

CTC 30

Ymgynghoriad ar rôl, llywodraethiant ac atebolrwydd y sector cynghorau tref a chymuned

Consultation on the role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector

Ymateb gan: Cyngor Cymuned Llanboidy

Response from: Llanboidy Community Council

Gosen
Llanboidy
Whitland
Carmarthenshire SA34 0EJ

Local Government and Housing Committee
Senedd Cymru

18th October 2024

Launch of consultation – role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector

Further to your invitation to participate in the above consultation, I would be grateful if you would consider the following observations.

The role of community councils has changed in recent years, with more responsibilities and more legislation being imposed on local volunteer councillors.

The community council I am a member of is in a rural location with a population of just over 1,000 people, most of whom live outside the village. It has 10 councillors, some of whom are retired and some are in employment, and one part-time clerk. As there are only just over 800 electors in the parish the precept is small and does not enable a small rural community council to actually provide the services the community needs and wants, therefore taking up yet more volunteer time.

As councillors we all want to make sure our area is a good place to live in. Unfortunately, the extra work, responsibilities and training required are putting a burden on people who already have other jobs and/or responsibilities and who are not paid for this work.

It is possible that people will not want to remain as community councillors or stand for election in the future.

The high number of clerks leaving their role is also a sign that they are not happy with the workload and responsibility it now entails. Clerks are also Responsible Finance Officers and their duties are onerous and pay levels do not reflect the level of responsibility expected. Our clerk is only paid for 8 hours per week and we can't afford to pay more.

County councils have procedures in place and trained staff who can deal with such things as human resources, health & safety and financial regulations. They are in a much better position and more qualified to undertake some of the work being allocated to community councils.

The underfunding of county councils is of great concern as services and amenities are being cut as a result.

With regard to digital and new technology, this is still unreliable in many rural areas and not used by a large number of elderly people. It is therefore not inclusive and not suitable for everyone.

Susan Evans
Chairwoman
Llanboidy Community Council