



Japan Local Government Centre, London

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION SINCE 1997

1997

Local Government (Contracts) Act

Confirmed the power of councils to arrange for the private provision of services and to enter into contracts

Local Government Finance (Supplementary Credit Approvals) Act

Enabled local authorities to release capital receipts

1998

Crime and Disorder Act

Established a statutory role for local authorities in community safety

Audit Commission Act

Reformed Audit Commission with regard to inspection of local authorities and other local public bodies

Government of Scotland Act

Created a devolved Scottish Parliament, including overall responsibility for local government

Government of Wales Act

Created a devolved Welsh Assembly, including the powers of the Secretary of State for Wales over local government

Human Rights Act

Ratified the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law, affecting all public bodies

Public Interest Disclosure Act

Protected whistleblowers against loss of employment from reporting corruption

Regional Development Agencies Act

Established eight regional bodies for strategic and economic planning in England

School Standards and Framework Act

Established education action zones; reformed opt-out schools; allowed local ballots on the future of local selective schools; allowed ministers to take over failing LEAs and individual schools

1999

Greater London Authority Act

Established the Greater London Authority, defining the powers of the office of mayor of London and a 25-member London Assembly elected under proportional representation

Local Government Act

Abolished general capping and introduced the Best Value regime

2000

Freedom of Information Act

Provided a statutory right of access to information and a duty for local authorities to publish information

Learning and Skills Act

Established local learning and skills councils with local authority representation; abolished local training and enterprise councils; extended OFSTED inspection to further education and sixth form colleges

Local Government Act

Required local authorities to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their areas; introduced the duty to publish community strategies; introduced new standards arrangements; abolished the surcharge; introduced new executive management arrangements, including the option of having a directly elected mayor if approved by a local referendum

2001

Health and Social Care Act

Required local authorities to consider the activities of local health service provision in their overview and scrutiny function

2002

National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act

Abolished community health councils

2003

Local Government Act

Allowed prudential borrowing by local authorities; created business improvement districts; repealed the Section 28 ban on educating on homosexuality issues in schools

Regional Assemblies (Preparations) Act

Empowered the Secretary of State to order referendums in each region on the question of whether or not to have an elected regional assembly for that region; allowed the Boundary Committee for England to enact reviews of local councils in order to recommend unitary patterns for any region assenting to an assembly

2004

Children Act

Integrated children's services within local authorities and established children's trusts

Housing Act

Reformed the powers of local housing authorities, particularly with regard to private rented accommodation and housing standards, including long-term empty properties

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act

Simplified the planning system; increased community involvement; sped up inquiries into major developments; removed Crown immunity from the planning process; regionalised spatial planning

2005

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act

Enabled local authorities to improve the quality of the local environment by providing new powers for them to deal with a range of anti-social behavioural issues such as fly-tipping, graffiti and litter

Education Act

Reformed school funding arrangements by allowing for three-year budgets and guaranteed levels of funding from central government to schools

2006

Council Tax (New Valuation Lists for England) Act

Suspended the requirement for the revaluation of domestic properties, in England, for council tax purposes in April 2007

Education and Inspections Act

Enabled schools to apply for trust status, defined the strategic role of local education authorities and strengthened the admissions code to ensure fair access to schools

Electoral Administration Act

Lowered age of candidacy for public office to 18 and introduced requirement for local authorities to promote electoral registration and voting

London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act

Established the Olympic Delivery Authority to manage the infrastructure of the 2012 Games and provided the Mayor of London additional planning powers in relation to the staging of the games

Police and Justice Act

Reformed powers and structures of local authority Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships, conferred extra powers on local authority trading standards officers and extended local authority powers over anti-social behaviour

2007

Concessionary Bus Travel Act

Extended local authority provided free bus travel nationwide

Greater London Authority Act

Extended Mayor of London's powers and appointments in housing, policing, transport, waste and planning

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act

Allowed the Secretary of State to approve bids for unitary status and provides for councils to move to whole council elections, adopt new leadership models, enact by-laws, or create parish councils (including Greater London), all by resolution of the council. Allowed for establishment of joint waste authorities and for local authority standards committees to hear cases regarding members and officers. Also abolished NHS patients' forums and introduced local authority involvement networks for health services, as well as giving the Welsh Assembly full competence over local government structure in Wales.

Sustainable Communities Act

Required the Secretary of State to publish a plan for the promotion of sustainable communities and for each council to publish their own plan on how they intend to spend public funds

2008

Children and Young Persons Act

Reformed the statutory framework for the care system, to ensure that children and young people receive high quality care and support and to drive improvements in the delivery of services focused on the needs of the child

Housing and Regeneration Act

Abolished English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation and replaced with the Homes and Communities Agency and the Office for Tenants and Landlords

Planning Act

Streamlined planning decisions by avoiding public inquiries concerning major infrastructure of national importance through a new Infrastructure Planning Commission, with a new Community Infrastructure Levy to fund local facilities following development and replaced the planning inspector's appeals role with a panel of local councillors

Planning and Energy Act

Enables local planning authorities to set requirements for renewable and low-carbon energy generation and energy efficiency in local plans

Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act

Established the Local Better Regulation Office and improved the co-ordination of regulatory enforcement by local authorities