk)

**Sent:** 24 April 2018 14:49

**To:** Alun Davies (Ministerial) ; Gwynne Jones

**Subject:** Mon a Gwynedd

Pnawn Da

Codwyd cwestiwn yng nghyfarfod diwethaf Cyngor Tref Amlwch ynglyn a'r posibilrwydd y gallai'r ddwy sir (Ynys Mon a Gwynedd) ymuno yn y dyfodol. Cytuno bod angen cadw Mon fel ag y mai ond cydweithio a datblygu partneriaethau gyda Gwynedd. Nid oedd yr aelodau am weld y ffin yn diflannu eto. Ar hyn o bryd gyda datblygiadau mawr ar y gorwel, mae'n bwysig bod Mon yn edrych ar ol ei asedau ei hun. Mae profiad blaenorol cyn yr ailstrwythuro yn dangos diffyg gwariant a buddsoddiad ym Mon. Cytunwyd yn unfrydol ysgrifennu at Prif Weithredwr Cyngor Mon a'r Gweinidog Perthnasol yn y Cynulliad i ddatgan barn yr aelodau felly dyma ebost yn nodi barn a phryderon aelodau Cyngor Tref Amlwch.

Byddwn yn ddiolchgar o dderbyn unrhyw sylawadu.

Gyda diolch

Carli Evans Thau

Clerc



# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Choose the best departments from existing local authorities to oversee the amalgamated counties, e.g. education is more effective in Flintshire so the education department from county hall would oversee what is currently Wrexham

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Brilliant - this should have been implemented years ago

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Brilliant - it seems counterproductive to pay two or more departments for each element when counties could be re-amalgamated more effectively to give better outcomes

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Id consider looking at the old borders and reintroducing them, rather than split again into something new. The old county of Clwyd was effective and should never have been separated

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

Not evidence but if you're paying one Director to oversee transportation and planning/highways/education/housing etc...instead of multiple then it saves a huge amount on salaries which could be pumped into services instead

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes as it negates the need for endless questioning

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

Yes

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

As mentioned in section one, I'd consider reverting to the former counties (which were split in the 90s) to avoid yet more confusion

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

Please see response above. It would also negate the need to think of another new name, there was talk over "wrexshire"; whereas if the parts of Denbighshire which were originally in Clwyd were returned, you could revert to Clwyd once more

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

take the highest performing department from each county to create the strongest team possible

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

I think it should be rolled out across the board, as soon as possible.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

I dont believe that option one should be persued. I believe option 3 should be introduced immediately

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Make it compulsory with a date limit

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Traditionally local government elections are held in May - let's not confuse the electorate

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

No

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

If reducing the amount of county councillors, consider the ward borders. In Buckley they have various wards and a certain amount of councillors each, in Gwersyllt there are more wards and the same amount of seats for a smaller population. This needs to be looked at. There should be 1 councillor to a set amount of people, again to save money and ensure a fairer democracy

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Councillors should hold frequent surgeries - some elected barely attend meetings and simply collect their wage for the duration of their term

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Please see above. Compulsory attendance at meetings would be a good start

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Education, transportation and planning.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

Through amalgamation and ensuring the best people are in charge

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Public meetings

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

The only challenge I envisage is the mentality of some senior staff/councillors who've not been pushed to perform at their highest level. They may object to the amalgamation

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Compulsory immediate amalgamation to prevent heel dragging

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

If any change, an improvement by introducing more welsh speakers into counties

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

By amalgamation happening urgently before already stretched budgets suffer even more, to the detriment of the residents

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

No

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Not that i can determine

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

No

No

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

I'm not a specialist but not that i can determine

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

Please push this through this time, sooner rather than later

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable)

[REDACTED]

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

There should be a greater emphasis on the number of services which could be delivered on a regional level. e.g. Highways and Transport departments. This would pool resources to deliver a better service on regional issues such as road improvements and transport.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

In agreement with the common elements. There should also be provision for informing the public of proposed changes in what they will see and feel as a result of the mergers. This should be done on a higher level to avoid bias.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

In agreement with the principle of creating fewer, larger authorities. From the figures in the annex it is clear that there would still be some degree of disparity between authorities in terms of the topic areas outlined. There are specific areas which require serious further consideration for providing larger authorities.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

The most obvious and clearly sensible option would be to create two North Wales authorities. North Wales West consisting of Anglesey, Gwynedd, and Conwy, and North Wales East including Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham. This would create more equal authorities in line with other proposed merges across Wales. I believe residents would be much more inclined to agree with this option when considering the figures in all topic areas compared to the current proposal.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

Aside from the obvious cost saving with having only two north wales authorities, the benefits of having two north wales authorities is clear from the statistics (as evidenced within the figures in the annex). If the current proposal for three north wales authorities was to be implemented this would result in approximately 97,779 population difference between the smallest and largest authority. By comparison having just two north wales authorities would reduce this difference to 76,046 resulting in a more equal merger.

In terms of the Welsh language the option of two north wales authorities would also assist in creating a balance between Welsh and English speakers. Based on the annex figures the proportion of Welsh speakers would be 50% for west north wales and 25% for east north wales.

Based on this I believe Option 3 - a single comprehensive merger programme would be most suitable.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes, it is crucial for people to be kept aware of proposals.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

These seem reasonable.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

In agreemtn with point 4.18, in particular the point on creating better balance.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

The proposed changes would be an improvement to the existing situation. However, there is a case to suggest that further merging the north wales authorities from 6 to 2 would future proof any further financial savings necessary or any further local authority boundary reviews. This is backed up by the figures proposed in the annex and aligns with the other services in the area, i.e health board.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

A greater focus on regional delivery of road improvements through a regional Highway and Transport department.

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

Yes, this approach seems to be sensible considering the known resistance demonstrated by some authorities. This would add a necessary level of accountability and driver for delivery.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

I am not in support of option 1, however if this were adopted then any proposed date should be as short as possible.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Taking into account the attitude of some local authorities I believe it would be most sesible to adopt option 3 as the option which will ensure the desired outcome of the mergers. This eliminates the expectation on local authorities to volunarily merge which increases local tensions and speculation.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

None.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Not that I am aware of.

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

Electoral boundaries on a plan mean very little to those on the ground. Determining parameters for electoral reviews should have an elements of consideration to the social connections which exist between communities as well as physical boundaries and population of wards. If a robust review is carried out this could lead to a reduction in the number of electoral wards necessary.

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Councillors should be required to provide evidence that their stand point or opinions are based on that of their local resident views. This could be done through demonstrating what their decisions have been in democratic decisions.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

People have generally lost faith in the system through corruption, nepitism and councillors being elected by default who have their own agendas disregarding the real issues and concerns which face their local residents. For this reason, there should be a cap on the term length of a councillor to ensure that people are wanting to be involved for reasons to make a change to their local communities and not for the financial gain and power associated with the title. As a recommendation 10 years would be a sensible cap for a councillor. Imposing such policy would ensure there is new and fresh ideas being implemented within local authorities, provide a chance for younger talent to be elected and tackle the evident demographic imbalance of councillors.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

The greater problem is who is in local government not what power they have.



Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

None.

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Highways and Transport.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

A regional transport department pooling financial resources and contractors.

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Regular update bulletin.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

None.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

The introduction of a fixed term that any one councillor can be in position. There is evidence to suggest that councillors have become complacent and are out of touch with residents issues. Councillors should be in the job because they are passionate and driven to make positive change, not for the financial benefit or because of any invested interest.

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

The effects on the Welsh language would be positive as a result of the proposals with greater balance given between Welsh and English. Policy should not allow for local authorities administration or services to be Welsh only as this could have the opposite effect and result in non-welsh speakers being alienated. There should be a requirement for local authorities to be bilingual.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Positive effects could be increased through larger merger of authorities, in particular those in north wales where the language is most prominent.

wales where the language is most prominent.

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Language is a social mechanism. There should be a balance between languages and no favoritism between either language. The focus should be on bilingualism. There should also be adequate recognition that English is the official language of the UK.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

None.

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

None.

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

None.

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

None.

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

The consultation is extensive and the content is too complex for the lay person.

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Treat all counties equally and not concentrate on Cardiff and the valleys

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

There are no common elements just political dogma

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Leave well alone and let authorities plan their mutual co-operation

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

See above - stop political meddling

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

No

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

No

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

No

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

Not appropriate

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

See previous responses

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

Seek local co-operation and reduce cost of admin

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

No

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

No

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Remember that the permanent staff are the servants of the councils NOT the masters

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Stop senior council staff over ruling or muzzling councillors

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

The

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Transport, social services

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Consistent approach is not always the best. local knowledge is best

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

The Welsh language is a useful but expensive luxury  
I am director of an international group and the parent company built the new factory near Bristol as the additional costs to comply with the language could not be justified to build in Wales.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

There are none

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

See above

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

No positives. Concentrate in building creative conditions for employment

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

No

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

No

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

No

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous



# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

WG needs to be decisive and tell LAs what they will be funding thereby making the decision about what LA boundaries will be. regional working really does feel like a cop-out from having to make the difficult decision and having to have difficult conversations with parochial people

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Logical and helpful in setting out the operating parameters of the mergers

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

As stated above, WG needs to get on with it. This has been on the table previously under a couple of different Ministers. Please be decision and get on and take action - if the figures stack up, you can evidence services will not be negatively impacted, then the egos of local politicians will have to be secondary considerations

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Please ensure LHB and LA borders are coterminous. Please create a culture for flatter, less bureaucratic organisations

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

The obvious reduction in senior leadership posts is clear. Being that these are the most expensive posts, savings will be realised. However, consideration needs to be given to what will be saving and what will be reinvestment into front line services.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes definitely. As previously stated, coterminosity with LHB boundaries will be very helpful

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

Yes.

**Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?**

I think acknowledgement of the boundaries that were in place would be helpful to demonstrate an awareness that in many cases, boundary footprints are going back full circle to the boundaries of 30 years ago, before LA areas were separated in the last big shake up. e.g if you're bringing back the 3 county boroughs that used to be Dyfed, then please call the 'new' area Dyfed. Anything else will simply be perceived as picking a new name for the sake of it

**Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?**

Communities naturally associate with other, nearby communities. Have community consultations been conducted to be clear about whether Torfaen, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent people naturally flow through these areas? What if Torfaen people naturally associate with Newport? Wouldn't that merger then be more appropriate?

**Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?**

Regional working adds a layer of bureaucracy onto already bureaucratic working. regional working needs to go as it appears to LA area merger by the back door and all it does is add in another layer to the working agenda. If there are economies of scale e.g. procurement of paper, then the WG needs to lead on this not some intermediary regional body

## **Page 4: Chapter 5**

**Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?**

I think transition should be based on tight timescale as too much planning and debating will introduce individual agenda and ego states to the challenge which is unhelpful. Make the planning short and sharp and let's get on with it. If we plan and plan, we get no where but find ourselves going around in circles

**Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?**

Definitely, as above - be clear about the dates. And the best way for organisations to be clear about the dates is to set budget contributions to the associated organisations with achievement dates

**Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?**

Set the timescales as short. If organisations really wanted this to happen, they could achieve it in 6 months - from developing new structures to appointing new officers and giving notice to the unsuccessful. Budgets could also be integrated and set within 6 months

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

This is just too far ahead. Set the merger date as 1/4/20 so that we can get on and make those financial savings and get on with the restructure. This regional working has been discussed for far too long with no action. Let's move to something formal

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Whatever planning cycle programmes and services have, 6 months notice is plenty of time to change that process, so I don't see that sufficient prior notice wouldn't be sufficient. Also, please note, there is not much now that WG doesn't have the final say on, so what would need to happen is that the internal WG departments make agreements and give notice about their change in planning cycle. Please don't let services tell you they 'can't' when it's WG that set the parameters in the first place - if WG set them, they can change them

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

Unless you work in any of the organisations affected, your interest will be limited and it will be merely 'eye rolling' at the fact that there is yet another governmental 'big idea' that it coming, with limited understanding. As long as citizens receive appropriate elderly care, children are safe, bins are collected and potholes are fixed, they name of the organisation and the name of the CEO is not relevant

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Councillors should be voluntary roles with no formal payment. Expenses reimbursement only

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Provision of statutory services need to be standardised so that e.g. children across different LA areas don't get different number of hours 3-5year old education etc

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

None what so ever

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Dwi'n siŵr y byddai mwy o wybodaeth am effaith dwyieithrwydd ar ddatblygiad yr ymennydd yn gweld cynnydd yn y defnydd o'r iaith. Ar hyn o bryd nid yw'n cael ei weld fel cenedligrwydd o hyd er mwyn cenedligrwydd, ac ni all pobl boeni na defnyddio'r iaith na'i ddysgu

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

*No Response*

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

*No Response*

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

I envisage benefits from the improved strategic alignment for regional planning.

However, Growing Mid Wales remains underdeveloped as an economic growth programme, and I anticipate significant challenges in coherent regional planning across the vast Mid and West Wales region extending from Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant in the north east, via a four hour drive through the Powys Marches (with significant infrastructure and economic links with England) to Haverfordwest.

There is a risk therefore that Mid and West Wales is left behind those regions with a more contained geography, higher population density and more coherent regional identity. The steps to be taken by Welsh Government to ensure that the perceived benefits from Strengthening Local Government are equitably experienced in all parts of Wales are not adequately articulated.

Investment in Mid and West Wales infrastructure including mobile and digital data, roads and public transport feels critical to benefits realisation. A stronger Welsh Government presence in mid Wales would be an important visible commitment to a thriving mid Wales.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

No comment.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

I support the general principle, particularly as a Health Board Employee I recognise the potential benefits for citizens and service users from increased strategic alignment and reduced transactional bureaucracy. However, the lack of a clear plan for Powys is concerning. Any options would need a clear plan for how Welsh Government will enable Powys to achieve the intended benefits, rather than risk being left behind the rest of Wales facing the challenge of delivering services for the oldest population, in the second largest local authority in terms of area, with the smallest population and the most sparse population density.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

The options of new modern boundaries fit for future generations could be considered, rather than through merger of existing council areas.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

The experience in Powys where there is already co-terminology between Health Board, local authority, PSB and RPB may provide useful learning.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

It is important not to underestimate the challenge of ensuring democratic accountability across large areas. Five of the proposed local authority areas would exceed 1000 sqkm whilst two would exceed 5000 sqkm encompassing vast cultural and geographical diversity which may present leadership challenges, particularly when making challenging decisions that will be essential for the delivery of the intended strategic benefits.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

The lack of a clear plan remains concerning, compounded by the fact that the impact assessments do not adequately identify the risks and challenges for the county in delivering the strategic benefits, and therefore do not discuss the strategic support that may be required.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

The key issue is the need for a compelling national vision for a thriving mid Wales.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

There is a real need to streamline regulation, policy and governance at national level to reduce the burden of bureaucracy at local level. In Powys I have experienced challenges in seeking to attend to multiple often incoherent national policy agendas using similar but inconsistent terminology (eg Well-being of Future Generations, Social Services and Wellbeing, IMTP requirements etc.) all creating an overlapping burden for a small administrative resource.

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

As these proposals do not directly relate to Powys I have no comments to make.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

As these proposals do not directly relate to Powys I have no comments to make.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

As these proposals do not directly relate to Powys I have no comments to make.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

I would support this, subject to the outcome of the independent review of town and community councils (I am a co-opted Community Councillor).

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

No comment.

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

A rapid view would need to be taken on the reviews currently under way (eg Conwy, Powys, Bridgend).

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Locally we benefit from a highly engaged County Councillor with high levels of attendance at Community Council meetings, which strengthens knowledge of the local community.

Identify advantages and disadvantages of moving to fewer multi-Member electoral wards elected using proportional representation to help strengthen minority voices.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Adequate remuneration is critical.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No comment

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No comment



Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

The current proposals include no options for Powys to secure the benefits envisaged in paragraph 6.18-6.21

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Ensure that advice and support is also available to Powys to ensure that we are not left behind.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

The human and emotional impact of significant organisational change must not be under-estimated. Organisations are complex networks of individual people and relationships; community resilience depends on the maintenance and strength of these relationships; prolonged organisational change can have a significant adverse impact on productivity, engagement, motivation, recruitment & retention which can have an adverse impact on the network of support available to the most vulnerable people in society.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

A clear and supportive framework for the management of change needs to be in place.

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

As a non-merging authority Powys will not necessarily accrue the benefits envisaged for merging authorities, and strategical and structural investment should be considered by Welsh Government to address potential inequity.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

As a non-merging authority Powys will not necessarily accrue the benefits envisaged for merging authorities, and strategical and structural investment should be considered by Welsh Government to address potential inequity.

address potential inequity.

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

As a non-merging authority Powys will not necessarily accrue the benefits envisaged for merging authorities, and strategical and structural investment should be considered by Welsh Government to address potential inequity.

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

As a non-merging authority Powys will not necessarily accrue the benefits envisaged for merging authorities, and strategical and structural investment should be considered by Welsh Government to address potential inequity.

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

The proposals anticipate that local authorities will be better able to meet the changing needs of an ageing population yet there are no clear ideas for supporting the largest and most sparsely populated local authority with the highest proportion of older people - Powys.

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

As a non-merging authority Powys will not necessarily accrue the benefits envisaged for merging authorities, and strategical and structural investment should be considered by Welsh Government to address potential inequity.

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

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Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

There is no purpose in completing this document as you'll do what you want to do and won't take into account the views of anyone other than yourselves. You are hell bent on reforming Local Government in Wales, yet again, at a potential cost of millions of pound to the taxpayer. We have been here before and unwound the situation back in 1996, because the larger authority model just didn't work then. And the reason, quite simply is because geographically the authorities become far too big to work. Your proposal to merge Gwynedd and Ynys Mon for example would create an authority that would take approximately 2 and a half hours to cover by car, north to south, and 2 hours east to west and would cover a geographical area larger than Luxembourg. Your proposals are once again based on your "pink tinted glasses" vision of Wales as existing purely along the M4 corridor, and give little or no consideration to what impact merging authorities along the pre 1996 county lines once again will have on the more rural communities of North and West Wales in particular

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

*No Response*

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

*No Response*

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

*No Response*

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

*No Response*

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*No Response*

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

The questions that you seek comments on in this consultation are not intended for laypeople to understand and to be able to comment on. The opinions you seek require a deep understanding of Local Government in Wales now, and an understanding of how these proposals would impact on local economies the length and breadth of Wales. I believe that you should be consulting on a more local basis with an opportunity for people to provide feedback specifically on the proposals for their own areas which would be far more effective and easier for people to understand and provide some commentary about. I'm guessing that you've kept it as you have so that people just won't bother desponding and you in turn can bulldoze the changes on the people of Wales because they had no interest in the consultation

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

*No Response*

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous



# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Welsh Government doesn't seem to be able to help itself in trying to change anything it has ultimate responsibility for purely for changes sake - be it Education, Social Care, Health or Local Government with very little evidence of a long term strategy to deliver the highest possible public Services and a poor record for delivery. I do appreciate funding has been made available to support regional working initiatives but the evidence of benefits that could / should be delivered have been unclear. Welsh Government perhaps needs to show much greater support to initiatives for regional working and where appropriate it should positively hand over responsibilities not just try to micro manage from afar and then criticise when things fail. There needs to be much clearer evidence that we are all in this together and if this means changes to jobs and structures - especially in rural areas of Wales where skilled well paid employment is very limited then WG need to show they are willing to lose their own share of funding / budgets to help fund the regional working if it is deemed a better way to work. To overcome the fear for so many staff working in health and councils etc of job losses and the huge disruption this would cause there has to be perhaps significant improvements to the terms on which officers may leave employment e.g. through early retirement or voluntary redundancy - this will start to develop confidence in public sector staff that the change yes may mean posts are lost but it will be done so for the right reasons in the long term and if there are added costs to meet in the short term that ultimately delivers the right solution for regional or shared working and key high in demand skills / jobs are retained then surely that is a better outcome for all.

For me, brand new initiatives will always have a much better chance of success as they don't tread into existing responsibilities. Shared work on major roads for example led by WG or the growth bids in development are being enthusiastically and positively approached. There is a real issue though with WG officers and politicians in previous shared / regional working pilots that haven't been successful only listening to the voices they want to hear.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

There is no mention of funding or perhaps of the approach to how efficiencies and economies of scale will be delivered in the new bodies. Again, if that is the case there should be an acknowledgement that highly skilled and well paid jobs won't be lost in rural areas and targets for efficiencies will be on reducing admin and bureaucracy and legacy processes to help deliver improved services. Yes there will be changes, times have changed travel is much easier technology has developed and these will be embraced to deliver perhaps fewer tiny village schools, leisure centres or libraries but upgraded state of the art facilities. So where there are losses - they will be in these areas of legacy processes and bureaucracy. Perhaps it should also recognise within the common elements that vital roles will be retained and protected wherever possible e.g. to ensure care workers skill sets are developed and retained (and rewarded accordingly) or teaching assistants are no longer treated as cheap teachers etc.

**Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?**

I can see the sense in that larger authorities with larger budgets could deliver more effectively. I do think though that the existing authorities and services have worked incredibly hard for the last ten years under huge pressures to try to deliver effective services to residents and visitors. With frankly very little help, support or even recognition from WG especially previous ministers who were dreadfully out of touch and perceived to be on a power trip of personal crusade (the outright dismissal of the Conwy/Denbighshire merger offer was a particularly disappointing low point)- especially when you consider may have been local councillors. Yes there are weak officers and staff across the public sector in Wales - just as there are in any large organization such as the post office, BT, health and yes - welsh and national government. The difference is many of these officers are on much lower salaries and pensions than staff in other organisations including WG - I think WG would have much greater credibility if they were seen to be on an equal footing with their local government colleagues.

There are significant concerns with very many officers around the welsh language challenges and interpretation of how it would be adopted in councils - this would need to be addressed.

Major differences in council tax are a further significant issue for neighbouring councils - how will WG help address this?

There is no mention whatsoever of maintaining the status quo and investing the money that mergers will cost into the authorities? Or indeed in the scope to regionalize whilst ensuring centralised services regionally but distributed fairly.

**Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?**

The problem with the merged authorities is they all want to be the lead or winner. Perhaps some rules need to be put in place from the outset that say each authority will start with a structure of chief and directors that will be taken from each of the current authorities equally? Again - the assurances on retaining (indeed delivering more) skilled jobs is absolutely critical and the offer of better terms to allow people to leave willingly will help the move towards the merged authorities to work.

You could consider for North Wales as an example a North East and North West wales model but the language and how stringently it would be adopted eg. for welsh essential jobs would be a massive issue for many.

has any consideration been given to reducing the role of WG substantially and relocating those responsibilities and roles into the local councils across Wales ? Likewise could some aspects of health care go into the existing local councils?

**Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.**

I think WG needs to cost the options out properly - how can I provide evidence of costs for each option?

All I could suggested is its essential WG ministers don't only listen to what they want to hear when costs for options are considered. And the major stumbling block and challenge undoubtedly is loss of jobs with very poor severance terms - address that and I believe you can start to move forwards with much greater support from staff. You do though need to show that you are as WG in this with the councils.

**Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?**

Yes I think so - for long term planning if nothing else.

I do believe that putting forward dates of 2022 are just too ambitious and sets the Councils and WG up to fail before they have even started - maybe it should be for mergers to take place by 2027 with 2 happening per year from 2022 ? That helps ensure there is not a colossal free for all, lessons can be learnt and WG can be seen to help and support the transition and also to learn from it.

**Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?**

You mention stakeholders but don't actually say who they are?

Lets be honest - cost is the critical factor and the estimate of savings - however in the previous section you mention costs provided from previous consultation and acknowledge some of these savings may have been achieved. You have to be clear -to ensure it's success and support there has to be a huge capital investment - £97million was ridiculous - that works out at around £4million per existing Council - its going to cost much, much more than that so its important if WG are to gain and retain confidence of the public, councilors, councils, staff and partner colleagues they it is completely up front and transparent about its targets - setting out what it feels it merger will cost and what it expects to see in savings and how it will be achieved post merge.

**Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?**

It's OK - my concern remains though that the upfront costs are going to be huge if its to be successful - you have to ask given that should the current model be looked at again with improved funding? I agree the proposal if you were to start from scratch today could well be a better model but you have to consider what is in place already and whether they should be adjusted/tweaked to work better. Without doubt many prefer the provision of very specific services in each locality.

**Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?**

Maybe they should continue as they are but perhaps, for transparency and consistency across Wales look at a national NNDR and/or council tax charge (or even abolish and introduce it onto income tax) and collection service, a national waste collection service and/or a national enforcement service for decriminalized parking, dog fouling, littering, licensing etc. For a national service though e.g. for council tax it should be moved to mid or north wales - Cardiff, Swansea and Newport have enough.

**Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?**

See above ..... maybe the trial of national council tax / nndr rates collection service with a single national charge would be a significant starter for 10 and would remove the need and huge national cost on councils of mergers - ensuring provision of care and support of schools etc stays local albeit with a push to continue embracing the age and moving towards new state of the art schools, libraries and leisure facilities in place of legacy poorly maintained expensive to run sites in rural locations. I mean - in this day and age should we really allow schools of less than say 100 pupils to exist unless in very exceptional circumstances? Its sad to see village shops and public houses closing - but its progress and we vote with our feet.

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

I strongly believe that if its deemed it must proceed and we are very clear that the business case is watertight that it should be a focus on 2 mergers per annum over a 5 year period so that it can be managed and supported properly.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Yes - but see above..... at the end of the day maybe it should be more about asking for volunteers to go in each of the agreed years ? What is to be gained if you are set on moving forwards with asking for volunteers unless you are willing to allow some to merge and leave others to not do if they don't want to? The business case and resourcing for mergers - including getting support through the right funds to support voluntary redundancies or early retirement is key. WG staff get fantastic terms as do many in the public sector (my sister was recently made redundant by the post office and received 6 months salary after working there only just over 4 years). To gain support from so many frightened staff in rural locations this has to be thought through and costed.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

See above.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Its too soon to try to do this all at once - it should be staged so that it can be well managed and supported so maybe the elections for the first 2 mergers take place in 2021 with subsequent ones to follow each year after until 2027.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Councils already do this where they work well with members. There are challenges of course - this is politics - it creates problems at times purely because of the that.

**Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?**

I don't necessarily agree with the previously quoted observations by the minister that elected members could or should be paid more to bring the very best people in. Do you want people in purely because the salaries are higher? In my experience for the most part people become councilors to help their local community first and foremost. This was the original thinking behind payments when Tony Blair was PM and it hasn't really made a difference but what it does do is create significant issues for councils around behaviours etc when members lose their seats on cabinet and the extra salary that entails. Perhaps better just to increase the overall allowance for all members.

**Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?**

Perhaps health workers and any workers out in the field would all be better working in councils locally. Setting of business rates and collection should fall to the respective Councils so that have the option to set and to receive what they collect from their county. Depending on brexit and possible additional budget opportunities councils should be allowed to determine how some of that money will be invested.

**Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?**

See above re business rates.  
Every authority should receive their annual settlement fairly - the current model does not support councils with high proportions of elderly citizens.  
I firmly believe housing associations' stock should all come under their respective councils - the money wasted on so many vanity projects since new housing associations came in to place in recent years has been shocking.

**Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?**

Council Tax national billing/collection on a single IT system - purely because its like any other bill and doesn't have the same social impact as social care provision or education provision ?  
NNDR possibly?

**Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?**

Maybe start with a regional collection model and expand?

**Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?**

I think we need to understand exactly what the strategic plan is first? In suggesting councils are too small though - we need to address by making them larger potentially does this also mean other smaller public organisaitions such as housing associations need to be looked at again?

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

Financial support is the single biggest issue so that the mergers can be funded and staff are supported to take opportunities to leave or retire where appropriate.  
The language is an important consideration.  
The geography of areas likewise.  
Should other smaller public organisations come into scope? e.g. housing associations?

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Funding the proposals properly and ensuring staff have clarity on the strategy, timescales and that they will be offered reasonable terms if they do have to leave in line with colleagues in other public sector roles.

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

Sadly, I think we are unrealistic already in our push to see the language adopted on an equal footing whilst also wanting to see efficiencies and economies. We have to support and encourage adoption and use wherever we can but globalization means its impossible to deliver parity between the languages and we have to recognise that or risk bringing in huge additional costs.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

I think we should recognise the right for anybody living in Wales to converse in their language of choice as is the case now. However - there needs to be some recognition that technology and globalization may limit our ability to do this AND deliver effective and efficient savings.

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Have we considered how a significant loss of jobs would impact on families if the mergers went ahead? Again - its essential packages are in place that can help those where this to happen in line with what is available to WG staff and private sector. Budgeting for the proposals if they are to be rolled out successfully alongside timing appropriately are key.

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

See above.

See above.

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

████████████████████

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

██

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Not sure

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Fewer Local Authorities are essential in these times of austerity, which are set to continue.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Fewer Local Authorities is a must - 22 is too many and we cannot afford it. There should be 12 or less.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Compulsory merger is the only viable option in my view.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

22 LA Chief Executives compared to 10 or 12 LA Chief Executives as well as how many less Councillors?? You do the maths - doesn't take a genius.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes but Government should not be held to ransom by those Chief Executives & Councillors who are looking to serve self interests rather than those of local rate payers.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

Yes but if no solution can be found - compulsory merger at the earliest opportunity should be forced upon Councils.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

I personally don't have any objection to the merging of our areas Newport & Caerphilly.



Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

No - happy with what is proposed for Newport & Caerphilly. We are a good fit.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

More collaboration between LAs and NHS.

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

As long as the process for change is quick which will save money in the longer term.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Yes definitely - waiting for others to agree could take forever.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

If Councils drag their feet and don't want to merge voluntarily then merger should be compulsory. The sooner the better. No more of the tail wagging the dog - we need a strong Government determined to get this through once and for all.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Not that I am aware of.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Not that I am aware of.

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

Not sure.

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

All Councillors to attend Cabinet Meetings???

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

We need less Councillors not more.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No. Someone needs to maintain some central control over the purse strings.

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Compulsory mergers only. Let's get on with it - and the sooner the better.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

As above.

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

From Central Government in Cardiff.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

Lets just get on with it.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

N/A

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

Traditionally - we are not a strong Welsh speaking area.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Not sure.

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Not sure.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Not sure.

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

No - let's just get on with it.

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Not sure.

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Not sure.

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

Please can we just get on and do this - the country cannot afford the massive bill for paying for 22 Local Authorities - such waste and duplication. No more than 10 Councils is enough. Police and Crime Commissioners - how much additional cost is there to that as well. Why can't we just go back to having a Chief Constable?

## Page 7: Submit your response

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

*No Response*

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

The common elements could justify the demolition of local govt. altogether.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Maintaining local accountability. Dyfed and the two tier system of councils was a disaster. Nobody understood it and nobody felt a part of it. There has to be a common core for it to work – language, heavy industry are different in the three Dyfed counties.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Let the people decide, not the Welsh Govt. By all means involve counties in joint consortia.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

With 1974 and 2000 in mind, estimates fell woefully short, and were an excuse for aggrandisement.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

What a farcical question!!

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

With a common interest and a common electorate this is fine. But it has to be voluntary. Dyfed failed. Why should we want to reinstate it?

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

Why should we need a regional tier? We are all less than 150 miles from Cardiff.

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

*No Response*

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Build bridges, not bring down enforcement.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Soviet speak.

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Make them local. Give them more power.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

Devolve power. We are talking about devolved govt.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Let them see if they can work together. The skies the limit.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Avoid consistency. it is the big stick of power-hungry bureaucrats. Devolution of all kinds should be about experimentation.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

The title is the reverse of what is on offer. It makes for cynicism about the political process, and reflects badly on the worth of local democracy.

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable) -



Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

[REDACTED]

Q37. Address

[REDACTED] Goodwick [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Social services need to have better links with nhs. The nhs don't always engage in matters that are significant

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

All sectors have to be consulted

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

I disagree with Conwy merging with Denbighshire. This is because Conwy is already a large county and has the highest population of elderly people. It is a very caring authority and Denbighshire has contracted out a great deal of services. We have been voted a clean and tidy county and heavily rely on tourism and second to that 38 per cent of the jobs in the county is within local government. The rates are much higher in Denbighshire and this could mean an increase for residents in Conwy. There is no welfare provision within Denbighshire and we would not want to inherit the problems of Rhyl and battles over which county gets more funding. This merger would result in job losses and we have to maintain the fantastic Queen of the resorts, and the county as it is.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

I do think that the south authorities are half the size, half the demographics and that they should merge in comparison to the North.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

No I don't have evidence of costs but Liverpool council and Newcastle local authority have had to contract services back into the authority, as out sourcing didn't deliver. It has been publicised

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes clarity has to be given

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

You have to look at the area covered, the demographics, the population, the attributes of each county, what works, what doesn't work

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

There will already be joint working, eg you wouldn't need two chief executives as head of service.

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

I disagree with Conwy and Denbighshire merging .Yes there should be a transition committee and members from both authorities

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

For counties that want to voluntarily merge then this should happen

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

I do believe the people should have more of a say and vote on the merger and not be down to having it imposed

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Community hubs, local radio, face book media pages; and what's app

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

I do think that councillors should have stricter vetting like the police. I also think they could work with the police eg when they give talks at the school local councillors could talk about being involved particularly from last year in primary through to 6 th form

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Each county will be unique with its own demographics and those with similar will work better.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

I would also like to say that it is now difficult to get a front line job if you are not a Welsh speaker, and if you have the experience and prepared to learn Welsh then this shouldn't be detrimental to English people who have the skills and want to bring business and jobs here as well. Eg My niece couldn't get into the Welsh police force so has been in Nottingham police for over 10 years. My two nephews couldn't get jobs in St Asaph, one works in Cardiff the other in London due to the Welsh language policy

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

It has to be fair to English and Welsh, not detrimental to either

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

As above

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

The public should have more say on these proposals

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

[REDACTED]

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

*No Response*

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

*No Response*

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Merging Newport with Caerphilly makes neither economic nor social sense. Newport should be merged with Cardiff and Vale councils creating what could be called "Greater Cardiff Authority" (GCA). This would allow areas fringing the Capital to benefit from their vicinity to Cardiff rather than be hindered by it.

The current Caerphilly council should be split with the old Caerphilly being absorbed into the GCA and Islwyn rejoining Monmouthshire.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

see answer to 1d

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

see answer to 1d

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

One committee to work with the boundaries commission should be sufficient - unless Westminster is paying!

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*No Response*

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Working with the boundaries commission is vital to ensure that Parliamentary/Assembly and local Govt boundaries do not conflict with each other (to avoid silly constituency anomalies, eg Newport East const made up of Newport and Monmouthshire councils).  
Existing cycles to be maintained until one switching date is fully signed off.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

see answer to 4



## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

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Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

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Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

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Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

*No Response*

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

*No Response*

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

*No Response*

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

*No Response*

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

*No Response*

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*No Response*

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

*No Response*

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

*No Response*



# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Work with local authority staff as equal partners. Support this by providing secondments/work placements between Welsh Government and local authorities so staff have a better understanding of the issues faced by the other. Encourage civil servants to stay longer in departments so they get a better understanding of the work, learn from their mistakes and develop constructive working relationships with local authority staff. Provide enough time for planning, delivering and embedding new initiatives. Make sure lessons learned reports are produced for each new initiative and include local authority contributions. Put protocols in place so that staff consider these before new initiatives have begun. For example, many grant schemes are rushed through with no time for planning and it happens again and again. Need to start focussing on quality and taking time to do things well rather than always being distracted by the latest new thing. Training is needed for civil servants and ministers about the difference between regional commissioning and pooled budgets. Allow local authorities in the North to use the Welsh Government offices at Llandudno Junction for video conferencing with other regions.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

I don't think the case for change has been made. It feels like 'something must be done, this is something therefore it must be done' rather than being an evidence-based decision. It's also based on the assumption that public services in Wales will always be underfunded which needs challenging. It's the kind of project that needs investment to work well, for example, in good IT solutions, and there isn't the funding around to do that at the moment. It will create work for back office and management staff at the expense of front line staff, which I think is the opposite of what's intended. Larger authorities will struggle to provide responsive, local services. Front line staff will be further removed from decision makers either due to an increase in middle management or by having overstretched senior staff whose workload doubled overnight. The geography of many local authorities in Wales means that the larger they become the more time will be wasted travelling which also has an impact on our carbon footprint and the well-being of future generations.

Need to start again thinking about which services we deliver and the best scale to deliver those at making the most of our existing structures. We have Welsh Government structures that can work at a national or regional scale and local authorities that can work at a local level or joined up at regional or sub-regional scales. The flexibility is already there. Need to be honest about how many of the barriers faced to achieving what ministers want is due to the number of different councils and how much is due to other factors. Having the same management of a larger area won't magically solve complex issues that we've been struggling with for years. Particularly while managers are distracted by rewriting policies and merging teams. Re-read previous local authority responses to consultations on mergers – a lot of thought went into these and it doesn't seem like the concerns are addressed in the current green paper.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

*No Response*

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

*No Response*

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

*No Response*

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*No Response*

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

*No Response*

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

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Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

a. The various health boards /Police forces etc need to be aligned with the Principal Local Authorities there are too many misalignments' between the boards for effective collaboration.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

b. There could be 5 principal authorities to one health board and 5 in another, but 10 in the Fire and Rescue Authority but they would need to be the same 10 authorities so that they all align this would allow effective collaboration. There needs to be sufficient time to resolve TUPE issues and issue with existing contracts held by authorities.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

c. No disagreement with the principle however there will be significant upfront costs and additional rebranding costs. With local authority budgets being extremely tight already, where would the funds for the shadow authorities be obtained from?

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

none

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

none

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

a. Clarity on the future footprint is important

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

b. Factors are sometimes identified from reports that have not been agreed or adopted which could lead to decisions being made on un-agreed material

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

c. The new authorities need alignment with other authorities across the board, there are too many misalignments' which will lead to difficulties in cross board process and procedure.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

none

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

e. There needs to be alignment of the local authority areas with the regional public service delivery

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

a. Transition committees need to be cross party

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

b. It would be sensible if Option 1 were chosen that there would be a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral Cycle.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

c. Concerns over who will fund the shadow authorities during transition

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

It would be cost effective for Assembly, County and Town and Community Council elections were held on the same day.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

none

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

The number of electorate and size of wards should remain the same

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

a. All County Borough Members should also be members of the local Town or Community Council

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

b. There should be more scrutiny of Committees. Councillors on Committees should have an interest in the subject matter of the Committee and should only be paid for the Committees they meaningfully attend.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

a. Local Council's should have the ability to raise funds to provide social housing for their area

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

b. There should be flexibility to provide all wales solutions to problems such as an integrated transport system (Wales Oyster card)

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

a. Shared Purchasing/ Legal/ HR/ Payroll with an integrated single platform. Town and Community Council's should also have access

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

n/a

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

a. Centralised all wales service for local authorities (not based in Cardiff) these centralised services should be based in other areas of Wales to improve employment prospects in these areas. Self-service purchasing from end users would be useful.



Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

b. Centralised all Wales services such as HR/Payroll/ Pensions/ Purchasing/Legal/ Translation services etc should be based at regional hubs and not in Cardiff to improve employment prospects in these areas.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

c. TUPE

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

none

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

b. Opportunity to provide free Welsh language training for staff and councillors

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

c. Additional free translation services required for local authorities.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

none

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

a. Education authorities should be aligned with local Councils to ensure that all Councils in each cluster share the same Education authority, Health Service Board and Public Service Board

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

none

none

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

none

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

none

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable)

[REDACTED]

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

[REDACTED]

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Wales is a region so we only need one council with three offices and there is space in WG offices across Wales. The current situation where local politics dictates what is done in a parochial fashion is unacceptable as is the cost of running all these councils and national park authorities. The NHS, education, social services, highways and development management needs to be centralised, the current arrangements don't meet the legitimate expectations of the Welsh people.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

You need a bolder vision.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

If a solitary authority is out of the question the maximum should be 5.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Yes, we only need one central administration, there is far too much waste and duplication with a lack of democracy at grass roots level.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

Council tax has doubled in a short period, way above inflation, we can't afford to continue like this.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes of course, get on with it, like the review of designated landscapes this has been dragging on for years now. The matters are becoming more serious by the day.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

I don't have enough time to lay out my thoughts here.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

The people don't see any benefit in local government, all they see is an undemocratic abuse of power and money with little input from the grass roots, not that they see any point because nothing changes.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No, a waste of time and effort.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Frustratingly SLOW

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

June 2019, we need to get a move on

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

I think you mean to ask how you can remove 'elected' members from the equation.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

What responsibility? You need to ask ordinary people what their councillor does for them, they only see them when the elections are coming.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

They have too many powers and new responsibilities are added all the time, someone has to pay the staff and that is going to be the long suffering taxpayer.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Everything

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

One council

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

One council

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

I can't see how the Welsh language would suffer any more than it is already in the north west, mid and west Wales. The local authorities and their planning policies are the problem not the solution.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

One council, one strategy.

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

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Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Form regional collaborative delivery bodies for these functions - by cutting down on the number of local authorities you might also get more positive engagement from those that remain rather than the position which most currently take - its ok to share as long as we are in charge

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

I strongly agree the number should be significantly reduced

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

possibly - you might create less than you currently propose making them co-terminus with regional health boards whilst at the same time strengthening town/ parish Councils as in England

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

simply by reducing the number of chief officers you would make significant savings - Gwent was split into 5 authorities with 5 times the overhead at last reorganisation. There is a need for fewer better Councils, with better leadership ( Members and Officers), skills and capacity

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

yes

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

yes



Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

Newport and Caerphilly makes little sense - Newport, Monmouthshire Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent should merge

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

only to go further as above

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

seek innovative collaborative delivery models - plenty exist in England

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

*No Response*

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

yes

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

why wait, why not sooner

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

again need fewer better (and better remunerated) Members

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

see above

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

IT, Revs Bens, Council Tax, property services, FM

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

the impact on communities losing Civic HQs will need to be addressed

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

## Page 7: Submit your response

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Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Care needs to be taken with regional working so that policy making does not become too remote from citizens. If decisions on policy are taken by all Gwent consortium Education portfolio holders it becomes very difficult for residents in one authority where the policy might not be as beneficial to influence the decision making process. For back office functions regional working is a step in the right direction.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

While I disagree with the specific boundaries proposed. I agree that it would be preferable to reduce from the current 22 local authorities.

**Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?**

I will detail two options. As a resident of Newport, I do not pretend that my understanding of North, Mid & West Wales is as good as a local resident. I would also like to start by specifically opposing the idea of a combined Newport & Caerphilly authority, this makes no sense in geographic or travel-to-work area terms. Frankly, it looks like it was the last authority to be decided upon and the two remaining councils lumped together.

One option for reorganisation would be four very large authorities based on Cardiff Capital Region, Swansea Bay City Region, Mid Wales & North Wales. The advantages of this proposal would be that there could be greater strategic planning across a region. The disadvantage would be a perception, which may be borne out, that either the city or valleys or wealthiest areas would dominate decision making.

A second option, which on balance I prefer, is more complicated and would involve some new boundaries as opposed to simply lumping existing authorities together. The logic would be cultural & environmental similarity and human interaction.

For example;

Monmouthshire is largely rural and its only rural neighbour is Powys so I would propose the Brecon & Radnor area of Powys join with Monmouthshire, while Montgomeryshire join a north-east Wales authority.

I would suggest combining areas with a high proportion of Welsh language use together, for example Carmarthenshire & Ceredigion, while acknowledging that Pembrokeshire probably is sufficiently culturally different to stand alone.

I also suggest a single large Valleys authority because the challenges of these areas are very similar. It also avoids the fear that the Valleys would be viewed by Cardiff and Newport as simply commuter territory.

I have an idea of a 9 or 10 authority model on this basis but rather than specify my exact interpretation, I think the important point to get across is combine areas with a similar culture and environment or where people move freely between on a frequent basis. Rural with rural, valley with valley, urban with urban, Welsh speaking with Welsh speaking etc.

**Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.**

*No Response*

## **Page 3: Chapter 4**

**Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?**

Yes. The uncertainty after numerous reports is a problem. Clarity would be welcome.

**Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?**

*No Response*

**Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?**

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

*No Response*

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*No Response*

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

I've no objection to 2021. Every effort should be made to ensure there is no longer than five years between elections even when such comprehensive change is taking place.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

I think there is scope for significant devolution of powers whether to an elected city region or existing local authorities. A starting point would be to look at what has worked and not worked with the English model which has allowed greater retention of business rates and more ways to raise revenue eg. New Homes Bonus. As things stand Wales is more centralised than England, it would be good to see a shift in the balance between Welsh Gov't and local authorities.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

I believe our top-down city regions would gain from directly elected mayors to lead them.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*



## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

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Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable) -

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# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Ensure that financial and other areas of potential efficiency savings are identified and shared across authorities for future implementation .

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

There is a clear need to merge authorities to as few as possible (say 8)

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

The principles are fine but the timescale is too slow and number of final authorities too high.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

There should be a maximum of 8 authorities put into place . Voluntary mergers may not work due to job protection issues.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Clarity on the future blueprint is important but there should be a maximum of 8 authorities.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

The change I would make would be to have ,in particular , Monmouth to include Newport and the areas around . Newport at present includes many rural areas around which are more appropriate to Monmouth . This would help reduce the authority numbers.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

As mentioned above.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

I think identifying cost reduction areas and getting the new authorities to action them would give savings . Authorities should confirm the actions they have taken .

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

These proposals are needed to ensure the maximum savings and efficiencies.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

As long as the timescale is not too long .

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

By seeking the views of local residents affected for important issues in order to ensure that the elected member correctly reflects these views .

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

Possibly a final say in planning consents for controversial areas with no need to get it called in by the Welsh Government .

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Education is certainly one area where there is potential for efficiency enhancements.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

By Welsh Government guidance.

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Less authorities (8) and quicker implementation.

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

No significant impact .

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Savings could be increased by aggressively implementing the proposals as soon as possible despite hostility by certain vested interests .

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

Obviously existing authorities will want to delay or stop the enacting of the proposals however there is little creditable argument available for justifying having 22 authorities .Indeed I recall that there was a comparison between Birmingham with one authority and Wales with 22 yet the population was not too dissimilar .

## Page 7: Submit your response

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*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

*No Response*

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Sensible

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

It is an obvious and logical suggestion, the principle of which is very often seen in commercial companies.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

*No Response*

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*



Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

Yes - as long as bureaucracy is kept to a minimum, and it is not used as a platform for wannabe politicians to endlessly argue

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Yes

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

I worry that it might result in even more power being held by the entirely South Wales - centric assembly.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Training

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Councillors already work in a culture which seems divorced from the real world. The best thing would be to take a commercial approach to performance and effectiveness

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

Thry dont seem able to properly exercise the powers they already have

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Management

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

I find it hard to believe how wordy and complex it is. It must have taken many hours to create. Can you not do better than this? Keep it simple, and start saving money!

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

When we had Mid Glamorgan, Services for Deaf people was brilliant, however due to small councils the services for Deaf people have become largely non existent. Getting councils to work together to provide a unified service for Deaf people can only be a good thing.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

It needs to happen and as quickly as reasonably possible.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

It needs to happen, I think there should be a Cardiff city region that merges Cardiff, Newport, RCT, Merthyr, Bridgend, Vale of Glamorgan, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and may be Neath Port Talbot and Swansea. This would give us a city of the same size in area as London and One of the largest cities in the UK which would be a driver for inward investments and a major economic power house of the UK. It would make Cardiff a bigger city than Bristol and give it the financial clout to compete with the like of Birmingham.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

See 1C a Cardiff City Region similar to Greater London

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

The population of Merthyr and Blaenau Gwent will fit in to the Principality Stadium with some seats to spare.

Birmingham Council has the same population as all of Wales.

The numbers just don't make sense

The CEO of Merthyr earns in the region of £120,123  
The CEO of Birmingham earns in the region of £182,500

The population of Merthyr is 63,546  
The population of Birmingham is 1,128,100

This means people of Merthyr are paying £1.89 per person  
This means people of Birmingham are paying £0.16 per person and Birmingham has more high earners than Merthyr

It is just not sustainable

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes without a doubt

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

Yes

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

I agree with what is proposed but I would go one step further and create a region of greater Cardiff which will be a similar size to London in Area

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

I agree with what is proposed but I would go one step further and create a region of greater Cardiff which will be a similar size to London in Area.

A larger council will have a bigger budget and more financial clout. already a significant proportion of people working in Cardiff do not live in Cardiff and have no say on what happens in Cardiff even though the issues in Cardiff will have an impact on their lives but they have no say. This is not democratic.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

Social Services should follow the same regions as NHS boundaries.

There should be one Police authority for all of Wales.

Road infrastructure and maintenance of trunk roads should be one national region.

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

Yes, but council should also start merging services before the council merger to save money early on, i.e. procurement, social services, housing, rubbish

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Yes

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

No

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

The month is fine but the voting should take place on a weekend not on thursdays

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Not that I am aware of

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Listen to them

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Councillors should be few but should become a full time role with a clear job description, "lazy" councillors should be easier to remove if found to be negligent

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

Business Rates  
Speed Limits  
NHS  
School Holidays  
How School Operate

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

Should be allow to have a commercial arm to set up social enterprises where the profits are reinvested in services. The commercial arm needs to be run separately to the council but the commercial arm will report to the council as the sole share holder, or the commercial arms could be run by various councils.

Care would be needed to ensure they don't benefit from state aid and that procurement rules are not infringed.

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Social Services

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

I don't think consistency is important. Making sure that the services match the needs of the area is more important than consistency.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Social Services, Housing, Rubbish Collection

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

None

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

None



None

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

None

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Should be positive

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Deaf people should gain better services

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

*No Response*

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Unacceptable for Wrexham to merge with Flintshire. Wrexham County should be allowed to grow taking in South Denbighshire etc.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Create larger authorities!q

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

*No Response*

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yesy

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

YesO

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

To keep the Wrexham county identity

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

Yes

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

Yes

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

YesNo

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

No

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

To much interference from Cardiff

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

To merge with Flintshire will not favour the Welsh language

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

[REDACTED]

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Exploit cross border opportunities with Chester etc to build resilience in higher education and strengthen industrial innovation and training programmes

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

I agree with them

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Reduction in the number of authorities is essential - current authority structures too expensive and an impediment to growth and fairness. Not too worried which options are pursued to achieve this.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

North and mid wales poorly served by Cardiff centric view of 'the nation'. Three regional authorities would be perfect future state.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

No

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Essential

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

Agree

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

Agnostic on this



Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

No

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

Acknowledge the importance of cross border initiatives

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

Unnecessary process unlikely to engage public or generate good voter turnout

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Truncate it as much as possible.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Every year we wait increases the social and economic cost so the sooner the better.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

No

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

No view - this is detail, get on with it

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

This a leading question. Councillors have a variety of motives for serving. A good start would be to push more council services into community hands.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Remove the standard remuneration altogether. Run with a system of means tested awards tied to a Professional development programme.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

They have too many powers already.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

Ability to enter cross border partnerships with english authorities.

Ability to raise monies through industry partnership and sponsorship

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Youth services, arts and culture, maintenance and planning

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

Community partnerships, outsourcing

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Consistency is important regionally not nationally. Competitiveness between authorities and regions essential in some areas.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

No

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Cross border issues

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

Increased costs of bilingual information and translation

Difficulty in attracting suitable talent to public sector jobs

Alienation of growing non welsh speaking residents

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Concentrate funding on welsh language education arts and cultural activities for the minority who pursue them

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

What a ridiculous self serving question this is.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

no

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

No

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

No

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

No

No

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

None

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Have more public facing 'workshops' where members of the public can have conversations and bring forward any ideas they feel could work, either in their area or community, or for them as an individual.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

I feel this is a positive move and one that all local authorities should be encouraged to embrace.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

I agree that fewer, larger authorities would be better.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

The options suggested seem sensible options

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

No

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

Yes

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

I think they are sensible options

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

The local authority organisations could work more collaboratively before and when the larger authorities are created.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

No

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

Yes

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Yes

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

The dialogue between authorities should be supportive. Some smaller authorities may feel that it is a takeover, but with the right type of dialogue, they become more receptive to the change that is needed.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

I think this gives plenty of time for personal resources to be redeployed, or put in place for the new arrangements, including recognition and understanding from members of the public that their service won't deteriorate because the authority has changed name, or the headquarters have moved.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Helping voters, particularly, new or older voters, the significance of the changes.

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

I think these should be discussed openly either in a consultative way, eg through committees, focus groups or by using posters or marketing through visual media.

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

by putting the citizen at the centre of their vision and mission statements.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

by using different types of media to make members of the public aware of the value local councillors can add to them and the area in which they live.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

to act as the voice of the people they serve when connecting with services that affect people, but don't necessarily collaborate with what they offer people, eg GP surgery, Police, local school, Fire service, including local businesses and charities etc.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

All areas within the local authorities can offer scope for shared transactional services.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

Through discussion among the personnel who will be affected, and who may have roles in making the changes happen.

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Support from local authorities to their citizens and support to local authorities from their citizens should be a 2-way conversation. Advice and support could be generated by holding focus groups with individuals from certain areas within the local authority, who may have influence and enthusiasm to help their fellow citizens embrace and understand the reasons for the changes.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

Yes. These could be that staff may be displaced, or have to move locations. This could cause stress to them and their families. It could also cause stress on citizens, if they feel the service they current receive will suffer, or depreciate as the merge between local authorities to create larger ones progresses.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

ongoing discussion, dialogue and information given to citizens and employees of the local authorities to ensure they have time to adjust to the changes, and any ideas or issues they may raise are listened to and acted on, as appropriate.

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

I feel the changes proposed will give all employees of local authorities the opportunity to use and/or develop their Welsh language skills, so that it is treated no less favourably than English

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

By offering classes to learners, but also the opportunity for staff to hold conversations in their areas of expertise in Welsh with colleagues, before developing the confidence to hold those conversations with Welsh citizens in Welsh.

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Any dialogue, eg posters, leaflets, conversations or public meetings should be conducted bilingually with the option for anyone asking queries and being responded to in Welsh or English, if they choose.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

No

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Yes



Yes

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

No

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

NO

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

N/A

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable)

[REDACTED]

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

[REDACTED]

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

By ensuring that funding is provided through local government itself- especially at a time of austerity- and by Welsh Government working in co-operation with local authorities rather than undermining them. Some financial incentives and population weighted representation would also assist and promote greater fairness.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

You have not provided any genuine alternatives - you seek to impose mergers of local authorities on a 'one size fits all basis'. I believe option 1 is the most desirable - for voluntary mergers. We have been around this circuit before and the previous Cabinet Secretary pledged that we would not go down this path again - that there would be 10 years of stability. The vast majority of authorities are efficient and successful. You should focus on the handful that are not and seek to reform them. The way forward is regional working not 'top-down imposition.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

That whilst fewer authorities is desirable your approach is prescriptive and would make local government remote from local communities. There was no campaign to save the County Councils when they were abolished because they were perceived as remote from local communities.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

The question is a leading one. You suggest the answer in the question. The best option is merger with some financial incentives but not to penalise those who on democratic grounds do not favour this approach. The major alternative is joint working and the City Deal demonstrates how successful this can be.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

The evidence lies in the past history of local government reform. On every occasion it has been vastly expensive in the short term. The burden of prove is on those seeking reform to show it is cost effective, not the other way around. The history of reform is not positive and invariably by the time the 'long term' arrives when it should have achieved its objectives, there are then calls for reform possibly back to the model previously overturned.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Stability would provide such clarity - by declaring that voluntary mergers would be encouraged and providing a framework and incentives for them to take place.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

Yes, but your conclusions are mistaken.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

They are not based on  
Local communities but on the bureaucratic expediency of the civil service.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

The alternative should be voluntary and allow for a natural evolution towards a rationalised model of say 15 - 18 authorities based on 'natural' communities

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

By establishing properly funded joint boards in areas requiring a strategic approach.

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

If I agreed with your proposals - but I do not.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No. You should rather negotiate with the WLGA and set mutually agree targets with the full fo c of joint Co- operation of WG and local government rather than top- down imposition,

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

This is entirely unnecessary - a negotiation should take place in ordentonarriv Nat a consensus.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

You are pre-empting the reader's view. This is another leading question which I am not prepared to answer.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

The agenda should be to strengthen local democracy not to undermine it.

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Good ones already do so.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

There is no justification for any change in remuneration of councillors at a time of great hardship. There is however a need for WG to support local government by a positive dialogue. LG has had 10 years of being publicly undermined.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No. It  
Should more effectively manage those it has.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Education, social services, transport and  
Environment (planning) as they need a more strategic approach,

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

By joint working between authorities. There is already a successful model - The City Deal.

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

By the involvement of LAs in determining the policy

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

There is a lack of recognition by WG of the efforts and tremendous strides in LG towards joint working demonstrated in the City Deal.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

I refer you to my previous answer.

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

No significant impact

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

My main concern is that the reform would result in greater remoteness from local communities, especially ethnic groups in Cities like Newport, Cardiff and Swansea.

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

It is unlikely that such large authorities would address local needs.

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

None

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable)

[REDACTED]

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

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[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

The services mentioned should match up where possible to the authority areas, but need to exist very much within a national system, and all-wales approach which means that the service (options, availability, and quality) are consistent across the whole country. Where this requires a single Wales approach, it should do that, where it can be offered on an authority or regional level, that's good as long as that level exists firmly within the national framework to ensure a consistent (even if not identical) welsh service.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Stronger, better equipped, larger local authorities sounds good, but needs to be married with the electoral reform covered in previous consultations to ensure that the we an actually democratic system (of PR) which means the makeup of the new local authorities reflects the communities they represent, and this holds even more true if they are made more powerful.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Reducing the number of authorities is something I fully support, and is long overdue.

The idea of doing so through voluntary mergers seems optimistic at best, and I think that a single change over date for the compulsory mergers is by far the best option.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

*No Response*

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Clarity is important for both the organisations involved, but also for the public. We have a woeful deficiency of understanding over the level at which responsibility for different services rests - just look at the numbers who are unaware that key areas like health and education are devolved and extrapolate to regional and local government levels.

Democracy cannot be exercised if people do not know the level at which responsibility exists.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

It's good if cultural ties etc have been factored in, but again, it is vital that things are couched in an all-wales framework that ensures that the level of service, and service options people have in different areas are consistent. It is also important politically that we have a "Welsh solution" and that these are the building blocks of a consistent, tiered level of welsh politics - local to regional to national.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

It sounds sensible, as long as there is adequate education and publicity prior to the elections for the shadow authorities. There seems to be the possibility for real confusion.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Yes, but option 1 should not be pursued.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Only that it should be option 3.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

As long as there is no political effect or consequences of having it so close to the May 2021 elections



Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Electoral reform should obviously be implemented before the elections in 2021

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

The earlier it is carried out the better, particularly where it changes boundaries which affect other services or regional groupings (like in health or emergency services). The more time everyone has to prepare the better.

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

(without reference) it was somewhere suggested that local governments should have power over their own electoral arrangements and systems. Though I appreciate this isn't what this is about, they shouldn't have this power where it allows different electoral systems (voting systems) or council systems to exist. These should be consistent across the country.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Some things require a national solution, and consistency. I've already mentioned electoral systems etc.

Another would be base level protections - environmental, for example.

When it comes to public services we should be able to expect the same level of service and availability of options (to a large degree anyway), wherever we are in the country. That doesn't mean there can't be variation to a degree based on local needs, but we should work hard to avoid a "post code lottery" in any public service, even when doing so detracts from the concept of local solutions to local problems.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

There should be some acknowledgement that financial burdens on some, poorer areas, should not fall to those areas alone. That levels of wealth across the country should influence the cost of local residents, and the level of need the provision, even when these don't match, and that some 'balancing' mechanism may be needed to address this.

IT would be nice to look at a local income tax possibly in relation to the above, or even better a combined income and wealth tax, instead of the outdated council tax model we have.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

Combining more welsh speaking and less welsh speaking areas could threaten the language, but it could also do the opposite if it's a race to the top on prioritising the welsh language, rather than to the bottom as it has at times been in the past.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

The required use and prioritisation of the welsh language should be strengthened at local level. Local government should be a Welsh-first public service, though one which in no way weakens the provision for non-welsh speakers, or disadvantages them.

This is especially important in schools, and primary schools even more so, but all council decisions should run on the principle of welsh-first, but english not disadvantaged.

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

This reform of local government is long overdue, and very welcome.

The greater alignment of services and regions with the local authorities is good.

Tying all this in with electoral reform to create a democratic system, is necessary to legitimise it all (and the greater powers).

I believe option 3 (forced merging in 2022) is the only viable one.

We must not lose sight of the national framework within which these all exist, and the need for consistent quality and provision of service to all in Wales.

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]  
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Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

*No Response*

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

I strongly oppose the mergers. I am incredibly concerned that efficient council areas will end up subsidising those which are run inefficiently. It feels as if the good are being made to pay for the bad, rather than the bad councils being fixed and made to run well. This is clearly not ideal, since an inefficient and badly managed area will be able to hide underneath the umbrella of a larger authority without actually having any meaningful root & branch restructuring which might actually solve the problems that were there in the first place.

I also worry that there will be a lack of democratic oversight and representation which is not addressed in any meaningful way in this document. How can I as a resident of Hengoed consider I am being represented by a council sitting in e.g. Newport or Merthyr, which have extremely different demographics, needs and priorities compared to my local council borough. It is extremely likely that the areas of greater populus would withdraw funding and resources from more rural areas, leaving us feeling more isolated and poorly served. I would feel extremely disenfranchised if this was to go through.

Furthermore, I am concerned that broad brush approach will be used by a larger centralised council arrangement. For instance, the use of TrolleyBlocks in some areas (i.e. Brynmawr in Ebbw Vale and Bassaleg in Newport) was assessed and has been found to have been a shambolic failure, which is inappropriate in many cases for residents. However, these areas are not being permitted to revert to the previous recycling method as the council has invested in the trollyblocks equipment and needs to see a return on the capital expenditure. There is an extremely high risk that with larger unified authorities, decisions will be taken impinging across an entire area which may be of benefit to residents in one place but are highly inappropriate in other places, and so highly inappropriate options may be implemented without due consideration for all residents in a given area.

The risks of the mergers obviously include (but are not limited to) the allocation of resources away from rural or more needy areas in order to "consolidate" and minimise costs, the loss of local services, longer waiting times for essential local services (e.g. building inspection work, environmental health visits, local registrations etc), the signing of contracts with providers who are inequipped to deal with an economically diverse population across large geographic areas, etc.

To summarise, this is a terrible idea.

**Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?**

I strongly oppose the proposal of merging local authorities, in the strongest possible terms.

I am incredibly concerned that efficient council areas will end up subsidising those which are run inefficiently. It feels as if the good are being made to pay for the bad, rather than the bad being fixed and made to run well. This is clearly not ideal, since an inefficient and badly managed area will be able to hide underneath the umbrella of a larger authority without actually having any meaningful root & branch restructuring which might actually solve the problems in the first place.

I also worry that there will be a lack of democratic oversight and representation which is not addressed in any meaningful way in this document..

Furthermore, I am concerned that broad brush approach will be used by a larger centralised council arrangement. For instance, the use of TrolleyBlocks in some areas - e.g. Brynmawr and Newport - was assessed and has been found to have been a shambolic failure, which is inappropriate in many cases. With larger unified authorities, there is an extremely high risk that decisions will be taken impinging across an entire area which may be of benefit to residents in one place but are highly inappropriate in other places.

The risks obviously include (but are not limited to) the allocation of resources away from rural or more needy areas in order to "consolidate" and minimise costs, the loss of local services, longer waiting times for essential local services (e.g. building inspection work, environmental health visits, local registrations etc), the signing of contracts with providers who are inequipped to deal with an economically diverse population across large geographic areas, etc.

To summarise, this is a terrible idea.

**Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?**

An ideal solution would be a closer examination of the structure of individual local government areas by an outside body (e.g. a committee of the Assembly government). This organisation should have the power to compel local councils to change their practices if necessary (or leave them alone if they are working at their best). This has the benefit of allowing a considered and well thought out approach to be made to restructuring each council to work appropriately for the local populations they serve, while allowing the introduction of experience and best practice from other areas.

It is extremely important that any restructuring committee works within the existing framework of local provision (e.g. does not largely affect sites in local areas), and where possible attempts to maintain provision of local services at the same or greater levels going forward.

**Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.**

*No Response*

## **Page 3: Chapter 4**

**Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?**

*No Response*

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

No, I strongly disagree. I think the factors are extremely limited and do not consider the options for people living in areas outside the larger towns.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

See my earlier responses in sect. 1.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

See my responses in all sections of sect. 1.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

See again my responses in section 1.

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

No. I feel that this is an utter waste of time and is a method of providing highly paid "jobs for the boys" which will actually achieve little.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Please see my responses in sect. 1.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Yes. This date may coincide with Brexit or any transition deals ending, and possible repercussions from other electoral activity in May which may affect the election process on a local level.

September may be a better choice, as this is likely to be outside the usual roulement of elections and so is unlikely to be influenced by people making "protest votes" or voting to make political statements.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

See suggestions in section 1. Some form of rotation of people between councils may be useful in order to allow best practice to be shared.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Councillors should not be paid for their services. Furthermore, the utmost scrutiny must be made of all councillors to ensure that they are not abusing the democratic process for personal gains.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

The power to selectively repeal sections of the Welsh Language Act in areas with low usage (determined by the Census) in order to save a huge amount of money?

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

See section 1 responses.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

See section 1 responses.



Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

See section 1 responses.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

See section 1 responses.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

See section 1 responses.

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

This is likely to increase this - which is the biggest waste of money in the country!

Local councils with low levels of Welsh language use should be allowed to repeal sections of the Welsh Language Act in order to give enormous savings.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

This is likely to increase this - which is the biggest waste of money in the country!

Local councils with low levels of Welsh language use should be allowed to repeal sections of the Welsh Language Act in order to give enormous savings.

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

This is likely to increase this - which is the biggest waste of money in the country!

Local councils with low levels of Welsh language use should be allowed to repeal sections of the Welsh Language Act in order to give enormous savings.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name



Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

What Government has to remember is, that bigger is not always better. To large an area makes people feel from smaller authorities feel that what they feel is not taken in to account. Keep matters such as education local to the area.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Again as above Local issues are seen as being swept aside in favor of larger Counties . A case in point being the health authorities . Cwm Taf should never been set up the fact there Three valleys making up this region make transport concerns a large problem when it comes to patients access to services.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Keep it local . Stop going back to failed ideas of the 1980's

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Yes it failed the last time it was pointed out as a waste of money then and it as an idea is a waste of money now.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

Check the records of the old Mid Glamorgan Council

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Only by consultation with councils and not dic tat

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

No nobody seems to take notice of history

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

Leave well alone and let the elected members get on with the job instead of putting barriers in the way

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

as above

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

More collaborative working between areas instead of a " Big Brother" feeling towards local issues

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

No

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Leave well alone the general public have voted in local councils for local matters larger councils lose the sense of feel for local residents.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Leave the councils the people have voted in to run to the end of their term ,if you have to hen change do it then and stop the waste of money the early election would cost.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

the people voted for five years why do you think you know better than the local people.

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

Use local councils in going forward.

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

By not imposing councils that to large . Take my town of Merthyr if merged with RCT the problems of the smaller area would just be swept under the carpet .

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

The responsibility the councillors is large . It is a full time job for less than part time wages. Bring the members remuneration in yo line with full time posts.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

More power over housing, transport , waste recycling,

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

More flexibility in gaining loans for local projects

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Transportation issues and IT services

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

By partnership working not domination of on region by another

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

By more consideration smaller local councils

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

Do not change.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Leave alone and take the lessons of the past in to consideration.

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

Welsh is the language of this country and should therefore be a priority.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Welsh should be taught from day one of a child's life and therefore in ten to fifteen years Welsh would be spoken wide spread. Also compensation should be given to councils when it comes to budgets to fund Welsh translation of documents

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

positive discrimination for Welsh language over the English language with more promotion of Welsh customs.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

no

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

As Above

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

As Above

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

Leave the landscape as it is and stop repeating the mistakes of the past.

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

[REDACTED]

Q37. Address

n/a

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Mark Drakefords original proposals were spot on. Why are you wasting valuable time going over old ground.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Job losses and cost increases

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Its a backward step. Big is not necessarily beautiful and it will be costly.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

No

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

All local authorities owing to austerity are already maxed out in saving money by amalgamating them further this will have an opposite effect to what you are trying to achieve..

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes Mark Drakeford did

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

Yes stick with Mark Drakefords proposals

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

Absolutel terrible



Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

Keep authorities as they are and merge some working practices if the needs arise.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

Should remain as they are

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

no

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Alan Davies is regressive in his thinking where as Mark Drakeford was visionary

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

This will substantially diminish under the new proposals and will further deteriorate if these new proposals go ahead

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Remuneration should go back to allowances etc. Most councillors are in it for themselves and are being paid for doing nothing. The old councillors on the whole did it for public service.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

the Welsh language would take a hit

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Its impossible if the proposals go ahead

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

*No Response*

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

There are too many layers of government  
We need fewer councils  
Conwy is one of the smallest and I believe the councillors alone cost over £1.4m  
Too much administration and not enough front line service

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

10 is better than 21

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

It will work if we get fewer councillors and lose some admin costs  
Jobs will have to go!

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

4 councils  
North  
Mid  
South east  
South west

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

No

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

No opinion  
Too much complication

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

A step in the right direction

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

Not many individuals will have evidence!  
I believe Birmingham council serves about 3m  
One council?  
Wales population 3.6m  
The Assembly  
And over 20 councils  
We are over governed

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

Over to you

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

I do not know enough about the working of councils to know how  
I do know that savings are unlikely to be made

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Yes

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

It's ok  
Let's go to voting on Sunday

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

None

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

None

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Stop paying them  
Get people who want to serve not get paid

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

The responsibility should lie with the professional staff not elected members  
Being a councillor should not be a job

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No  
Less government not more

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No comment

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Business development should be across north wales not split into six

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

No idea

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Business Wales

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

No comment

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Reduce councillors  
Reduce admin costs

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

There needs to be a genuine bi-lingual policy

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Education should be available through out Wales in both languages  
As the language act states

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Common sense

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

The young need our help

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

No comment



No comment

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

No comment

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

No comment

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

The start is very technical  
It's good to be given the chance to comment  
Some of the questions can seem intimidating

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) None

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

[REDACTED]

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Support the new councils, recognise regional difference and enhance transport and connections, by funding listening and enabling.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

It is clear that conwy, gwynedd and ynys mon are a good fit. They have the same demographic, outlook and opportunities. Caernarfon is the right location for the county seat, Caernarfonshire and the Island should be its name because contains Wales' biggest island and it will provide the strong and reliable government envisioned by the consultation. Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham are and have always been Clwyd, that must be protected and enhanced by these proposals. Local Government in these regions will be strong because the communities are connected and feel Clwydian. Its important to them, Wrexham will find it difficult to adjust because it is the capital of North Wales, but it would also find it hard to be subsumed by Flintshire so its important to take account of its sensibilities and a strong town council will deal with that, the county seat must be Yr Wuddrug despite the local transport difficulties (no train station) and Wrexham objections, it has good road connections and infrastructure, councillors should be supported to get to meetings with allowances as needed.

Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire are Dyfed. It is right and sensible that that should be recognised and supported by the consultation. Powys should be included, but its not essential. Canolog Cymru should be its name. It reflects the fact it is Wales' heart.

The capital authority Caerdydd does not need to merge, it is sustainable, strong and efficient. It should be named Cyfalaf

The vale of Glamorgan belongs with Abertawe, despite the proximity to Cyfalaf it is distinct and needs to be recognised as distinct. The district should be Sir Tawe. It is strong and reflective of difference. It will be prosperous and self sufficient. The authority that contains Merthyr will need to be supported, very carefully and with sensitivity. Merthyr is struggling, and needs support and hope, the new authority governing Merthyr will prosper by helping children get to school and supporting them when they feel forgotten. The kids of Methyr are welsh and proud, supporting them helps wales, improves wales and gives the whole nation strength. The new authority should be Methyr gydr y dyffryn. Its important to recognise Methyr's contribution to our nations prosperity, whilst supporting and nurturing its ability to provide for all of our nations economic future.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Fewer is better and necessary. Its difficult but the communities will feel connected to councils that connect with them.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Mentioned above. Clwyd, Sir Caernarfon a y Ynys, Cyfalaf, Methyr gydr y dyffryn, and Sir Tawe. A strong Wales has and needs strong councils

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

No, its not going to be cheap to reorganise the government but its vital and we will prosper because of it

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Very important. Future local government should be set for at least 25 years

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

Rail, roads and the ability to access the internet should be included in your thinking. And the language and support to learn it and belong to it is essential.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

They need further thought.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

Human factors have always crossed governmental lines.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

As above

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

I have experience of "change agents" they were always very professional. It was necessary to have cheerleaders nobody would have been able to engage with the process without them.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Completely Agree

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Its necessary painful and correct.  
Wales will emerge stronger, prosperous and more powerful if it is concluded

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Its absolutely the correct date and should be persued with vigour

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Continue with your current plans make adjustments as needed to support the Welsh nation

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

There are many communities in Wales they need protection and enhancement and they also need to feel that they belong in this nation

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

They can do this by holding surgeries and providing news letters to their constituents

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Allowances should be index linked they should have a opportunity to use public transport and they should be expected to attend those meetings

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

Local government should be responsible for the education of our children for taking Care of our elderly relatives and for the good state of our roads and cultural enhancement.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

To respond to the local community's needs without being tied to a national agenda

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

As described above

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

As described above

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

By email and letter

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

Financial and human outreach offices

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

The identification of the regions and local authorities that are to be pursued

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

Some authorities will be more predisposed to pursuing the proclivity of the Welsh language, this is because the residents of those communities will be more fluent in Welsh. Some authorities in the consultation will be less predisposed to converse and communicate in Welsh and this is a natural and acceptable evolution of our language.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Change is difficult. It will need to be resourced and supported

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

We are a bilingual nation. Its important that opportunities are enabled to learn our mother tongue, but English is and always will be the key to propering as a nation, for our children, they need to speak both English and Welsh and hopefully many languages to enable our kids to flourish in the modern world.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

The cri should be implemented in its entirety

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

The proposals require some thought. I've given that thought and provided my opinion.

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

all communities should be included, including those with English descent.

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Wales will prosper when it listens to its people.

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

It's very important that though these changes are made to provide for the future of our nation, it's vital that the people in our new council jurisdictions are made to feel like they belong. It will be to the success of the whole country if we can achieve this.

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous



# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

The 'larger' means better & more cost effective concept is not a viable or realistic idea. What is needed is continuity of provision of commonly provided services so that economy of scale can be achieved without the loss of the local link of the current sized authorities. We could describe this concept as smart provision in which authorities with Welsh gov. help work together to decide on how best to provide each service. Once the format is agreed streamlined provision can be provided while reducing overall costs to each authority.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

I don't agree that enlarging authorities will provide the expected cost benefits. More over the whole concept of 'local' authorities is that they are local and closely linked to the area they provide services to. However that does not mean that adjacent local authorities cannot agree to collaborative means of providing services. The first step is to agree how to provide those services and what common elements are needed to provide the service. Once that is agreed common procurement and provision can be managed without merging authorities.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

I disagree with the concept of larger authorities. I foresee many drawbacks in particular the loss of accountability; a distant large organization by its very nature will be less accountable to local communities. I also don't believe the expected cost saving will materialize. Larger authorities will cost more to run and be even less accountable for expenditure.

Savings must be made but this can be achieved by smart collaborative provision of services and common procurement that can be achieved because of that collaboration and common elements to how to provide a service.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Yes, the option you have failed to offer - abandon the idea of larger is better and more cost effective.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

Without being part of the local authority system it is impossible to provide detailed cost options from, for example, collaborative service procurement and provision.

## Page 3: Chapter 4



Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

The footprint only provides 'clarity' about a single concept - enlargement so less than helpful.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

I disagree with the larger means cheaper concept. See earlier comment about the need to agree common means of provision so that collaboration and common procurement by neighbouring authorities can achieve economies of scale and make very significant savings.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

Having a local authority based in Caernarfon, the almost certain outcome of forcing a merger of Gwynedd and Anglesey/Ynys Mon, provides nothing but despair. A 'local authority' needs to be local and maintain the link with the community it administers.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

See earlier comments

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

See earlier comment

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

I disagree with the concept of enlargement so cannot agree any of these processes and their costs are necessary

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No comment

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

See earlier comments

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

If you wish people to be engaged and vote you should avoid the potential exodus due to summer holidays and have elections in the late Spring or Autumn.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Elections should always be held when up to date budget statements are available so the electorate can see how an authority has performed in financial terms. An election should therefore take place shortly after the latest financial statements become available.

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

No comment

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Sadly most Councillors have little wide ranging knowledge because those who stand for election tend not to be those who a community would be best served by.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

It would help if there was clear statement of the knowledge and duties of each Council post required. I've never seen such a 'job description'.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Most of them

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

Wales wide Welsh gov/inter authority consultation on how to provide each key service and what procurement is needed to provide the service.

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

First agree collaboratively [Welsh gov.local authorities] on: What, Why and How

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Abandon the enlargement concept and go for agreement & a common, Wales wide approach to provision and procurement.

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable)

██

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

████████████████████

Q36. Telephone

██████████

Q37. Address

██████████  
██████████  
██████████████████

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

████████████████████

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

in merging council districts smaller areas will lose out to the larger more populated areas.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

I am against mergers

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

larger authorities will not have the in depth insight and knowledge required to serve the whole population. The larger populated areas will automatically get priority and smaller communities will become even more neglected and under funded.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Where there is a common interest e.g. coastal tourism, farming or industry then cross border consortiums would be valuable.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

I am just a member of the public.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

No it is irrelevant

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

I don't think you have placed enough emphasis what unites individual populations and the value that smaller populations contribute to a given area as a whole.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

It is an attempt to merge populations and areas with incompatible needs and interests.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

Where there are shared interests and needs then cross border consortiums would be of use.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

see above

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

No

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

n/a

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

I doubt the cost - benefit effects would be felt for many years if ever.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

n/a

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

n/a

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

n/a

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

I am not familiar with the local councilors, perhaps they should present a more public face. Perhaps a weekly column in the local newspaper?

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

See above. I think most people are unaware of what their local councilors are doing most of the time. There needs to be a more positive attempt to connect with constituents on a regular basis.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

The impact will be negative, as smaller communities are undermined this will ofcourse negatively impact on culture and language.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

smaller rather than larger local authorities

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response



## Page 7: Submit your response

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Name

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Organisation (if applicable) -

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Email address

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Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Easier working for who? For the services each organisation is optimal for them. Easier working for the Public would be if all the various concerns were organised so that all had the same regions and with the same name.

That that region's name was in the title for each organisation that serves it.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

These common elements for merger are prerequisites. They are the absolutely minimal. The essentials.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Option 3. With the history so far. With the time gone by so far. With what is happening and has happen to public services. With what is likely to happen in the future (e.g. Brexit effects, etc.). Time is of the essence. Thus only this option is suitable. All options need to be comprehensive. Only this one is, as its title shows.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Option 3 is most appropriate.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Of course. Its absolutely essential.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

There is room for improvement. Unfortunately I have not the time to go into the details right now.

**Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?**

Some are fine. Others are bad. Some do not take in consideration the main reason for the reform. The main reason is to form viable sustainable authorities. This means amongst other things that an appropriate critical mass is available for each future authority. Powys has one of the smallest critical masses currently. Yet it is left as it is?

Cardiff has a larger critical mass than most of the proposals. It does not need merging. So why is it down to merge? Creating by far the largest authority. Far to Large. Authorities can be too large as well as to small.

Swansea and Rhondda Cynon Taff are similar. Mergers should only occur where necessary. Those that need merger should merger e.g. Powys.

Mergers need to create viable sustainable authorities. The suggested Blaenau Gwent Torfaen Monmouthshire one is not one. Its Capital Budget is even lower than the current Powys one! The first and last current authorities have absolutely nothing in common with each other. Out of all neighbouring authorities to Torfaen Newport is interwoven the most with it. Blaenau Gwent has two valleys in it.

These two valleys are also in Caerphilly. As Life and People revolve around the valley then it is obvious these two to merge. As investment is being put into the Heads of Valleys e.g. the road linking them all. Then to reflect and enhance this to have a new authority of the Heads of the Valley. Capitalising on the investment. Making the valleys stronger. The merger of Caerphilly with Newport does the opposite. It takes from the valleys. This must be avoided TOTALLY.

Vale of Glamorgan must not be swamped by Cardiff \_\_\_\_crazy!

**Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?**

Heads of Valley authority - Merthyr Tydfil Caerphilly Blaenau Gwent.

They are three valley authorities. They are close. They are interconnected. They follow the Heads of Valley road. The investment in this will be enhanced by this.

Cardiff standalone. Also Swansea &/or RhonddaCynonTaf . More than enough critical mass etc.

Bridgend with either NeathPortTalbot or Vale of Glamorgan. The two closest and most connected to it.

Powys and Ceredigion. Both are in Growing Mid Wales. Increases critical mass of both - each too low. Both are in and form Mid Wales.

Cardiff Merthyr Tydfil Caerphilly Blaenau Gwent. Both are around the Carmarthen Bay and use to form the ancient kingdom of Dyfed.

**Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?**

Have all regional structures of ALL the services the same with the same names. Therefore ONE set of regions and names. These names in the services' titles.

Wales traditionally and currently have three that all know and refer to --- NORTH ; MID ; SOUTH .

## **Page 4: Chapter 5**

**Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?**

NO Transition Committees are NOT needed. They waste resources and time. They also pre-empt and infringe on the Shadow Authorities. They bring to the current authorities too much influence on the future authorities. These are very bad for the future work.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

YES. ALL TO BE DATE SET. URGENCY IS UPPERMOST MORE THAN EVER.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

William's Report emphasised the urgency required. Several years on this is even more so the case. With Brexit even more so. The proposed process does not take this into consideration or show it.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

There are the May elections. People would not welcome another election in the same year. Especially when they are concerned it could be held the same time as the other elections. People to not see that as a problem. Moreover it would save a lot of money, resources, and time

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

It is now assumed everything political is tied into the electoral cycles.

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

Just, fair, equitable, comprehensive. All pay lip service to these. Rarely are they adhered to. When dealing with democratic things this is even a greater expectation.

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Not all councillors live in the ward/community they live in. So they only know it second hand (off others). Best to have the electorate that actually live in the area concerned.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

By the community/electorate showing they respect and value the councillor and the work they do. Respect has to be earn as with every thing. Too great a remuneration may well attract the wrong kind of person. Public minded people are required.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

There are different levels of devolution. Each level MUST have the power for that level. This is what ought to happen in Wales NOW.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

The same with other freedoms and flexibilities as with powers. The appropriate and necessary powers, freedoms and flexibilities for each level. All required levels available.

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

With question 8 above done rightly and all necessary and needed levels and structures in place with the reform then there should be no need nor scope for this.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

DOES NOT APPEL SEE ABOVE

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

The approach and attitude must treat everything and everybody the same. Consistency in these is essential.  
The most direct way is the best.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

Educating and making all aware of what is required and what is available is essential. Without these success will be very limited or none existent. All kinds of support will be absolutely necessary.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Since urgency is uppermost. To get the comprehensive timetable; to have elections for Shadow Authorities as soon as possible. TOO SHOW URGENCY IN ALL THINGS

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

Wales to have both languages equal throughout the country in all things. With this in place all levels of government and everything else would follow this.

government and everything else would follow this.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

With 11a) these will not be necessary

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

██████████

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]

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# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

*No Response*

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Whats the point. You changed North Wales from 2 counties to 6 and now want to make 3 counties. A waste of time and money.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

Total disaster

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Merge Denbighshire with Flintshire & Wrexham

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

Disabled children are so neglected in Denbighshire and its even worse in Conwy, the worst possible outcome would be to merge two councils which have a high elderly population due to the numbers retiring to be by the sea.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

n/a

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

No,

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

Do not even consider merging Conwy and Denbighshire, I will be forced to move.



Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

Merge Denbighshire with Flintshire and Wrexham. Look at Conwy, 6 x more social workers than Denbighshire but all off sick, bin only collected every 4 weeks, no respite hours even if your disabled child has serious and dangerous problems and the list goes on...

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

No, pointless waste of money

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*No Response*

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Elected members have told me that they have no say in anything, its all decided by paid officers.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

Make employees listen to elected people

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

They should have less. Denbighshire allows each school to manage budget and all schools have sacked support workers for ALN, disabled children suffering in schools only time before one dies.

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

More say in immergration. If someone highly qualified and working is being threatened with deportation the council should be able to be invovled.

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

People should be free to choose, Welsh should not be imposed. Make temporary road signs English first.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Welsh is a tradition and too much money is wasted on including it.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

I will have to move house if these proposals go ahead. Joining Denbighshire & Conwy together would be a complete disaster. I suspect that you have not suggested just 2 councils in North Wales because that would be admitting that you shouldn't have changed it from 2 into 6, previously.

Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.	
Name	<div></div>
Organisation (if applicable)	-

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address. Email address
<div></div>

Q36. Telephone
<div></div>

Q37. Address
<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.
Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Mandate these different regional working bodies to work together. With the best will in the world, partnership working becomes a 'nice to do' when people have time. It should be necessary and mandatory to work together.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

I believe option three is the right way forward. We have been discussing local government reform in Wales for a long time. We now need to step away from talking and take action. I believe this would be best done all at the same time and soon.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

No. I believe local authorities should be forced to merge together into fewer larger stronger councils otherwise they will drag their feet long enough not to do it. This will be to the detriment of the people of Wales.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

No

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes. It is a very confusing picture with health board boundaries, education consortia boundaries, police / fire boundaries etc. We are only a small nation, surely it would be better to work on one regional footprint!

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

I think some of the areas need to be looked at more closely. For example, we currently sit within blaenau gwent but our closest neighbouring town is in a different county (Caerphilly). Personally it would make much better sense to be part of a Caerphilly and Torfaen region, than be merged with Monmouthshire. We have more in common in terms of deprivation and cultural similarities.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

I think some of the areas need to be looked at more closely. For example, we currently sit within blaenau gwent but our closest neighbouring town is in a different county (Caerphilly). Personally it would make much better sense to be part of a Caerphilly and Torfaen region, than be merged with Monmouthshire. We have more in common in terms of deprivation and cultural similarities.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

As previously mentioned there are lots of different 'regions'. Clarity is needed

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

Yes

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

Definitely, although I don't believe it should be left to voluntary mergers!

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

No

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

No

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Don't know

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

None. Elections can sometimes be confusing if all held on the same day etc so it would be better to avoid this in an important election. I think it would also need a big marketing campaign to get people involved and have a say on their area. And that possibly this should be Welsh Governments responsibility. As an aside, I have heard nothing from my authority about this consultation.

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

Get more involved in the community rather than just turning up during the qelection campaign

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

I think increasing knowledge of what's required and how to get involved would be a good start. Americans teach their youngsters about their political history. We don't do anything similar in wales or the uk. How can we expect to generate interest in voting or standing / representing your area when it's almost kept a secret!

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

I think they have all the powers they need. They should have a requirement or duty to engage their citizens or if they already have this, it should be enforced because it doesn't happen here!

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

No. See above

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Anything that is led by a local authority can be shared.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Strong leadership from Welsh Government. Yes the local authorities need to deliver for their areas and some areas (rural wales) will have different requirements from more urban parts. But nevertheless issue still remain the same.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

Ultimately the new authority would need to be accessible by their citizens and the language they speak. In some areas of wales there will be a heavier focus on welsh. There should be an opt out system to save the authority money issuing everything bilingually. Plus other languages should be taken into account (I.e. Cardiff has a strong Somalian community where English isn't a first language)

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*



Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

As mentioned previously, we have had no communication from our authority that this consultation was taking place. I believe this is a significant issue as welsh citizens are not being encouraged to get involved. For example, the consultation was out when we had our council tax notice. Why wasn't it publicised then? Seems like the authority is trying to hide something

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

*No Response*

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Continue with the above, in particular the City Regions and City and Growth Deals. These have not had time to settle in and the prospects are looking good.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

In theory it sounds reasonable but many council are doing a fantastic job despite the stranglehold of austerity, these councils need to be able to develop the things they are good at. Now is not the right time to be spending the money for reforms. Who is going to pay and who will miss out as a result.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Clearly there are some councils that are far too small to be financially effective and are struggling to hold their head above the red line that is bankruptcy. Why small councils were allowed to happen is beyond me.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

It is but we need to get first principals right. Address the problem of too small council first and get them on a good financial footing - maybe it's those that need to be amalgamated first.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

Expand resource sharing - Torfaen has about 78 instances of resource sharing with neighbouring councils - Torfaen is clearly doing something right. Waste management is one of the biggest problems for Wales - we cannot continue to have 22 different styles of waste management and be successful.

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

No. We cannot afford to spend more on more bureaucracy at this time.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*No Response*

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

You need to see what suggestions come of this consultation process first before you start setting deadlines.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

I'm sure it has but has any serious thought been given to assessing each councils best practices and sharing them - put politics aside here. We need to work for the good of Wales.

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

The idea is a good one - in practice. The downside is loss of local identity. Also after so many years of austerity can Wales afford to pay for this reform at this time and who will do without to pay for it? Wales has suffered a number of local government and county amalgamations over the years. As a resident who was born in Aberavon and worked for a time in Tasmania I saw a similar reform attempted there. It was not welcomed and failed. Instead councils went down the resource sharing track. There was some minor adjustments to council boundaries to coincide with changes to electoral boundaries. It seems to have worked.

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

No Response

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

more information to the public,before news given to the media.Inform Assembly Members first.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

*No Response*

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

*No Response*

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

*No Response*

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

*No Response*

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

*No Response*

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*No Response*

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

*No Response*

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*No Response*

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*No Response*

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*No Response*



Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*No Response*

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

*No Response*

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

*No Response*

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

*No Response*

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

*No Response*

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

*No Response*

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

make councils cooperate

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

this could be a disaster

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

why is the welsh government revisiting this again? who is going to pay for the disastrous forced mergers? after years of austerity, there are few savings to be made!!! councils have just recovered from the last bout of local reorganisation. Flintshire is a very well run, high performing council, on a very small budget compared to other councils in wales, if it forced to merge with Wrexham, the new council may never reach Flintshire's level of performance.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

no

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

who is going to pay for these mergers?

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

no

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

no

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*No Response*

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*No Response*

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

no

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

no

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

this is an unnecessary council merger. there is absolutely no public demand for these mergers

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*No Response*

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*No Response*

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*No Response*

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

listen to local members views. force authorities to listen to local members views on planning matters

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

have meetings and members briefings in the evening. at the present time council officers, assume all members are retired, and councillors who work full time are treated like second class citizens

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

*No Response*

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

*No Response*

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

*No Response*

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

*No Response*

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

*No Response*

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

don't know

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

don't know

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

if this stupid ill advised forced mergers take place, then there will of course be a lot less money available to spend on children and young people

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

yes abandon the proposed mergers

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

*No Response*

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

the proposed mergers will be a disaster for the people of wales. I also consider this anti labour

Page 7: Submit your response

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Name [REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

[REDACTED]

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous



# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

Provide adequate, sustainable levels of funding. Work with and listen to LAs who are the providers of services and have continued to serve their communities well despite 8 long, hard years of austerity. From the examples you provide it is clear that regional working is being undertaken and in a way that is best for our particular region ( SE Wales).

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

It appears that the only option offered is process not alternatives. As above, the best way to move forward is by mutual respect and listening to LAs, including WLGA. Forcing change is never a good option and there remains considerable scepticism in regard to voluntary mergers given the debacle last time when those that wished to merge were turned down.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

It cannot be one size fits all as is suggested by combining Authorities to fit the numbers. Any merger must be able to continue to be recognisable and accessible to the local population in order to serve them best. I note you have already identified Powys as a stand alone authority. Is it because the numbers don't work or what is best for the community? Given the huge differences between LAs that are rural/ towns/cities/ welsh speaking/ English speaking/ densely populated/ sparsely populated/ large complex ethnic minority etc etc.. how would you ensure the best 'fit' or would it be down to the nearest neighbour? Will it undermine the regional working that is well established? The disruption to LAs would be enormous at a time of huge pressure and uncertainty and I'm not convinced by the predicted costs.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

I would have hoped that you would have identified other options although it seems the only one is merger! As stated above the other successful options include joint working and adequate, sustainable funding

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

The evidence provided is not convincing and given the history of previous reorganisations ( of which there have been many) it just ends up with a constant cycle of changes

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Can't see anyone thinking a lack of clarity would be helpful. Clarity requires an understanding of the role of LAs, how and why services are provided, what will be needed in the future and how best to provide them in a sustainable way. If individual LAs believe merger with another appropriate LA, and there will be sufficient funding, will achieve this or vice versa, their views should be respected.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

The factors appear to be limited to mergers. A much broader debate with a variety of options would be beneficial

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

See above. They appear to be entirely about numbers and geography without an in depth consideration about local culture and communities or potential job losses, which will affect those and wider communities.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

Work with LAs and WLGA to identify the best solutions

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

That would depend on the complexities of the LAs involved. For example would they fit with the Health Board / education/ City Deal footprints?

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

I don't agree with the proposals

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No- see comments in regard to working with LAs and WLGA

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

As above- mutual respect and collaboration is paramount

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Why would it be a suitable date- has this been identified through liaising with LAs and WLGA? It appears to be a very short time frame.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

Every issue and matter in relation to LAs should be tied into the electoral cycle for obvious reasons

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

That everything is taken into account to ensure that the democratic process remains fair for all and strengthens Local Government

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

They already do. What evidence do you have that they don't?

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

By recognising and publicly acknowledging the work undertaken by Councillors for their communities day in and day out. That would make it more attractive than constant criticism, also directed at Councils, and including there being too many Councillors, particularly when there is the suggestion that there should be 20 more AMs.

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*No Response*

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

Procurement, legal services, planning and transport, language translation

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

Joint working with LAs with expertise ( not merger)

Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

LAs and WLGA

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

See above

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

See above

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

All LAs follow WG Welsh Language policy

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

*No Response*

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

*No Response*

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Children and Young people will be impacted by any disruption to services, lack of funding and loss of jobs, particularly those that are vulnerable, disabled, learning difficulties or ethnic minorities etc..

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Work with, and listen to, LAs

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

As above

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

*No Response*

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable)

[REDACTED]

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

[REDACTED]

Q36. Telephone

*No Response*

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

funding should be provided through local government itself- especially at a time of austerity- and by Welsh Government working in co-operation with local authorities rather than undermining them. Some financial incentives and population weighted representation would also assist and promote greater fairness.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

You have not provided any genuine alternatives - you seek to impose mergers of local authorities on a 'one size fits all basis'. This is "Groundhog Day" - the previous Cabinet Secretary pledged that we would not go down this path again - that there would be 10 years of stability. No Councils are in special measures. You should focus on the handful that are in financial vulnerability and seek to support them. The way forward is regional working not 'top down imposition.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

That whilst fewer authorities is desirable your approach is prescriptive and would make local government remote from local communities. There was no campaign to save the County Councils when they were abolished because they were perceived as remote from local communities.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

This is a question that already implies an answer. You suggest the answer in the question. The best option is merger with some financial incentives but not to penalise those who on democratic grounds do not favour this approach. The major alternative is joint working and the City Deals demonstrate how successful this can be.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

The evidence lies in the past history of local government reform. On every occasion it has been vastly expensive in the short term. The burden of prove is on those seeking reform to show it is cost effective, not the other way around. The history of reform is not positive and invariably by the time the 'long term' arrives when it should have achieved its objectives, there are then calls for reform possibly back to the model previously overturned.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Clarity for who?

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

I don't agree with the factors that inform your thinking

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

These are based on plans drawn up by the Welsh civil service over many years and they keep being regurgitated by ministers

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

An alternative could be voluntary and allow for a natural evolution towards a rationalised model of fewer authorities based on 'natural' communities

Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

Properly funded city regions with local delivery at the point of delivery

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

I completely disagree with your proposals so I can't comment on the efficacy of this idea

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No - WG should negotiate with the WLGA and set mutually agreed targets with the full joint Co-operation of WG and local government rather than top- down imposition which appears to be the mantra of WG

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Working in partnership with local government instead of in opposition would be a good start

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Then it's only a four year cycle when manifestos and plans have been drawn up for a five year term - how would WG feel if they had to finish a year early?

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

That people were elected in 2017 expecting to serve a five year term - you can't keep arrogantly keep changing the goal posts

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

Strengthen local democracy not continuously undermine it

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

How do you know they're not already doing so? Again an arrogant assumption in this question aimed at undermining Councillors - we could ask the same question of Assembly Members

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

See the submissions to the Independent Review Panel - it's all there

Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

You tell us

Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

They've had the General powers of competence in England since 2014 - why not Wales?

Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?

The big departments with the largest budgets

Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?

Not as they are at present - there is a growing creep of the Quango state with devices run by unelected faceless bureaucrats - Transport for Wales - the Education Consortia - the new plans for Post 16 Education - lovely for WG and Civil servants to manage - let's get those pesky Councillors out of the way asking awkward questions for local accountability



Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?

Get rid of the Quangos and go back to local accountability

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

Get rid of the Quangos

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Getting rid of the Quangos that are developing across the public sector

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

Minimal

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Ask the expert witnesses in this field

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Too complicated a question to answer straightforwardly

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Not sure

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Unclear

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Not sure

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Not clear

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

Many of these questions are leading - much of it is difficult to answer and I will be astonished if individuals outside civic society or politics are able to answer these questions - it's as if this consultation wasn't designed to be as difficult as possible to compete. I know several individuals who have told me personally that they gave up on trying to complete this because of its complexity

## Page 7: Submit your response

Q34. You are about to submit your response. Please ensure you are satisfied with the answers you have provided before sending.

Name

Organisation (if applicable)

Q35. If you want to receive a receipt of your response, please provide an email address.  
Email address

Q36. Telephone

Q37. Address

Q38. Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous

**Sent:** 25 March 2018 22:41

**To:** Correspondence mail - AD <[Correspondence.Alun.Davies@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Alun.Davies@gov.wales)>

**Subject:** Meeting local authorities

Dear Mr Davies

I live in Flintshire and worked as an accountant in local government for all of my working life.

I'm writing to you in support of your proposals to reduce the number of local authorities.

I believe that the current arrangements are inefficient and that a reduced number of authorities will allow efficiency from scale and the opportunity to take advantage of new technology and employ staff with greater expertise. However, I think that it is important to maintain control over senior staff salaries.

Regards

Sent from my Windows 10 phone

## The Valleys

Dear Mr. Davies,

You will have a job on your hands with council changes. Most people I believe will be behind you. People were happy with our old counties. Ministers in England would just force it through. I was earwiggling some of our local Councillors in the club the other night and they think it's all a joke and that you do not have a chance of changing things. Quietly I think they are shitting themselves in case it goes ahead. They all do try nicely. Me and my mates hope you force it through. Unlike many Councillors we care about Wales. It annoys me when I now hear school kids who cannot pronounce Welsh place names. I'm not a Welsh speaker but I've taken the trouble to learn place names etc. and the history of my Country. We have a lot to be proud of. People have an affinity with certain areas and I've taken note of that when drawing up my map. Two ministers have failed I hope you are not the third. I think people will lose heart with Ministers and the Assembly if that happens. Ministers need to be stronger than Councils. //

## 10 Counties

Pembrokeshire should retain the name Pembrokeshire

①②③ Will need to be renamed

Powys Should retain the name Powys

Swansea- Neath Port Talbot - Bridgend Should be West Glamorgan.

Cardiff and The Vale - Should retain that name or be South Glamorgan.

Rhondda Cynon Taff - Merthyr Tydfil and a part of Caerphilly. Should be North Glamorgan.

Part of Caerphilly - Blaenau Gwent - Torfaen - Newport. Should be West Gwent.

Monmouthshire Should be East Gwent. (Alternatively West Gwent could be just

This map takes in Historical divisions and brings together peoples with a similar outlook and strong historical links to a particular area.

'Gwent' and East Gwent retain the name Monmouthshire. This may cause less problems.



## Mid-Glam Wales

Dear Mr Davies,

For years now the powers that be have fiddled and farked about with our Counties. Why not go back to what we once had Dyfed, South Glam, Gwent etc. People were happy with that. They did not mess about in England. They largely kept their historic County name. That gives local people something to be proud of. Ours were done in a right mess. The people in Pembroke said they wanted to keep that name and so they got it. It was the same with Monmouthshire. They got their way. Well those names can still be maintained as sub-divisions of Dyfed, Gwent etc. When ours changed in the 1990s we got daft names like Rhondda Cynon Taf and Neath Port Talbot. While in England we still saw Kent, Hereford, Gloucestershire etc. We were tricked. Ireland has never changed their ancient names, and all this talk of having a certain number of people in each area is just nonsense. The Highlands region of Scotland is bigger than Wales. The only one that did not work well in Wales was Mid-Glamorgan. Its Headquarters were in Cardiff and it was lumped together with Bridgend. An area that had no historical <sup>connection</sup> (except in ancient times) with the valleys of North Glamorgan. Maesteg, Pontycymer and Nant-y-ffordd were also included when there was never really any close connection with the Rhondda and Taff valleys. It was all about keeping power along the M4 Corridor. Or so we were told. Bridgend fits in better with the Vale of Glamorgan. What's the problem if a new Mid-Glamorgan was a bit smaller than the others. There have always been anomalies in everything. It makes things different and interesting. The upland valleys of Glamorgan is a distinct area. The accent heard there is always considered the true Welsh accent (just think of Windsor Davies) Please do something, or the others have failed. So Please go back to something that worked.

Gwent?

Dear Mr. Davies,

First Class news that you intend to bring back some of our old Counties. I would love to see Gwent return. It's one of the oldest names in Britain and should never have been done away with. I saw that Woman Councillor shouting on the TV News. She is obviously frightened stiff that her cash flow will end. You will get a lot of problems from places such as Caerphilly and Merthyr. They are well dug in and don't want change.

Please, Please stick to your guns and make these Councils all see the line. I'm sick of hearing that parts of Wales are some of the poorest in Britain. With all the wealth we have generated that should not be. Ministers in the past have got things wrong and left us in this mess. Civil Servants in London helped cause a lot of the damage by just drawing lines on a map and not taking other things into account. I hope you ~~will~~ succeed.

R. Williams



Merthyr Tydfil

Dear Mr Davies,

I hope Merthyr becomes a part of a new authority. Under our present Council the place is becoming a shit heap. We have derelict land in the town itself. Our Police Station has been pulled down. St Tydfil's Hospital has been pulled down as well as other buildings. They have been knocking the town about for 60 years and it just gets worse and worse. Our last remaining hospital can't cope. Its no good running things over Merthyr our glorious days are over. We, like the Rhondda were built on Coal. That's long gone. I hope change comes soon. It will not if the Valley Councils have anything to do with it. They do a lot of shouting as if they care get rid of them something of our history, local or national and they want have a clue.

Yours  
Ran P.



CaerPhilly

Dear Sir,

I Saw the proposed pairings of Councils in the paper and I must say they look like a right shambles. CaerPhilly has little connection with Newport and the Rhondda has little connection with Bridgend. That's the kind of pairing they would draw up in London. May I say it is of little use leaving arrangements to the Councils themselves. That would just be a ~~Carve~~ carve up. During the famous Newport riots it was the people of the valleys east of Rhymney who flocked to Newport. The people west of that joined with the Men of Merthyr. Everything in what was Glamorgan and Gwent is now in section. Except the Councillors themselves. They are all doing very nicely. I can't understand why they now get paid a full wage as most have time to do another job. Serving on the Council was once considered a Civic honour. Now we have Cabinets and God knows what else and everything gets done behind closed doors. The Voters are no longer consulted on anything. I notice that in England they still have all their old names while Wales is just a Mess. I hope the change is done quickly. I notice they are already all gangling up on you. They see their Cash cow disappearing.

John P.

CARDIFF  
23/3/18

Dear Sir,

By reducing the number of local authorities, in Wales, you are doing the right thing.

However, you must not allow the "we don't want to lose our jobs brigade" to drag the matter out until 2026!

Adopt a comprehensive merger programme with "shadow authorities" elected in 2020 so that the new authorities would assume their new functions on 1st April 2021.

yours faithfully

L. R. J.

Wales

March 2018

Dear Mr. Davies,

I'm rapidly losing confidence in the assembly. I cannot understand why councils are being asked to organize and changes to their boundaries etc. what way is that to run a country. These people are not capable of organizing such changes. we will just end up with a mess worse than the one we have now. The councils will all stick together and carve things up to suit themselves. Can you imagine leaders in England or Scotland allowing such important moves to be organized by the councils themselves. Ten councils I think is a good number. Its the way they were divided up in the past that led to problems. The divisions we now have in Glamorgan and Gwent are a mess. How on earth they were expected to work is anyone's guess. These two former counties is where the greatest problems were created. A further problem was created when mid-Glam did not have its headquarters within its boundaries. It was one of only two counties in Britain to be in this situation. The other one was in the north east of England. I see a real shambles being created with councils being asked to organize themselves. we will all be losers and in a few years the problem will be back. Please order the councils to change and show them what the new counties will be. I have enclosed a plan which I believe will work and brings back some names which have historical significance, ones people can relate to. Monmouthshire is a name I believe should disappear. In fact the word "shire" no longer exist in Wales. I believe councillors in Monmouthshire insisted on that name returning in a hope they could become a part of England. For years they would not fly the Welsh flag on County Hall. I don't know if that has changed. A few misinformed people used to claim that Monmouthshire was once a part of England (It never was) In fact two areas of Monmouthshire were stolen from us in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and added to Herefordshire. These were the Parish of "Welsh Newton" and a detached part of Monmouthshire called "Welsh Bicknor". Please do this properly our futures depend on it. Tell these councillors where to get off.

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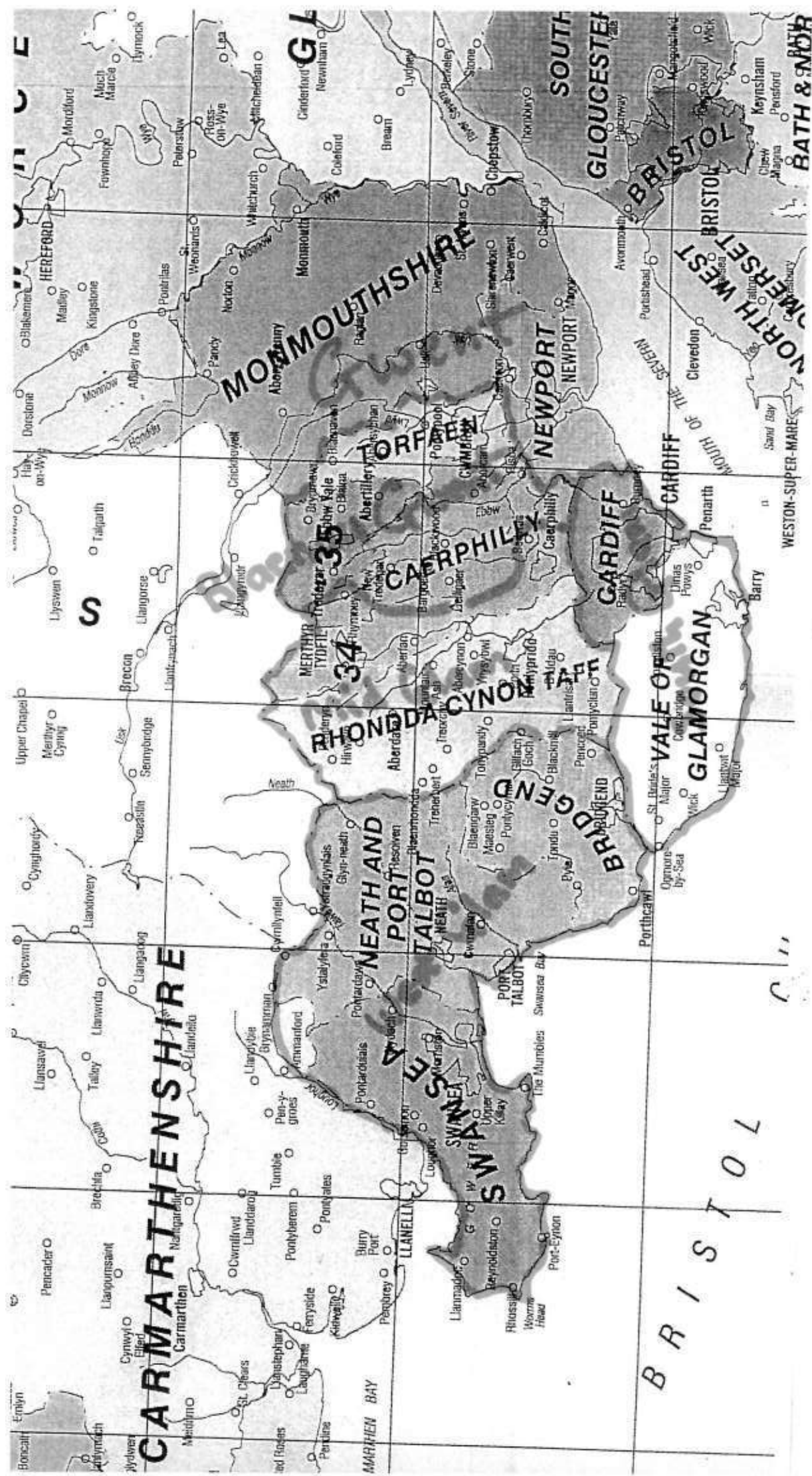
55: OLDHAM  
56: TAMESIDE  
57: STOCKPORT

KEY TO NUMBERED  
UNITARY AUTHORITIES  
IN WEST MIDLANDS  
36: WOLVERHAMPTON  
37: WALSALL  
38: DUDLEY  
39: SANDWELL  
40: BIRMINGHAM  
41: SOLIHULL  
42: COVENTRY

KEY TO NUMBERED  
UNITARY AUTHORITIES  
IN SOUTH WALES  
34: MERTHYR TYDFIL  
35: BLAENAU GWENT

- ① West Glam
- ② Mid-Glam
- ③ South-Glam
- ④ Blaenau Gwent
- ⑤ Gwent





## Glamorgan

Dear Mr Davies,

Why is there so much messing around with our counties? The Valleys of Gwent and north Glamorgan are distinct areas. We should be counties in our own right. The Gwent Valleys should be centred on Cwmbran while the Glamorgan Valleys should be centred on Pontypriod. These councillors are just making things difficult for their own ends. I dread to think what kind of mess we will get this time. Not long ago Caerphilly Council were boasting in the papers about a picture they had outside the Mayor's office of King George V and the Queen visiting Caerphilly. It had hung there for years. When the picture appeared in the papers it was soon pointed out that the King and Queen were not in the picture. It was just a group photo of some Minors with a well-dressed man sitting on the grass and a woman in a big hat.

This is what you are dealing with. No wonder the English think we are bloody soft. I would like to see our old names return. The Valleys just sink further down hills so I don't know what these councils have to shout about. They appear to be telling you what to do.  
- If I'm lucky, you will read it  
Bill T.

Menthyr Tydfil

Dear Mr. Davies,

My Council has suddenly come to life. I thought they had all died years ago. You have frightened the shit out of them with this talk of reorganization. I would like to see Mid-Glam return but of course it will never happen. The Council will not allow it. No one in our town voted to move our, very well used, Bus Station to a smaller site in a back street but the Council say we did. No one can see the voting papers. Even our public toilets have been closed. The Council said, in the local paper, there would not be a problem as we could all use the one in the nearby Cafe. The owner said 'Oh no they can't'. Now I'm sick of seeing young men peeing in alleys. Even pubs have put up notices asking the public to stop using their toilets. Our public library was handed over to some trust who straightaway closed the Reference room and Family history room and turned them into their own offices. After years of complaint the Old YMCA building was renovated, well partly renovated because suddenly all work stopped about two years ago and it's falling into ruin again. Part of our old general hospital still stands in ruin over twenty years since the Tories closed it along with so many other hospitals. We are crying out for the return of Mid-Glam but with more thought given this time - Bridgend had nothing to do with us. J.D.

Georgetown  
Merthyr Tydfil

Dear Mr. Davies,

Our local MP and also our local AM covers not only Merthyr but also Rhymney. So it seems obvious to me that we should both come under the same authority for local Government. Merthyr and Caerphilly used to both come under mid-Glam. With Caerphilly so near to Cardiff I see no reason why we cannot be joined with that authority. With Cardiff in charge we might get things done. Everything at present is totally disjointed with authorities working at odds with each other. If we were with Cardiff it might break this cycle of poverty that is blighting the valleys. The planned authorities I've seen are still miniscule compared with many English authorities. North Yorkshire is as big as North Wales and must have a population of about two million. They must have real clout. Why can't Glamorgan be just one authority. I see no reason against it. Although I suppose there would be two Cities, Cardiff and Swansea vying for power. There seems to be a determination to divide Glam along a central line just south of Pontypridd. There seems a similar set up in Gwent. These Councils will not go quietly so I see yet another mess being created. Maybe it suites the Assembly that way. — yours K. P.



# Cardiff

Dear Sir,

Why is there so many problems with giving us new authorities. I think 8 is a perfect number for a Country the size of Wales. 8 is also the symbol of infinity considered very lucky. In the South the valleys all run south toward a City.

Swansea - Neath Port Talbot - Bridgend (West Glam)

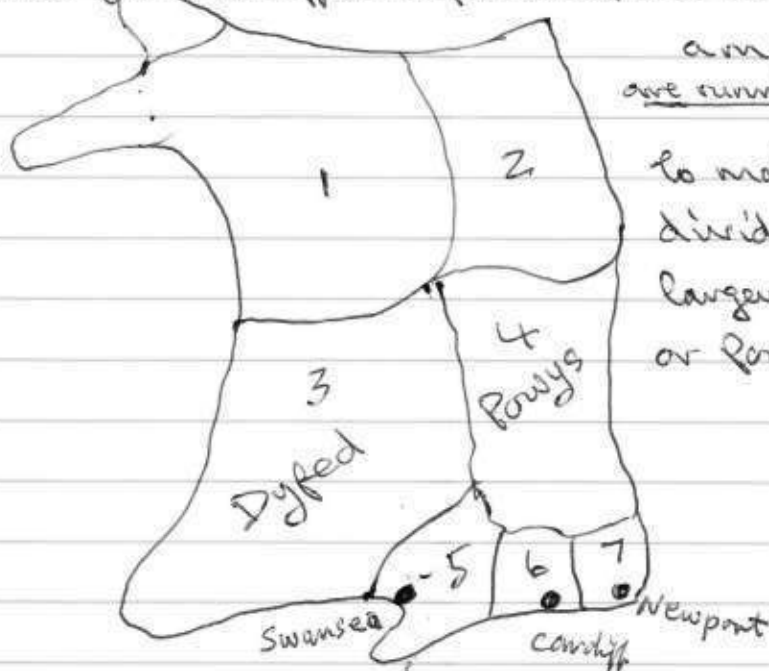
Rhondda Cynon Taff - Vale of Glamorgan - Merthyr Tydfil - Caerphilly -  
Cardiff (East Glam or Mid-Glam)

Glaenau Gwent - Torfaen - Monmouthshire - Newport (Gwent)

There was never a problem when we had just Glamorgan and Gwent. The Counties above would still be smaller than many English Counties. Dyfed and Powys are good names (old kingdoms) Two more good names for the north and we are in business.

Cardiff would have far more clout if it were head of a County taking in (the Vale) (Rhondda Cynon) (Merthyr) (and Caerphilly) The valleys are already becoming 'dormitories' for Cardiff. Transport could also be improved so let's get

a move on. These Councils are running rings around the assembly.



to make 8 Counties divide up one of the larger Counties of Dyfed or Powys.

The most populous Counties all centred on a City

Dear Sir,

I appeal to you to listen to the Council leaders who appealed to you last week regarding the reorganisation of local councils. With regards to Pembrokeshire, combining the three counties to become Dyfed has been tried before and didn't work, and won't work again this time. Please leave Pembrokeshire alone ! The people that live here love Pembrokeshire and want to keep it as Pembrokeshire. Please listen and don't waste more of this country's money with reorganisation. This has already been done, and then undone at a huge cost which could have been avoided, and should be avoided in the future. Just imagine how that money could have been spent. Save our council tax going up again by not wasting it on unnecessary reorganisation. Please listen to the people of this country. Thank you. Diolch.

Yours Faithfully,

Sent from my iPad

Rural areas need close funding, not based in distant urban centres. They each have a different character and demographic. Ceredigion would rather look after its own. I cannot speak for Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen, but removal of services from Pembrokeshire to Carmarthen could also be detrimental. Dyfed was not a good arrangement for counties other than Carmarthenshire. Keep local government local. Collaboration for economies of scale can be done under local directives.

Thank you

██████████

██████████

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION**

Williamson reported on this around about 2012 and I can remember going to a meeting in Transport House in Cardiff when the First Minister told the audience that there was no other game in town. This matter has been put on the shelf too many times and the matter has now become very urgent due to the austerity measures that has been imposed by the Westminster Government.

Councils have had to make cuts in their budgets for far too long and it is time that all Leaders of Councils and the Welsh Local Government Association realised that the time is now ripe for reorganisation. If this happened in the private sector, company directors would be looking to see where cuts could be made much quicker than this has taken. Successive Ministers have talked about re-organisation of Local Government and Leighton Andrews had the right idea.

Last week I spoke to a staff member in Dundee, about the same population of Newport (150000). Dundee has 29 Councillors which equates to approximately one Councillor to 5000 electorate. Newport have 50 Councillors that equates to one Councillor to 3000 electorate. People on the street are saying that we have too many Councillors and I would tend to agree with them because, taking Newport as an example, work has been outsourced e.g. Leisure and Housing. Similarly, I do not think Councils such as Newport need so many Cabinet Members. Again, something that people are talking about.

I do believe that the proposal will strengthen local government and will alleviate the need to cut front line services but, at the same time, deliver financial sustainability. The mergers will lead to savings and improved services. Assets could be centralised and rationalised to create economies of scale. I do think that a way can be found for Council Tax harmonisation.

I am a believer in Regional Consortia and strongly believe that education needs a flatter structure. In this connection, I would suggest that education is run by the Regional Consortia and cut out the tier of Local Authorities to enable more money to be spent on Schools' budgets.

Councils complain about the increasing costs of Social Services. I think this service could be taken over by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care. The reason I say this is because, as the title suggests, health is very close to Social Care. As an example, I was speaking to two Social Workers who call on a neighbour. They work for a private company from Caerphilly. If Social Care came under the Welsh Government there would be economy of scale and savings could be made.

I would not agree with the Cabinet Secretary when he proposes Newport amalgamates with Caerphilly. I would rather see a South Gwent and a North Gwent Council. In this connection, I would suggest that the South Gwent Council takes the M4 corridor that includes the present South Monmouthshire Wards and the old Islwyn Council area from Caerphilly. The North Gwent Council would then take the remaining Caerphilly and Monmouthshire areas, Blaenau Gwent, and Torfaen. I would also suggest that Powys and Ceredigion are amalgamated to have a total population of 206306, leaving Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire to amalgamate with a total population of 309564.

I am not a great believer in having two separate elections in the same year and, therefore, do not agree that the next Council election should be in June 2021 whilst the Assembly election would be in May of that year. May 2020 may be too early for the election of the new Councils. However, a solution should be found.

If the Cabinet Secretary is looking to reduce public spending, it may be pertinent to look at the Fire Authorities across Wales. Scotland has one Fire Authority that was formed by the merger of eight regional fire services in April 2013 for the whole of the country and consideration should be given to having one Fire Authority for Wales.

Our Ref: JP/lab

Direct Line: 01633 435958

12 June 2018

Strengthening Local Government  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

[StrengtheningLocalGov@gov.wales](mailto:StrengtheningLocalGov@gov.wales)

Dear Sir or Madam

### **Green Paper Consultation - Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above consultation. We should be grateful if you find below a response from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, which does not intentionally reply directly to the specific questions that have been included within the Green Paper, but provides a general response on behalf of the Health Board. In this reply we seek to highlight the context within which we are working with our local government partners, the increasing strength of our local and regional partnership arrangements and the importance of continuing integration of the health and social care system in the interests of the people served by our public services. Therefore, we have not commented significantly on aspects of structural change covered in the consultation, but have sought to highlight the importance and benefits of the health sector, local government and wider community based services and interests working together to further integrate our planning and service delivery within agreed geographical areas. It is anticipated that this will improve outcomes for patients and service users and enhance access to integrated and coherent services for our citizens.

#### **Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan**

Pencadlys,  
Ysbyty Sant Cadog  
Ffordd Y Lodd  
Caerllion  
Casnewydd  
De Cymru NP18 3XQ  
Ffôn: 01633 436700  
E-bost: [abhb.enquiries@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:abhb.enquiries@wales.nhs.uk)

#### **Aneurin Bevan University Health Board**

Headquarters  
St Cadoc's Hospital  
Lodge Road  
Caerleon  
Newport  
South Wales NP18 3XQ  
Tel No: 01633 436700  
Email: [abhb.enquiries@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:abhb.enquiries@wales.nhs.uk)

The Health Board with our partners in the Gwent area have made great strides in recent years with our partnerships arrangements, especially in the context of the Social Services and Well Being Act and also the Well Being of Future Generations Act. For instance, through our partnership response to the Social Services and Well Being Act the Health Board, with our five Local Authorities, the Third and Independent Sectors and along with citizens, we have made real progress in the linking and integrating of services. This has been achieved through the development of a joint vision and priorities for services in our area and having clarity about our expected joint outcomes. It is anticipated that we will be enabled to build on this further with the outcome from the recent Parliamentary Review and the longer term plans to be published soon by Welsh Government to design and deliver an increasingly seamless service.

Admittedly, it theoretically should be more straightforward for the Health Board to work with one Local Authority partner in our geographical area in terms of our governance and planning arrangements. However, it is recognised that irrespective of the numbers of statutory bodies working in a given area, there exist a diverse economy of interests, partners and service providers with which health and social care need to work in partnership. Therefore, it is suggested that irrespective of the numbers of statutory partners it is the strength of the partnership and arrangements that are put in place to develop and support delivery that are important. It is suggested that even given the numbers of partners, partnership and service arrangements in the health and social care system can work effectively together as is evidenced by the current progress of our Regional Partnership for the Social Services and Well Being Act. However, in this respect, it does highlight that the Health Board having to support five Public Service Boards can place significant demands on the Health Board. The streamlining of these arrangements perhaps to one Public Service Board for the Gwent area would be preferred. The Regional Partnership Board arrangements currently in place demonstrate that working across the Gwent geographical area can work between the statutory bodies and our community based partners.

It must also be recognised that the health and well-being of the population is not only responsibility of the National Health Service, but all partners and citizens must come together to play their part. At the same time, the NHS must build on its ability to work with others in order to provide services which are not only person-centred, but also help to reduce health inequalities and improve patient outcomes. The opportunities presented by our Neighbourhood Care Networks/GP Clusters will also provide further models for integrating care and services and engaging with our communities in different ways.

Again, the partnership arrangements in place are increasingly demonstrating that this can be achieved with a shared understanding and the will to succeed. This can be achieved with smaller numbers of partners as well as multiple partners. Different statutory partner boundaries may or may not help in these situations. All public bodies must seek to build on how we can improve our ability to work together and support our partners and colleagues in other sectors and undertake active collaboration. The key will be a

common purpose and commitment to actively work together and engage directly with and involve our citizens and communities in an integrated way to avoid duplication and make a cohesive offer to our citizens. This will require in some instances whole system change and development within and between public services particularly to be able to respond to the challenge of demographic changes and demands, in particular the forecasted increases in the older population and the continuing challenge of recruiting and retaining the right workforce with the right skills to deliver the required new system of health and care in our areas. Therefore, the Health Board supports the further integrating of health and social services with the services of wider partners and we fully recognise that the way services are delivered now is not sustainable, and more importantly do not always meet the needs of local people.

Therefore, we support the Green Paper's proposal for better alignment between the work of the Public Service Boards (PSBs) and Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs), which operate on Health Board boundaries as this will begin to respond to some of the challenges outlined above but also streamline some of the complexity and potential duplication of the partnership architecture that has developed in recent years.

In conclusion, as outlined, significant progress has been made in recent years to further develop our local partnership arrangements. In the Gwent area many of these arrangements are beginning to work well, even with the range of partners, particularly the numbers of statutory partners involved. Therefore, as highlighted, it is not necessarily the numbers of partners that are important, but the willingness to work together in the interests of citizens, to work locally together in and with our communities to understand their needs and to respond with integrated health and care services determined and guided through our local partnerships. However, it is recognised that some realignment of the existing requirements for partnership would facilitate the effective delivery of the collective partnership vision, whilst also staying connected to local communities.

Yours sincerely



**Ann Lloyd**  
**Chair/Cadeirydd**



**Judith Paget**  
**Chief Executive/Prif Weithredwr**



## Annex C: Consultation Questions

Your Name	Tim Pratt
Organisation (if applicable)	ASCL Cymru
E-mail / Telephone	07834 175284
Your Address	130 Regent Road, Leicester LE1 7PG

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<b>Chapter 3</b>	
<b>Consultation Question 1</b>	
In Chapter 2, we restated our commitment to regional working in key areas but recognised the need for this to be supported by further change. In chapter 3, we set out the broad options for moving toward fewer, larger local authorities and summarise features of the process which would be common to each option.	
a) What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?	<p><i>We feel that it would be essential to ensure that there is a consistent approach to regional working; the current context allows still for too much duplication of services which removes school leaders from their 'day job' of leading schools. The four consortia were set up, and therefore held to account, through different governance structures which are becoming too distant from a fundamental principle in Wales of 'local democracy'. Many parents do not know or understand what the consortia are, or the influence and power they have at local level. Significant monies now are removed from this local level of decision making and from front line services which is having a significant impact on school budgets. We would therefore like to see a higher degree of consistency both in the way the educational consortia are organised and also in their governance.</i></p> <p><i>It would improve communications and efficiency if there were commonality between regional bodies, i.e. they all serve the same area. It is unhelpful to have two service delivery providers that operate within one educational consortium area, for example.</i></p>
b) What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?	<p><i>We agree that a clear strategy is required that minimises uncertainty and allows for a structured change process, preferably in a manageable but not prolonged timescale. It is also appropriate that the process is democratically-led, but with appropriate support for implementation. We understand the need for the Welsh Government to retain emergency powers as a last resort in the case of serious failure in a local authority.</i></p>
c) What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?	<p><i>We support the principle of fewer, larger authorities in order to ensure that all</i></p>

<p><i>local authorities have the resources and capability to provide sustainable and effective local public services. Whilst we would understand the attraction of a voluntary merger process, we also feel that there should be a specified timeline in order to avoid delays which may compound some of the current issues within local government. We would therefore support the phased approach outlined in Option 2.</i></p>
<p>d) Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?</p> <p><i>Whilst it would be possible to create fewer, larger authorities, we support the principle for aligning the new authorities with current health board boundaries to allow a more joined-up approach to services, and are pleased to see that the proposals take account of the alignment of some of the other public service providers, for example the educational consortia. However, there is perhaps potential for increasing the congruence of all providers. We would have concerns though, if the final model still allowed for duplication of services with regional bodies i.e. educational consortia.</i></p>
<p>e) Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.</p> <p><i>We have no doubt that significant cost-savings can be made under any of the proposed options, particularly in relation to educational services that are duplicated in each council, for example payroll, human resources etc.</i></p> <p><i>We are particularly concerned that any changes should result in a single layer of accountability for schools, rather than the current multiplicity that causes significant unnecessary duplication of work. The current system where the LA retain the employer function but the consortia have the school improvement function in some cases can work well, but all too often causes conflict, confusion and can be extremely wasteful. At a time when financial resources are so tight, we need to be certain that resources are used in the best interests of our young people. At times it can appear that Wales has spawned an industry that is obsessed with data and norm-referencing, rather than a system that encourages and supports schools in their efforts to help every young person achieve their full potential. In some areas, the consortia do not appear to be held to account properly, and there are clear tensions between local authorities over jurisdiction. There is insufficient consistency of approach and delivery between the consortia.</i></p> <p><i>We would therefore see these proposals as an opportunity to ask some salient questions about whether the current system is sustainable in the long-term. In particular, in relation to education at a local and regional level we feel there is needed greater clarity around governance structures and jurisdiction. With the proposed changes to school accountability that the Welsh Government have published, and the greater importance placed on self-evaluation and the self-improving system in schools, we need to ask whether the consortia should be adopting a different role.</i></p> <p><i>Too often the consortia are driven by data and a ‘quasi-inspection’ manner of delivery. Inspection should be delivered by Estyn and the habit of the consortia in “ramping up” the pressure around inspection is, in most cases, counter-productive. The over-emphasis on norm-referenced accountability measures,</i></p>

*allow young people to be 'off-rolled' too often as it becomes easier to lose the child at that level. Schools that are successful and effective should not be subjected to constant monitoring and interference.*

*We believe that there are key areas where the clarity between the role of both the new LA/Regional bodies could add significant value:*

- If Wales' ambition is to support the development of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050, all of Wales' population should feel included and have the opportunity to learn the language. Programmes are delivered at local level currently and it would allow the new LAs to draw through 'lifelong learning' programmes to offer this, working in conjunction with the schools. In consortia that have high levels of Welsh speakers the teams that are leading this very important initiative sometimes appear 'non-inclusive' and to lack a team dimension to understand the challenges of non-speakers.*
- Regional working makes sense for ALN delivery to allow equitable access to provision for all young people who require support. Governance for this group should be equally split between education and the health boards, with a direct funding stream from WG. Core funding and jurisdiction would rest with the local authorities but additional funding directly from the WG stream. This could allow for any additional monies i.e. for mental health and well-being to be targeted directly as needed across the Health board regions.*
- Where there is evidence from a range of sources of a school that is failing its young people, there needs to be access to highly experienced professionals who are able to provide appropriate support and challenge.*

*There are other areas where there are unresolved concerns:*

- It has not been made clear how mental health and well-being will be delivered. The consortia sometimes appear to be replicating some of the practice of the English 'academisation' system – with the unintended consequences for the young people (particularly the most vulnerable) all services should be looking after.*
- School admissions, school meals, Safeguarding, Attendance, and 'Children missing from education' children are all delivered at LA level; there is a sound rationale for all services for children to be delivered at the same level.*
- Children's social care should stay with the local authority to allow the child to remain at the centre of public service delivery. This fundamental principle is completely lost by the current structures. The 'vulnerable' child, with limited outcomes, sadly is too often seen as 'problem' in data sets.  
*The current model does not allow for clear lines of accountability at local level. This has been lost.**

*In the event of fewer local authorities being created there may be a case for returning to the local authority as the single layer of accountability to ensure financial savings, a reduction in workload and clear lines of local accountability.*

## Chapter 4

### Consultation Question 2

Chapter 4 has explained the need for clarity on the future footprint for local government and the range of factors which should be taken into account to determine a new configuration. It sets out a suggested future footprint for local government, which could be reached via each of the options set out in the previous chapter.

a) Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

*We consider that clarity and certainty are vital in order to ensure effective and stable local government.*

b) Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

*We consider the factors used are appropriate and take account of relevant considerations.*

c) What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

*On the whole, we can see the benefits of the proposals, although it is also possible to see that there may be local opposition in some areas where the new areas would dramatically alter the balance of political power. We do have some concerns about the viability of Powys on its own. Particularly in relation to schools, some are so close to the borders of other authorities and so far from the centre of the current authority that it creates significant logistical difficulties. It might be appropriate to consider either*

*(a) dividing it into two regions that could be aligned with some of the other proposed authorities, or*

*(b) looking at boundary changes where there are isolated pockets that suffer because of competition from other authorities to ensure more effective delivery across such a large and sparsely populated area.*

d) Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

*See above.*

e) In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

*Please see our response to Q1 above*

## **Chapter 5**

### **Consultation Question 3**

Chapter 5 sets out the proposed approach to transition and implications for establishing Transition Committees and elections to Shadow Authorities under each option.

- a) Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

*Yes, this seems a sensible and pragmatic approach.*

- b) Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

*Yes, we would see this as important to avoid uncertainty and allow full engagement of the electorate.*

- c) Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

*As previously noted, we would not consider it sensible to leave Powys in its current state.*

### **Consultation Question 4**

The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021.

Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

*This seems a sensible option.*

### **Consultation Question 5**

The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for

example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

*Not that we are aware of.*

#### Consultation Question 6

What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

*Once a decision has been taken on the changes and timing of them, the schedule for electoral reviews can be established. The sooner such uncertainties are resolved the better for the electorate.*

### **Chapter 6**

#### Consultation Question 7

a) How can councils make more effective use of their elected members' knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

*There is no one answer to this question. In the best authorities there is already great and effective use made of local knowledge. It will be important that all authorities look to the best practice and do their best to emulate it. This is a very important area that needs to be addressed if there are more moves towards Regional working, particularly in education.*

b) How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

*It is important that local councillors are given public support and encouragement to do their jobs effectively and conscientiously in line with the Nolan principles of public life. This includes ensuring not only that they are not misrepresented and subject to abuse, but also that any misuse of their powers is dealt with promptly and effectively.*

#### Consultation Question 8

a) Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?

*We would support further development of community councils to meet specific local needs*

b) Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?

<p><i>Anything we should mention here?</i></p>
<p><b>Consultation Question 9</b></p>
<p>a) Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?</p>
<p><i>Cost effective and efficient digital solutions</i></p>
<p>b) How might such arrangements be best developed?</p>
<p><i>National platforms, carefully costed and capable of providing innovative and flexible services.</i></p>
<p><b>Consultation Question 10</b></p>
<p>a) In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?</p>
<p><i>It is important not to confuse a consistent approach with a common approach. Within the public services in Wales it needs to be recognised that there are different terms and conditions of service that apply to different groups of employees. It is therefore vital that these differences are seen as a significant contributory factor to the effectiveness of local services. It would not be advisable to attempt, under the banner of a “single public service”, to try to impose common terms and conditions of employment across all groups of employees. Unions and professional associations are in a unique position of being able to offer clear guidance and support on this matter.</i></p> <p><i>At the same time, a more coordinated approach to redundancy and redeployment can help to minimise the difficulties of recruiting suitable candidates for posts, and ensuring a viable and successful workforce.</i></p> <p><i>We support the concept of social partnership as an effective way of ensuring that appropriate and expert bodies are properly involved in the change process.</i></p>
<p>c) Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?</p>
<p><i>We are pleased to see that the potential cost for mergers has been acknowledged. However, it would be useful to have more detail on this</i></p> <p><i>(a) to reassure local communities that their interests are being best served by these proposals, and</i></p> <p><i>(b) to demonstrate to budget holders within local authorities that they are able to continue to work effectively during the change process.</i></p>

d) Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?
<p><i>We feel it critical that the specifics of any local authority mergers/boundary changes is clarified as soon as possible to give certainty to the rest of the process.</i></p> <p><i>We would also value clarity over the issue to terms and conditions of employment of distinct groups within local public service.</i></p>
<p><u>Consultation Question 11.</u></p> <p>We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposals within this consultation would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.</p>
a) What effects do you think there would be?
<p><i>We consider that these proposals allow for equality of language use, and are appropriate to the context of a modern Wales.</i></p>
b) How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?
<p><u>Consultation Question 12</u></p> <p>Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p>
<p><u>Consultation Question 13</u></p> <p>The Children's Rights Impact Assessment published alongside the consultation outlines the Welsh Government's view of the effect of the proposals contained in the consultation on children and young people. The Welsh Government seeks views on that assessment.</p>
a) Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?
<p><i>We are encouraged that the Welsh Government has undertaken this impact assessment. We would however ask that consideration be given under article 4 to the matter of equal access to the best possible educational provision.</i></p> <p><i>There are cases where some schools are located on the periphery of a local authority in direct competition with schools in another, larger authority and as a result are less well resourced. In such cases this leads to children in one school potentially having reduced access to similar resources and could be put at a disadvantage. We would encourage the Welsh Government to look</i></p>



<i>carefully at this matter to ensure that no children and young people are disadvantaged.</i>
b) Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?
<i>See response (a) above.</i>
<p><u>Consultation Question 14</u></p> <p>The Equalities Impact Assessment published alongside the consultation outlines the Welsh Government's view of the effect of the proposals contained in the consultation on protected groups under the Equality Act 2010. The Welsh Government seeks views on that assessment.</p>
a) Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?
<i>We consider that these proposal offer an opportunity for local authorities to address the issue of pay equality and lead the way in ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all employees regardless of their gender, race or religious persuasion.</i>
b) Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?
<i>We would like to see the matters mentioned in (a) above addressed specifically within the proposals.</i>
<p><u>Consultation Question 15</u></p> <p>Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.</p>
<p><i>We are encouraged that this consultation tackles the issue of local authorities and their ongoing sustainability. We are also pleased that the consultation is wide-ranging and present options for the future shape of local government. However, it does not appear to present a clear timeline for the Welsh Government's own decision-making process which we think would be helpful.</i></p> <p><i>We feel that this process offers Wales the chance to create an effective and sustainable form of local government for the future.</i></p>

Annex C: Consultation Questions

Your Name	<b>Rhys George</b>
Organisation (if applicable)	<b>Chair – Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales)</b>
E-mail / Telephone	<a href="mailto:rhys.george@cardiff.gov.uk">rhys.george@cardiff.gov.uk</a>
Your Address	<b>Electoral Services Cardiff Council Atlantic Wharf Cardiff CF10 4UW</b>

**Introduction:**

**The Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) was founded in 1987 and is the professional body representing the interests of electoral administrators in the United Kingdom.**

**This paper sets out the views of AEA (Wales) in relation to two specific questions (Questions 4 and 6) raised in the Welsh Government’s Green Paper – Strengthening Local Government – Delivering for People.**

**The AEA’s primary concern is about the effect of any proposed changes to the law which would impact on electoral registration and the administration of elections and which might arise as a result of the issues identified in the consultation paper.**

**Any such changes would need to be carefully considered in terms of the practical implications and the way in which the changes would be introduced and administered.**

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**Chapter 3**

**Consultation Question 1**

In Chapter 2, we restated our commitment to regional working in key areas but recognised the need for this to be supported by further change. In chapter 3, we set out the broad options for moving toward fewer, larger local authorities and summarise features of the process which would be common to each option.

- a) What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

**The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.**

- b) What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
c) What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
d) Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
e) Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>

<b>Chapter 4</b>
<u>Consultation Question 2</u> Chapter 4 has explained the need for clarity on the future footprint for local government and the range of factors which should be taken into account to determine a new configuration. It sets out a suggested future footprint for local government, which could be reached via each of the options set out in the previous chapter.
a) Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
b) Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
c) What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>

<b>this matter.</b>
d) Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
e) In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>

<b>Chapter 5</b>
<u>Consultation Question 3</u> Chapter 5 sets out the proposed approach to transition and implications for establishing Transition Committees and elections to Shadow Authorities under each option.
a) Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
b) Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
c) Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
<u>Consultation Question 4</u> The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021.

Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

**The inclusion of this specific question within the Welsh Government's latest consultation exercise has caused confusion and concern to Welsh electoral administrators.**

**Practitioners are bewildered as to why this proposal has been put forward in the middle of the current Welsh Assembly term and following on from the October 2016 Ministerial Statement from the previous Cabinet Secretary committing to a ten year period of stability for Local Government Elections and a permanent five year cycle (with the next elections taking place in 2022 and 2027 respectively).**

**On this issue the Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) remains strongly opposed to the suggested alteration of the date of the next Local Government Elections from May 2022 to June 2021.**

**This is due to the level of risk and difficulty in administering complex and highly administratively demanding elections for both the National Assembly for Wales as well as 'all out' Local Government Elections (including polls for Welsh Community and Town Council Elections).**

**In submitting this response the Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) supports and concurs with the detailed risks and impacts as outlined by the Electoral Commission in their assessment of this specific election date alteration for voters, electoral administrators and candidates and agents alike.**

**Essentially, there would be a risk in holding two significant elections in such close proximity to one another which would be multiplied if we also see various electoral reforms introduced for both elections at this time.**

**These include:**

- **Significant changes to franchise arrangements and the register**
- **Potential voting system reforms**
- **Campaign spending rules changes**

#### **Voters – Key Risks**

**There would be two voter registration deadlines which could lead to confusion for individual electors and possibly result in some people not registering in time, or indeed not registering at all;**

**If the franchise is different for each set of elections then the campaigns could also be different for each election. This could lead to voters not knowing whether they are entitled to vote in the National Assembly for Wales elections,**

**the local government elections or both;**

**If changes to the franchise are introduced then there would be new groups of voters voting for the very first time;**

**There will be different ballot papers and voting systems for each election which could be further exacerbated if new voting systems are introduced for these elections.**

#### **Electoral Administrators – Key Risks**

**The complexity and workload for administrators in holding two elections in such close proximity during 2021 would be significant. In addition to this, if any changes to the franchise are agreed, administrators would be adapting to new systems and rules and so there would be an impact on the elections software and an increase in the support required by elections staff.**

**It should also be acknowledged that Returning Officers (ROs) and electoral administrators are faced with reduced resources and a growing number of skilled professionals who are leaving local authority elections teams.**

**ROs/Administrators are also increasingly reliant on a small pool of specialist software and print management suppliers. As such Welsh Government need to guarantee that Returning Officers and their staff are properly resourced to ensure that any relevant electoral events run successfully and that all new legislative burden costs are fully funded.**

**In taking any final decision on the timing of the forthcoming Local Government Elections the association strongly advises the Welsh Government to liaise closely with the Wales Electoral Co-ordination Board (WECB) at every stage of the process.**

**For reference purposes I have also outlined below the key mission statement and purpose of the Board which this association believes will play an increasingly key role in the co-ordination of future Welsh electoral administration amongst key stakeholders:-**

**The Wales Electoral Co-ordination Board (WECB) bring together Regional Returning Officers, UK and Welsh Government officials, Electoral Commission and AEA Wales to co-ordinate relevant events, electoral activity modernisation and reform in Wales.**

**Finally, the Association encourages the Welsh Government to engage holistically in their approach to the long term scheduling of future elections and electoral events moving away from looking at the timing of individual electoral events in ‘stand-alone’ isolation.**

**We also encourage Welsh Government to reference the Association’s post-election report (see link below) for the May/June 2017 polls to gain further understanding and access evidentiary first hand accounts of the experiences,**

**pressure and stress created amongst the profession in administrating back to back electoral events.**

**[It's time for urgent and positive Government action - The AEA's review of the 2017 local government elections and the UK Parliamentary general election](#)**

**Consultation Question 5**

The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

**The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.**

**Consultation Question 6**

What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

**The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) endorses the view of the Electoral Commission on this matter.**

**In determining the parameters of electoral reviews the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales will need to ensure that any reviews are concluded (and the proposals approved) sufficiently in advance of any poll that the boundaries will come into effect for, in order that administrators, candidates and parties are able to properly plan for the election based on the new boundaries.**

**In the event that Welsh Government decides to proceed with such a review programme we would strongly advise that they consult closely, and from an early stage, with the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales as well as the Wales Electoral Co-ordination Board and individual Electoral Registration Officers on a reasonable, proportionate and practical review timetable.**

**Chapter 6**

**Consultation Question 7**

- a) How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

**The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.**

- b) How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
<u>Consultation Question 8</u>
a) Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
b) Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
<u>Consultation Question 9</u>
a) Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
b) How might such arrangements be best developed?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
<u>Consultation Question 10</u>
a) In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
c) Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
d) Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on</b>



<b>this matter.</b>
<p><u>Consultation Question 11.</u> We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposals within this consultation would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.</p>
a) What effects do you think there would be?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
b) How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
<p><u>Consultation Question 12</u> Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p>
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
<p><u>Consultation Question 13</u> The Children's Rights Impact Assessment published alongside the consultation outlines the Welsh Government's view of the effect of the proposals contained in the consultation on children and young people. The Welsh Government seeks views on that assessment.</p>
a) Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
b) Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
<p><u>Consultation Question 14</u> The Equalities Impact Assessment published alongside the consultation outlines the Welsh Government's view of the effect of the proposals contained in the consultation on protected groups under the Equality Act 2010. The Welsh Government seeks views on that assessment.</p>

a) Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
b) Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>
<u>Consultation Question 15</u> Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.
<b>The Association of Electoral Administrators (Wales) does not hold a view on this matter.</b>

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People (WG34071)

Contribution by ADSS Cymru

Authority	Jenny Williams - President
Completed by	Paul Pavia, Policy and Research Lead
Date	12 June 2018

## General Comment

The Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS Cymru) is the professional and strategic leadership organisation for social services in Wales and is composed of statutory Directors of Social Services and the Heads of Service who support them in delivering social services responsibilities and accountabilities; a group of more than 80 social services leaders across the 22 local authorities in Wales.

As the national leadership organisation for social services in Wales, the role of ADSS Cymru is to represent the collective, authoritative voice of Directors of Social Services, Heads of Adult Services, Children’s Services and Business Services, together with professionals who support vulnerable children and adults, their families and communities, on a range of national and regional issues of social care policy, practice and resourcing. It is the only national body that can articulate the view of those professionals who lead our social care services.

As a member-led organisation, it is uniquely placed as the professional and strategic leadership organisation for social services in Wales, to lead on national service development initiatives to ensure a consistent efficient and high standard of delivery for people who access care services across Wales.

ADSS Cymru is committed to using the wealth of its members’ experience and expertise, working in partnership with other agencies, to influence important decisions around social care to the benefit of the people it supports and the people who work within care services.

ADSS Cymru welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Welsh Government’s Green Paper, *Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People* because we believe the future of social care is one of the most significant policy areas that Welsh Government must seriously consider in evidencing and justifying the need for reform. Therefore, this response does not look to answer each question posed in the consultation document in detail, rather, it gives a more general perspective on the likely impact on social care should Ministers consider allowing reorganisation to take place.

### What do we want local government to deliver?

ADSS Cymru believes that this has to be the fundamental starting point when looking at potential reform, what does Welsh Government want its local government partners to do to assist it in the delivery of national public policy goals and what responsibilities should be wholly devolved to local authorities to ensure the best possible outcomes are generated for Welsh citizens?

We do not feel there was enough focus in the Green Paper on this key aspect of strategic planning. There should not be an arbitrary debate about boundaries and the final number of local authorities without a

detailed examination of what services local authorities should deliver in the future and how they will be properly resourced to deliver them; form must follow function in this regard.

While we welcome the principles of greater empowerment and further flexibilities promised to the sector, ADSS Cymru believes the realisation of those principles are needed now to allow local government to be responsive and ensure the resilience of their services. Reorganising existing service models into new boundaries, whilst incentivising new powers to merging authorities will not bring about the sorts of reform that will solve the complex societal challenges that councils in Wales are grappling with, particularly around social care. For example, we would like to see greater consideration of transferring powers to local government in relation to public health – as is the case in England – and also the examination of what local government could potentially do to improve well-being if it had more democratic control over primary health care.

While there is common ground between ADSS Cymru and the Government on the diagnosis of the key challenges facing social care in Wales and the pressures that are being faced by Wales' public services, there is still not an agreed consensus on a number of the prescribed treatments. If there is going to be a systemic move away from the current governance structure, then there needs to be a long-term vision for local government other than an insipid proposal of scale change; that vision was not evident from the Green Paper in our view.

### **How should services be delivered?**

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Services acknowledged on his appointment that 'great efforts' have been made recently to re-build and re-set the relationship between Welsh Government and local government and stated that, "there is certainly a sense that things have improved significantly."

ADSS Cymru believe strongly supports those comments and since the enactment of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act – an innovative piece of legislation co-produced between national and local government, with the Third Sector – relationships have improved and there is a continuous dialogue now in many areas, which is welcome.

Moreover, through the regionalisation of social care planning and commissioning, a key component of the Act with the establishment of Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs), followed up by the Government's White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed* and then most recently and the Parliamentary Review into Health and Social Care, we believe there is a new tone and direction of travel in terms of collaborative working between the tiers of government, built on co-operation and the subsidiarity of democratic accountability and that must be enhanced and not undermined.

As the former Cabinet Secretary for Local Government, Prof Mark Drakeford AM, stated in October 2016:

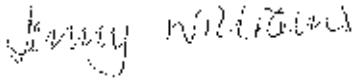
*"I want the Welsh Government's relationship with local authorities to be based on trust and a willingness to work together and an appreciation of our respective but distinctive roles in improving outcomes for people in Wales."*

While the Green Paper states there will be no rolling back on regional collaboration, ADSS Cymru believes that pursuing mergers now would create an unnecessary diversion and set back the progress that has been made on regionalisation where we have been making great strides. Without continuity, mutual trust and a commitment to localism, we believe that regional partnerships that have already been forged and in some cases contractually bound, will simply unravel.

Moreover, delivering on the key aspects of the Government's response to the Parliamentary Review - *A Healthier Wales: Our Plan for Health and Social Care* – bringing health and social care together in a seamless, integrated way, designed and delivered around the needs and preferences of the individual,

requires all-out focus. As Dr. Andrew Goodall states in that document, “What is needed now is to speed up change, not go in a different direction.”

Unlike the Green Paper, the Parliamentary Review and the Government’s response to it provide a clear vision of what the future of health and social care should look like, what the key steps are and what cultural change is required to get us there. This must be delivered but social services in Wales will be unable to do that with more uncertainty on the horizon.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Williams'.

Jenny Williams  
**President**  
**ADSS Cymru**

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

**Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?**

There is no point in maintaining arrangements for All Wales Government, 4 regions, 10 or 22 local authorities, attempting to work with health boards, educational consortia, local service boards, regional utilities and spatial interest groups. Every discontinuity leads to a confusion of the locus of responsibility, distraction from the delivery of quality services that support Welsh Government led policies and expense in joining up delivery.

**Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?**

The three options are essentially different routes to the same end - 10 Local Authorities. There is no attention to the interaction of the local government bodies with the Welsh Government or to smaller town and regional councils. It is not possible to change one level successfully without first understanding the impacts and consequences for and with the other elements of democracy in Wales, and with cross-border relationships, particularly with England.

**Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?**

I agree with the arguments in favour of a reduction to the overall number of local authorities, IF local authorities were to maintain a similar mandate as now. However, that does not address the underlying issue of the need for a different Wales governance model which is more effective at understanding the concerns of the population, creating policies that meet the current and future needs of the country, and efficient delivery of services and infrastructure.

There is a strong case for radical reform that addresses the challenges of a small population with communities of different characteristics clustered in different corner of a large-is area of land, and where political boundaries and jurisdiction currently work against the economic and cultural advancement of Wales, particularly in the North East, where for the majority of the population of the Wrexham and Flintshire, Mersey/Dee, Cheshire, Wirral and Shropshire areas the boundary is an administrative inconvenience that stifles opportunities for growth and development.

**Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?**

YES. There are compelling arguments for reform of the Welsh Assembly to increase its capacity and capability. I suggest having two constituency AMs per MP constituency, plus an additional 40 regionally elected AMs. If, for example the 10 local authority model were to be adopted, then the regional representation could be from those areas. That would give a total of 120 AMs.

If the Welsh Assembly and the Government then undertook the devolved responsibility for policy for public services within Wales, the current layer of local authority policy making could be dispensed with. This would reduce the disparity of service quality and delivery between the areas of Wales.

The Local Authorities could be redesigned as the delivery and quality mechanism for local public services, removing the need for the current (and in my view unaccountable) regional advisory bodies and delivery agencies.

The current arrangement for local authority, town councils and community councils could be remodelled to provide a democratic route to informing and advising the AMs, and providing governance arrangements and accountability lines for local service delivery.

The level of subsidiarity for national, regional and local services requires attention. For example, the current arrangements result in (a partial set but not all) Welsh Government model policies, local authority variations, regional educational consortia interpretations, and school individualisation. This is pointless duplication with huge potential for risk. The education system needs only one set of policies and guidance for schools in Wales. They should be a Welsh Government responsibility, delivered by schools and supported by local authority staff. Similar instances of unnecessary duplication abound in all policy and delivery areas.

Local understanding is crucial to the delivery of effective local services, which is an important reason for maintaining a local authority structure for such a small population.

The diverse and distributed characteristics of Welsh settlement and culture make the maintenance of local democratic accountability essential; providing a route to central Welsh Government through an expanded cohort of AMs is a way of bolstering democratic representation.

**Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.**

NO. But a reduction in the number of local councillors would more than offset the costs of additional AMs. The underlying costs are impossible to guess: they might include actuarial costs of redeployment, pensions and salary adjustments for local authority staff. There would also be a case for distributed location of Government special advisors and AM support services, potentially using co-location in Welsh Government offices or other Welsh Government owned or leased premises. The solution requires flexible thinking with a delivery of effective services at its centre.

## **Page 3: Chapter 4**

**Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?**

Clarity is important. The range of responsibility is as important to address as the footprint.

Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?

It is not possible to reform one layer of governance without addressing all the interacting layers. The 10 proposed areas are based on a South Wales perspective of how Wales works. In the North there is a clear divide between the North East and North West, and closer links between the current Wrexham and Montgomeryshire than the plan acknowledges. These current counties and Flintshire operate with an essentially porous border.

Welsh Government appears not to understand the level of cross-border commuting that creates wealth that is brought back to potentially spend in Wales. The level of commuting to the Northern hubs of Liverpool, Manchester and Warrington is increasing; towns like Wrexham and Mold have increasing proportions of residents who work across the border. Transport infrastructure needs to be addressed to encourage this, not to erect artificial political boundaries to investment in e.g. the doubling of the rail line on English land between Wrexham and Chester or in delaying improvements to the dangerous junctions at Ewloe. By taking this approach the Welsh Government also cuts off the whole of Wales along the North Coast.

The previous spatial plan understood and acknowledged these challenges; current thinking has resulted in an inward, Southward facing approach that does not treat other areas fairly, or offer equivalent opportunity and benefit to the North East.

Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?

The 10 proposed areas are based on a South Wales perspective of how Wales works. In the North there is a clear divide between the North East and North West, and closer links between the current Wrexham and Montgomeryshire than the plan acknowledges. These current counties and Flintshire operate with an essentially porous border.

Welsh Government appears not to understand the level of cross-border commuting that creates wealth that is brought back to potentially spend in Wales. The level of commuting to the Northern hubs of Liverpool, Manchester and Warrington is increasing; towns like Wrexham and Mold have increasing proportions of residents who work across the border. Transport infrastructure needs to be addressed to encourage this, not to erect artificial political boundaries to investment in e.g. the doubling of the rail line on English land between Wrexham and Chester or in delaying improvements to the dangerous junctions at Ewloe. By taking this approach the Welsh Government also cuts off the whole of Wales along the North Coast.

The previous spatial plan understood and acknowledged these challenges; current thinking has resulted in an inward, Southward facing approach that does not treat other areas fairly, or offer equivalent opportunity and benefit to the North East.

Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?

YES. See 1 d for detail

There are compelling arguments for reform of the Welsh Assembly to increase its capacity and capability. I suggest having two constituency AMs per MP constituency, plus an additional 40 regionally elected AMs. If, for example the 10 local authority model were to be adopted, then the regional representation could be from those areas. That would give a total of 120 AMs.

If the Welsh Assembly and the Government then undertook the devolved responsibility for policy for public services within Wales, the current layer of local authority policy making could be dispensed with. This would reduce the disparity of service quality and delivery between the areas of Wales.

The Local Authorities could be redesigned as the delivery and quality mechanism for local public services, removing the need for the current (and in my view unaccountable) regional advisory bodies and delivery agencies.

The current arrangement for local authority, town councils and community councils could be remodelled to provide a democratic route to informing and advising the AMs, and providing governance arrangements and accountability lines for local service delivery.



Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?

See 1d and 2d for proposals to reform and simplify public sector accountability and delivery.

## Page 4: Chapter 5

Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?

No. The options for processes of transition will require considerable energy. It would be better to invest that energy in planning properly for a single transition.

Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?

No.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

It would be better to invest that energy in planning properly for a single transition.  
My suggestions include change to the existing county of Powys. Therefore the restructure of Powys and merger(s) with other bodies needs to be considered if there are to approximately 10 local authorities.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Yes. There needs to be a clear inter-relationship between the electoral cycle of Welsh Government and (any) lower tiers of governance, to ensure that the inertia created by elections is minimised.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

There are some which need to be untied from the electoral cycle. Change in housing, education and health services takes far longer than 5 years to design implement and review.

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

The natural cycle of the services that remain under the control of each layer of democratic accountability. Change in housing, education and health services takes far longer than 5 years to design implement and review.

## Page 5: Chapter 6

**Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?**

Welsh Government could require local authorities to operate with the full council as the decision-making body, and not to delegate significant policy and funding decisions to an executive body.

**Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?**

No comment about councillor personal remuneration, except that a comparative range within the civil service pay scheme would be a useful benchmark.  
Local councillors require administrative support to work effectively. It would be appropriate for the local authority to act as employer and to host administrative support staff, but not to provide support for campaign or other representative activities.

**Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?**

Please refer to my previous submissions about full and integrated reform of the local government arrangements in Wales.

**Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?**

Please refer to my previous submissions about full and integrated reform of the local government arrangements in Wales.

**Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?**

Please refer to my previous submissions about full and integrated reform of the local government arrangements in Wales.

**Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?**

Please refer to my previous submissions about full and integrated reform of the local government arrangements in Wales. In particular, to re-purposing local authorities as delivery agencies for policy determined at an all Wales level.

**Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?**

Please refer to my previous submissions about full and integrated reform of the local government arrangements in Wales. All advice and guidance should be from a common source and is therefore best operated at Welsh Government level.

Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?

Please refer to my previous submissions about full and integrated reform of the local government arrangements in Wales. Structural change has to address all levels of Welsh and local Welsh Governance at the same time. It is not effective or appropriate to address levels individually.

Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?

Stop work on change until full and integrated reform of the local government arrangements in Wales is addressed. Structural change has to address all levels of Welsh and local Welsh Governance at the same time. It is not effective or appropriate to address levels individually.

## Page 6: Impact assessments

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

There should be none. Language is a separate issue covered by separate legislation.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

There should be none. Language is a separate issue covered by separate legislation.

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

There should be none. Language is a separate issue covered by separate legislation.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Security and consistency of funding to fulfil statutory duties effectively and to improve services.

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Security and consistency of funding to fulfil statutory duties effectively and to improve services.

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

Security and consistency of funding to fulfil statutory duties effectively and to improve services.

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Security and consistency of funding to fulfil statutory duties effectively and to improve services.

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

I do not consider the published proposals to be a fit solution for local government reorganisation in their current form. The consultation only offers three variations of achieving a single end within one tier of Welsh Governance. The proposals are not costed to illustrate the proposed impact of change or the potential benefits that could be realised. This lack of information significantly reduces the credibility of the proposal.

It is not possible to amend one level of governance without addressing the impact on the other levels. A full review of all levels of governance and their inter-relationship is required.

My contribution in this response is to set out proposals for strengthening the role of the Welsh Assembly and Welsh Government. It is arguable that Wales, in comparison with (nation and regional) administrative areas of similar population, is overburdened with tiers of governance that duplicate policy best devised centrally, to the detriment of service delivery that is best managed more locally. The consultation proposals make no improvement to the line of responsibility and accountability of the Welsh Governance Structure. My proposal is for a radical alternative that clarifies the loci of responsibility for policy and delivery, and removes the confusing and ineffective mess of arrangements between Welsh Government, local government, community representation and a host of regional bodies currently in place. Further consideration of the future role of the Welsh commissioners is also required, so that democracy is not overwhelmed by the bureaucracy created between official bodies, without direct and democratic oversight.

## Page 7: Submit your response

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Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) -

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[REDACTED]

Q37. Address

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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Keep my response anonymous

# Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People

## Page 2: Chapter 3

Q1. 1a. What practical steps could the Welsh Government take to make current regional working easier and more effective, for example in relation to education consortia, social services and the City Regions and City and Growth Deals?

When working for an international private company, Wales was regarded as a region like the Midlands and branch offices were set up with managers reporting directly to the overseeing directors. The company had a strategic clear aim to achieve their set goals. Unfortunately, the Welsh government does not appear to have a clear aim of what Wales is about as it is having to deal with so many issues at the same time e.g. economic disparity, ecological impact, and conforming to legislation and regulations, it's not easy.

Q2. 1b. What are your views on the common elements to the process of mergers we outline in this section?

Laughable, as I once sat on the steering committee when the Glamorgan Council was split into Neath Port Talbot and Swansea because it was a "good idea" and now a merger is on the agenda i.e. putting them back together.

Q3. 1c. What are your views on the options for creating fewer, larger authorities which we have set out?

If the principle of making larger authorities is to cut the "management & admin" staff then it's going to be hard on some families but if that makes for more efficient councils with less waste of time and resources then that would be a Godsend.

Q4. 1d. Are there other options for creating fewer, larger authorities we should consider?

Have just one authority! Or have the Capital City Council Authority and then 3 other Councils, e.g one for the North, one in for the middle and one for the South.

Q5. 1e. Do you have evidence on costs, benefits and savings of each option which can inform decision-making? If so, please provide details.

No I don't. statswales.gov.uk states that "Employment in the public and private sectors by Welsh local authority and status" - "1,430,500 are employed in Wales and 27.4 are in the Public Sector" so any cuts in the Public Sector are going to be felt.

## Page 3: Chapter 4

Q6. 2a. Do you agree that providing clarity on the future footprint of local government is important?

Yes

**Q7. 2b. Do you agree with the factors we have identified to inform our thinking? Would you change or add any?**

It seems to be based on the Health Boards alignments. I would want to know how the Fire Service is doing with its 3 regions and the Police with having 4 regions how well they are coping.

**Q8. 2c. What are your views on the new areas suggested in this section?**

As the consultation states "Community councils are an integral part of local government. They are often closest to people and local communities, and therefore uniquely placed to see, and provide, services which can have a significant impact on people's lives. Where community councils exist in an area, local authorities and other public services, will look to them to be a voice of communities."  
You didn't show the statistics on these so don't know how many will be in the new areas - these are going to matter if county councils are being reduced.

**Q9. 2d. Do you have alternative suggestions and, if so, what is the evidence to support these as an alternative?**

Just working on the numbers of population and households and Council Tax bandings given in the Tables  
Group (1) Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham, Pop.530708 Households 302449 and Band D 5789  
Group (2) Powys, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea Group Pop. 580849 Households 333159 and Band D 5539  
Group (3) Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend, Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil Group Pop. 532541 Households 305698 and Band D 6722  
Group (4) Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Torfaen, Newport, Monmouthshire, Cardiff Pop 688814 Households 400318 and Band D 7004

This seems to be more equitable with the Capital City having the greater proportion of population households and income.

**Q10. 2e. In the context of these proposals, are there other ways we should simplify and streamline joint working arrangements at regional level and among public bodies within the new authority areas? If so, what are they?**

How well is the fire service coping and the police service doing, if they can manage with 3 and 4 regions why can't councils manage especially if the community councils were better utilized.

## **Page 4: Chapter 5**

**Q11. 3a. Do you agree with the proposed process of transition: namely establishing Transition Committees and ensuring elections to Shadow Authorities can be held ahead of vesting day for the new authorities?**

There has to be a transition phase.

**Q12. 3b. Do you agree that, if option 1 were pursued, we should set a date by which voluntary merger proposals should come forward in each electoral cycle?**

I think the idea of voluntary merger whilst in principle seems very democratic I don't think it is going to help matters it is just going to make a hash of it and what happens if Wrexham wants to team up with Monmouthshire.

Q13. 3c. Do you have any other thoughts on the proposed process?

Plenty of chaos, and lots of time and money being spent to facilitate the process and then inevitably councils will want to re-brand themselves with new logos which is more waste of money. It is a cost cutting exercise rather than making Wales a strong and proud nation because it is just shrinking and combining councils instead of creating something new and innovative.

Q14. 4. The consultation suggests holding any local government elections in June 2021. Are there any reasons why June 2021 would not be a suitable date? If so, please suggest an alternative date with the reasons why that would be more suitable.

Not a lot of time to implement the changes unless talks are already further forward with all Councils.

Q15. 5. The Welsh Government recognises that there are some plans or assessments, for example the preparation of assessments of wellbeing by Public Service Boards, which are linked to electoral cycles. We will make provision to make sure these tie into any new electoral cycles going forward. Are there any other plans or matters which might be tied into the electoral cycle which we need to consider?

With a reduced number of Councillors to be elected and the cost of elections why not align with National Election in 2022

Q16. 6. What are your views on the approach which should be taken to determining the parameters of electoral reviews?

I agree with what was set out in the consultation document 5:16 to 5:18

## Page 5: Chapter 6

Q17. 7a. How can councils make more effective use of their elected members knowledge of, and connections in, their communities?

This is a very strange question as I thought that the reason we elected Councillors was so that they could bring their knowledge of, and connections in, their communities to the debating chamber to inform local action plans.

Q18. 7b. How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?

As local Councillors are elected for a term of office and are often there because they belong to a political party perhaps Councillors should be elected on personal attributes of honesty and integrity with a commitment to represent their community's interests but mindful of their place in the wider context of Wales and the World.



**Q19. 8a. Are there other powers which local government should have? If so, what are they?**

Another strange question as I thought local government was responsible for collecting and distributing money to provide services to the community under current legislation and within the confines of all laws.

To ensure that everyone is able to contribute to the general well being of their community e.g if they are not currently employed then they should perform community tasks providing they are fit and able even if it is only for 1 hour a week picking up litter.

**Q20. 8b. Are there other freedoms or flexibilities which local government should have? If so, what are they?**

The power to remove from the electoral roll persons who cannot be bothered to vote.

**Q21. 9a. Which areas offer the greatest scope for shared transactional services?**

Transport, communication, energy production, reduction of waste, environmental enhancement and sustainability.

**Q22. 9b. How might such arrangements be best developed?**

By thinking of Wales as one whole area.

**Q23. 10a. In ensuring we deliver a consistent approach across Wales, where consistency is important, how do you think the advice and support on each of these matters could be best provided?**

Shared ideas on best practice with other nations or organisations with similar challenges, evidence based scientific research, education on what it means to be a responsible citizen of Wales.

**Q24. 10b. Are there any other challenges or opportunities from structural change or providing additional powers and flexibilities that have not been identified above? If these areas require support, what form should this support take?**

We must take care of our environment and we must take a longer term view and not sacrifice our environment for short term gains we must look after our natural resources that includes our population.

**Q25. 10c. Which of the issues identified above or in your response should be prioritised for early resolution?**

Reduction of waste, we need to change our mindset from being consumers to caretakers.

Q26. 11a. What effects do you think there would be?

The re-organisation of the councils does not seem to have anything to do with providing better opportunities for people to use Welsh.

Q27. 11b. How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

statswales.gov.wales says "Annual Population Survey estimates of persons aged 3 and over who say they can speak Welsh by local authority" "Population 3,080,600 Number of people who can't speak Welsh 2,108,700 and those than say they can 870,400". Faced with these statistics I haven't got a clue, perhaps the question should be, do you have to speak Welsh to call yourself Welsh or is being Welsh simply a love and respect for Wales as a country with its rich and diverse landscape and people.

Q28. 12. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy within this consultation could be formulated or changed (if required) so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

We already have a law that says that "in the course of public business and the administration of justice, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Welsh and English languages are to be treated on the basis of equality." Welsh Language Act 1993.

Q29. 13a. Are there any positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

It says it is going to continue to monitor the situation, I suppose as the provision of children's services depends on budgets it remains to be seen if there will be sufficient money available.

Q30. 13b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive effects or reduce any possible adverse effects?

At the end of the day when the councils are up and running there are still going to be budget restraints.

Q31. 14a. Are there any other positive or adverse effects not identified in the assessment?

It seems to be generally in favor of the reform and doesn't see any adverse effects.

Q32. 14b. Could the proposals be reformulated so as to increase the positive or reduce any possible adverse effects?

Can't think of anything

Q33. 15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation.

*No Response*

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