

Public Accounts Committee

Meeting Venue: **Committee Room 3 – Senedd**

Meeting date: **Tuesday, 12 May 2015**

Meeting time: **09.01 – 10.59**

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Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Concise Minutes:

Assembly Members:

Darren Millar AM (Chair)
Jocelyn Davies AM
William Graham AM
Mike Hedges AM
Sandy Mewies AM
Julie Morgan AM
Jenny Rathbone AM
Aled Roberts AM

Witnesses:

Sandra Alexander, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Jennie Bibbings, Shelter Cymru
Sioned Hughes, Community Housing Cymru
Lindsey Kearton, Citizens Advice Cymru
Paul Langley, Community Housing Cymru
Elle McNeil, Citizens Advice Cymru
Helen Northmore, Chartered Institute of Housing
John Puzey, Shelter Cymru

Committee Staff:

Michael Kay (Clerk)
Claire Griffiths (Deputy Clerk)
Hannah Johnson (Researcher)
Alan Morris (Wales Audit Office)

TRANSCRIPT

View the [meeting transcript](#).

1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

1.1 The Chair welcome the Members to the meeting.

1.2 There were no apologies.

1.3 Sandy Mewies declared an interest as a member of the Assembly Commission (item 2.4) and Julie Morgan advised that her daughter works for Shelter Cymru (Item 4).

2 Papers to note

2.1 The papers were noted. The Committee agreed that the Chair should reply to the Assembly Commission (Item 2.4) seeking further clarification on the 1% target underspend of the operational budget.

2.1 Covering Teachers' Absence: Letter from the Auditor General for Wales on Covering Teachers' Absence (30 April 2015)

2.2 Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment: Letter from James Price Welsh Government (29 April 2015)

2.3 Young people not in education, employment or training: Letter from William Graham AM, Chair of Enterprise and Business Committee (1 May 2015)

2.4 Scrutiny of Commissioners' Accounts 2013–14: Letter from David Melding AM, Deputy Presiding Officer (7 May 2015)

3 Welfare Reform: Evidence Session 1

3.1 The Committee took evidence from Sioned Hughes, Director of Policy and Regeneration, and Paul Langley, Senior Adviser at Community Housing Cymru; Helen Northmore, Director, Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru (CIHC) and Sandra Alexander, Housing Income Manager, Vale of Glamorgan Council on its inquiry into welfare reform.

3.2 Sioned Hughes agreed to send further information on:

- the different approach taken in England to appeals

- the number of homes in the rented sector that have been sublet in Wales
- the number of people with disabilities affected by the spare room subsidy
- evidence of how housing associations have still not updated their transfer policies to ensure that arrears relating to welfare reform are not a barrier to downsizing.

4 Welfare Reform: Evidence Session 2

4.1 The Committee took evidence from John Puzey, Director and Jennie Bibbings, Policy and Research Manager, Shelter Cymru; and Lindsey Kearton, Policy Officer and Elle McNeil, Policy Officer, Citizens Advice Cymru on its inquiry into welfare reform.

5 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:

5.1 The motion was agreed.

6 Welfare Reform: Consideration of evidence received

6.1 The Committee considered the evidence received.

7 Financial Resilience of Councils in Wales: Briefing from the Wales Audit Office

7.1 Alan Morris highlighted the letter from the Auditor General for Wales regarding the Financial Resilience of Councils in Wales.

7.2 Members noted that a draft letter from the Chair to June Milligan, Director General, Local Government and Communities, Welsh Government would be circulated for their comments and agreement later today.