

24 January 2011

Programme: Localism Bill Committee

The provisional^[i] programme of witnesses for the Localism Bill Committee has been agreed by its Programming Sub-Committee^[ii]. The Committee will hear oral evidence on Tuesday 25 and Thursday 27 January and then consider the Bill every Tuesday and Thursday from that point concluding on Thursday 10 March (apart from the week beginning 21 February when the House will not be sitting).

The meetings are open to the public.

Tuesday 25 January 09.30am and 4.00pm in the Boothroyd Room Portcullis House	
c09.30am until no later than 11.00am	Local Government Association, Localis, Centre for Local Economic Strategies and Local Government Information Unit
c11.00am until no later than 11.30am	Civic Voice, Cllr Keith Barrow of Shropshire Council, Cllr Mike Jones of Cheshire West and Chester Council
c11.30am until no later than 12.15am	SOLACE, New Local Government Network, Professor George Jones, Emeritus Professor of Government at the London School of Economics, Professor John Stewart, Emeritus Professor of Local Government and Administration at the University Birmingham
c12.15pm until no later than 1.00pm	Greater London Authority, London Councils and Unison
4.00pm until no later than 5.00pm	Chartered Institute for Housing, Shelter, National Housing Federation, Brent Private Tenants Rights Group and Tenant Services Authority
c5.00pm until no later than 6.00pm	Barratt Developments, Redrow, Taylor Wimpey and Emerson Group
c6.00pm until no later than 7.00pm	Homebuilders Federation, British Property Federation, National Federation of ALMOs and British Land
Thursday 27 January 9.30am and 12.30pm in the Boothroyd Room Portcullis House	
9.30am until no later than 10.25am	Confederation of British Industry, British Chambers of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses
12.30pm until no later than 1.15pm	Campaign to Protect Rural England, The Country Land and Business Association, Action with Communities in Rural England, Simon Marsh representing both the RSPB and Wildlife and Countryside Link.
c1.15pm until no later than 2pm	Town and Country Planning Association, Planning Officers Society and Royal Town Planning Institute and Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
c2pm until no later than 2.45pm	National Association of Local Councils, National Council for Voluntary Organisations, Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations, National

	Association for Voluntary and Community Action and Open Spaces Society
c2.45pm until no later than 3.30pm	Department for Communities and Local Government

Line by line scrutiny of the Bill (all in Committee Room 12, Palace of Westminster):

Tuesday 01 February 10.30am and 4.00pm
Thursday 03 February 9.30am and 1.00pm
Tuesday 08 February 10.30am and 4.00pm
Thursday 10 February 9.30am and 1.00pm
Tuesday 15 February 10.30am and 4.00pm
Thursday 17 February 9.30am and 1.00pm
Tuesday 01 March 10.30am and 4.00pm
Thursday 03 March 9.30am and 1.00pm
Tuesday 08 March 10.30am and 4.00pm
Thursday 10 March 9.30am and 1.00pm

The Committee must complete consideration of the Bill no later than 4pm on Thursday 10 March.

Key areas of the Bill

- Provisions in relation to local government, including a general power of competence for local authorities and relevant Fire and Rescue Authorities, changes to local authority governance arrangements including provision for directly elected mayors, the abolition of the Standards Board regime, and requirements for local authorities to set senior pay policy statements.
- Provisions relating to community empowerment, including giving people, councillors and councils the power to instigate local referendums on any local issue and a power to approve or veto in a referendum a council tax increase deemed to be excessive, and enabling voluntary and community bodies and others to express an interest in running a local authority service, and local community groups to bid or buy buildings or land which are listed as assets of community value,
- Reform of the planning system; including provisions to abolish regional strategies, provide for neighbourhood development orders and plans, make pre-application consultation compulsory, and make changes to planning enforcement.
- Provisions to reform social housing including measures to offer flexible tenancies for new social tenants; create a new system of council housing finance; provide assistance for tenants to exchange their social rented property; and transfer the functions of the Tenant Service Authority to the Homes and Communities Agency.
- Abolition of the Home Information Pack.
- Provisions for London that provide the Mayor with additional powers relating to housing and regeneration.
- Abolition of the London Development Agency.

The Bill can be viewed on the Parliamentary website:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/126/11126.i-v.html>

The Explanatory Notes on the Bill are also available:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/126/en/2011126en.htm>

Further details on giving evidence to a public bill committee are available here:

<http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons/Scrutiny/giving-evidence-to-PBC.pdf>

Contact details

The Scrutiny Unit can help with any queries about oral evidence. Contact details are as follows:

Telephone: 020 7219 8387

Email: scrutiny@parliament.uk

^[i] This programme is provisional and is subject to formal agreement at the start of the first meeting of the Localism Bill Committee.

^[ii] The Programming Sub-Committee consists of the Chair and seven members of the Public Bill Committee. It meets to agree the programme of sittings of the Bill Committee.