

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (RELIGIOUS ETC. OBSERVANCES) ACT 2015

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

9. [Section 1](#) inserts a new section 138A (prayers and other observances) and a new section 138B (involvement with religious events and events connected with a belief) in Part 7 of the Local Government Act 1972.
10. New section 138A provides that the business at a meeting of a local authority in England may include time for prayers or other religious observance or observance connected with a religious or philosophical belief. These provisions are applied by *subsection (2)* of the new section 138A to meetings of a committee of a local authority in England, a joint committee of two or more such authorities, or a sub-committee of such a committee or joint committee. *Subsection (3)* provides that the provisions of this new section 138A do not limit other powers.
11. *Subsection (1)* of the new section 138B provides that a local authority in England may support or facilitate, or make arrangements to be represented at, a religious event, an event with a religious element, an event connected with a religious or philosophical belief or an event with an element connected with such a belief. *Subsection (3)* provides that any powers of a local authority in England (other than those under subsection (1)) may be exercised for the purpose of supporting or facilitating any of the events mentioned in subsection (1) or for purposes that include that purpose.
12. [Section 2](#) inserts a new section 138C (application of sections 138A and 138B to other authorities) in Part 7 of the Local Government Act 1972. The new section 138C provides that certain public bodies, subject (in some cases) to certain limitations, are to be treated as a local authority for the purposes of sections 138A and 138B. Accordingly, at meetings of these bodies the business may include time for prayers or other religious observance or observance connected with a religious or philosophical belief. Similarly, these bodies may support or facilitate, or make arrangements to be represented at a religious event, an event with a religious element, an event connected with a religious or philosophical belief or an event with an element connected with such a belief.