# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Consultation: Draft Directions to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales** |
| **DATE** | **17 August 2015** |
| **BY** | **Leighton Andrews AM, Minister for Public Services** |

Today I am commencing a consultation on Draft Directions to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales. The Directions will be issued following Royal Assent of the Local Government (Wales) Bill 2015, if that is the will of the Assembly, and will initiate the Commission’s reviews of electoral arrangements for the proposed local authority areas in Wales which I announced in June. The two options under consideration for North Wales are included in the Draft Directions.

<http://gov.wales/consultations/localgovernment/directions-local-democracy-boundary-commission-wales/?lang=en>

These Draft Directions set out the matters which the Commission must consider when reviewing warding arrangements within the proposed local authority areas. The accompanying consultation document asks for stakeholder views on these matters, including the number of elected members per authority, area characteristics that should influence warding arrangements and the naming of wards.

As I announced in June, I recognise that newly merged authorities will cover larger populations and geographical areas. I have, therefore, in these Draft Directions, removed the cap of the maximum of 75 councillors per local authority and specified that the number of councillors should be no smaller than the number produced by a councillor to elector ratio of one councillor to every 4,000 electors. The Commission will be tasked with proposing the most appropriate number of councillors per local authority area, taking into account the particular characteristics of that area, such as population density, geography and deprivation.

Powys County Council is not included in the review. The intention is, however, to implement the recommendations for the most recent electoral review of Powys in time for the local authority elections in 2017. The review proposed a reduction in the number of councillors from 73 to 64.

I would welcome thoughts from across Wales in response to the consultation and am keen to hear from a wide range of stakeholders.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Assembly returns I would be happy to do so.