

P-05-726 Give rate relief to Local Authorities for Leisure and Cultural facilities.

This petition was submitted by Ryan Dansie, which collected 17 signatures.

Text of the Petition

Due to ever increasing budget pressures, Local Authorities in Wales are looking at creating charitable trusts to take over the running of public services like libraries and leisure centres.

The main benefit of such an arrangement is the rate relief which a charity would be entitled to. This amounts to moving money from the central pot of non-domestic rates and into the authorities budget. No public money is saved overall, although there are overheads involved in setting up such arrangements which can involve payments being made to specialist private consultants.

Pembrokeshire County Council is about to begin the process of creating a charity to take over the running of all leisure and cultural services in the whole county. It's almost inevitable that other local authorities in Wales will follow suit in order to deal with their own impossible budget pressures.

I call on the Welsh government to change the rules of rate relief so that all Local Authority run leisure and cultural facilities are covered on an equivalent basis to that which a charity would be entitled to. If this is not done then the end result of losing this business rate income will still happen through the creation of these charitable trusts, but we will be unnecessarily losing control of our public services in the process.

Please take away this unnecessary incentive to outsource our important leisure and cultural services.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales