

# Agenda – Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 4 – Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: 13 June 2018

Meeting time: 09.00

For further information contact:

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At its meeting on 7 June, the Committee agreed a motion under Standing Order 17.42 (vi) to resolve to exclude the public from items 1 and 2 of today's meeting.

Pre-meeting (09.00 – 09.15)

## 1 Renting Homes (Fees etc.) (Wales) Bill – technical briefing

(09.15 – 09.45)

Emma Williams, Deputy Director, Housing Policy Division, Welsh Government

Helen Kellaway, Lawyer, Welsh Government

Huw Charles, Bill Manager, Welsh Government

## 2 Renting Homes (Fees etc.) (Wales) Bill – consideration of scope and approach

(09.45 – 10.15)

Emma Williams, Deputy Director, Housing Policy Division, Welsh Government

Helen Kellaway, Lawyer, Welsh Government

Huw Charles, Bill Manager, Welsh Government

Break (10.15 – 10.30)

## 3 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

## 4 Inquiry into Public Services Boards: evidence session 4

(10.30 – 11.30)

(Pages 1 – 22)



Rob Smith, Area Director – East, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Sally Baxter, Acting Director of Strategy, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Sarah Jennings, Director of Partnerships and Corporate Services, Hywel Dda University Health Board

Sarah Aitken, Director of Public Health, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

## **5 Inquiry into Public Services Boards: evidence session 5**

(11.30 – 12.30)

(Pages 23 – 31)

Judith Stone Assistant Director of Policy, Partnerships and Engagement, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA)

David Cook, Policy Officer, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA)

John Gallanders, Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham

Sue Leonard, Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services

Sheila Hendrickson–Brown, Cardiff Third Sector Council

## **6 Paper(s) to note**

(Page 32)

### **6.1 Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport in relation to pregnancy, maternity and work**

(Pages 33 – 34)

### **6.2 Letter from the Leader of the House and Chief Whip and the Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care in relation to pregnancy, maternity and work**

(Pages 35 – 37)

### **6.3 Inquiry into rough sleeping in Wales – Welsh Government response to the report**

(Pages 38 – 54)

## **7 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 (vi) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting**

**8 Inquiry into Public Services Boards: consideration of the evidence received under items 4 and 5**

(12.30 – 12.40)

Document is Restricted

## **Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee: Inquiry into Public Services Boards**

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board provides this response to the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee to address the three key issues the Committee have identified in the Terms of Reference for the inquiry into Public Service Boards (PSBs):

- To gain an understanding of the structure and functions of the PSBs;
- To explore the effectiveness of PSBs, resourcing and capacity; and
- To gather evidence of issues or barriers that may impact on effective working, and examples of good practice and innovation.

### **1. Structure and functions of Public Services Boards**

1.1 Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCU HB) is a partner in the four PSBs in North Wales:

- Wrexham PSB;
- Flintshire PSB;
- Conwy and Denbighshire PSB; and
- Gwynedd and Ynys Môn PSB.

1.2 BCU HB is supportive of the decision that was taken in the establishment of the PSBs merger of Conwy & Denbighshire, and Gwynedd & Ynys Môn PSBs. The PSBs in those Local Authorities are now aligned to the boundaries of the BCU HB Area Management Teams and the West and Central Areas. To support six PSBs would have been more challenging in terms of active involvement of senior officers within the Health Board and equally to other partners working across multiple Local Authority boundaries.

1.3 The Health Board is represented on all three PSBs by the relevant Area Director. A nominated Executive Director has also attended each of the PSBs. However, the Chief Executive of BCU HB has now written to confirm his intention to attend each PSB, to add his personal contribution.

1.4 In addition, the Health Board has nominated a lead officer in each Area to work with the local PSB Officers Group. The Assistant Director - Health Strategy works closely with the regional PSB Officers Group, together with the Associate Director of Public Health.

1.5 The membership of each PSB does vary across the BCU HB area. In addition to the four statutory members and the statutory invited participants, some of the PSBs in North Wales have invited additional representation. Public Health Wales NHS Trust is represented on all four PSBs. Additional members invited to PSBs according to local determination include the Colleges and Universities, Snowdonia National Park, Housing and Town and Community Council

representatives.

- 1.6 All four PSBs have a breadth of public service partners in attendance, as well as third sector organisations. This has further strengthened existing partnership working arrangements across the Health Board and opened up opportunities for collaboration with extended PSB partners.
- 1.7 A decision was taken by three of the four PSBs, on their establishment, that BCU HB would be asked to chair the Boards. This was to ensure ownership of the PSB within the Health Board and also ensure that the PSBs were not seen as performing a similar role to Local Authority Committees. It was also to align with the new Area based structure in BCU HB and to demonstrate support to this more localised arrangement.
- 1.8 All PSBs hold their meetings in public as part of their commitment to openness, transparency and local accountability.
- 1.9 Each PSB meets approximately once per quarter (sometimes more frequently) and the location of meetings varies in each PSB area.
- 1.10 Within BCU HB, the Strategy, Partnerships and Population Health Committee has been identified as responsible for receiving regular performance and assurance reports from the PSBs. The Committee is a formal sub-committee of the Board, is chaired by an Independent Member and the Executive Lead is the Director of Strategy. This Committee is also tasked with ensuring that partnership governance arrangements reflect the principles of good governance with the appropriate level of delegated authority and support to discharge their responsibilities; and monitor sources of assurances in respect of partnership matters ensuring these are sufficiently detailed to allow for specific evaluations of effectiveness.

## **2 Effectiveness of PSBs, resourcing and capacity**

- 2.1 The secretariat for each PSB is provided by our partner Local Authorities. The Health Board has provided support to each of the PSB Teams through the allocation of Officer time to support activities e.g. consultation and engagement meetings, editorial input or data collection and analysis.
- 2.2 The funding made available to PSBs by Welsh Government has been used to commission a range of support, co-ordinated through the North Wales Public Services Officers' Network. This has facilitated a degree of consistency of approach between the PSBs. It has also enabled more effective use of the resources to address shared priorities or development needs, whilst retaining local ownership.
- 2.3 The development of the well-being assessments displayed, in the main, a level of consistency as described above, arising from collaboration and co-operation within the Officers' Network. The Well-being Plans which were developed subsequently display more variation and reflect local priorities. This feels appropriate, in that the role of the PSBs is to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area, in working to achieve the well-

being goals within the Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) (Wales) Act 2015.

- 2.4 The variation in approach and the resultant differing priority areas may present some challenge to a Health Board working to the strategic framework of the **Living Healthier, Staying Well** strategy and three year plan, yet covering six Local Authority areas. The priority areas identified within the Well-being Plans are all, however, consistent with BCU HB well-being objectives and strategic programmes.
- 2.5 The well-being assessments were approved by the Health Board in the early part of 2017. The Well-being Plans were approved by May 2018.
- 2.6 Following approval of the Well-being Plans, the PSBs are establishing delivery mechanisms to enable and drive progress against the agreed well-being objectives.
- 2.7 It will be a challenge for the Health Board to ensure that the delivery workstreams can be supported and progressed, given the requirement for the Health Board to deliver against performance, financial and quality targets required within the NHS Wales Planning Framework and our three year plan. There is an opportunity, however, to develop further the broader contribution the Health Board needs to make towards the well-being of local communities, and embed partnership and collaboration effectively.

### **3. Evidence of issues or barriers that may impact on effective working, and examples of good practice and innovation**

- 3.1 In all PSBs there is a real sense of willingness and support from PSB members to make progress against the PSB well-being objectives. All partners can see the potential collective and organisational benefit of the actions that have been agreed but organisational pressures can sometimes restrict the capacity of the Health Board, and other partners, to contribute as fully as they would like to the work.
- 3.2 The WFG Act has driven the Well-being Plans to focus on areas of collective action where the PSB members can make progress working together. However, formal feedback received from external organisations during the consultation periods have raised different expectations and the PSBs are working to ensure that the overarching Well-being Plans continue to bring “added value” rather than being operationally focused.
- 3.3 It is our sense that the PSB agenda will mature and the working relationships will mature over time. However, it remains a challenge for PSB members, as well as individual public bodies, to develop the ways of working which will contribute to the longer term national well-being goals, and make the best of the opportunity provided by the WFG Act 2015 – taking the opportunity to change the way we work together, rather than continuing with business as usual.

- 3.4 There remains a need to ensure that the scope and authority of the PSBs is clearly identified within the partnership arena. The Regional Partnership Board, required under Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, brings a range of different partner agencies together to address the requirements of that Act. The Health Board needs to contribute effectively to both sets of statutory partnership arrangements, and each partnership needs to shape its contribution to the overall well-being of the North Wales population effectively, managing work programmes to avoid duplication and maximise the impact of shared resources.



## **Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee: Inquiry into Public Services Boards**

Hywel Dda University Health Board has provided a response to the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee shaped around the three key issues the committee have identified as Terms of Reference for the inquiry into PSBs:

- To gain an understanding of the structure and functions of the Public Services Boards.
- To explore the effectiveness of PSBs, resourcing and capacity.
- To gather evidence of issues or barriers that may impact on effective working, and examples of good practice and innovation.

### **1. Structure and functions of Public Services Boards**

- 1.1 Hywel Dda University Health Board (Health Board) is a partner in three Public Services Boards (PSBs); Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire Public Services Boards. The Health Board is represented on all three PSBs by the Chair, Director of Partnerships & Corporate Services and Director of Public Health. In addition, the Health Board has nominated a lead officer, the Head of Strategic Partnership Development, to work closely with the PSB Teams.
- 1.2 Whilst the membership of each PSB does vary, all three PSBs have a breadth of public service partners in attendance, as well as third sector organisations. This has further strengthened existing partnership working arrangements and opened up opportunities for collaboration with extended PSB partners.
- 1.3 Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire PSBs have made a conscious decision to elect a representative from an organisation other than the named statutory partner, as the Chairman of the Board. This provides a clear message that all PSB partners have an equal stake in the work and business of the PSB and has been well received by member organisations. Carmarthenshire PSB Chair is Barry Liles, Principal, Coleg Sir Gar. Pembrokeshire PSB Chair is Tegryn Jones, Chief Executive, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.
- 1.4 In Ceredigion the PSB elected Cllr Elen Ap Gwyn as Chair, and in April 2018 Ceredigion PSB held its first meeting in public as part of its commitment to openness, transparency and local accountability.
- 1.5 Each PSB meets approximately once per quarter (sometimes more frequently) and the location of meetings varies in each County. Different PSB members host the meetings without charge and this is seen as a contribution in kind by PSB members.

1.6 Following approval of the Well-being Plans, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion PSBs are both establishing a series of Delivery Groups to enable and drive progress against the agreed well-being objectives. Pembrokeshire PSB is taking a slightly different approach and initially will be using the PSB membership to establish the overarching work programme before delegating tasks to sub-groups.

## 2. **Effectiveness of PSBs, resourcing and capacity**

2.1 The secretariat for each PSB is provided by our partner Local Authorities, but as highlighted previously, partners each contribute meeting venues free of charge for PSB meetings. The Health Board has provided support to the PSB Teams in each county through the allocation of Officer time to support activities e.g. consultation and engagement meetings, editorial input or data collection/analysis.

2.2 The funding made available to PSBs by Welsh Government has been used to commission the services of a Regional Co-ordinator. This has been particularly helpful in establishing a consistent approach to the development of both the Well-being Assessments and the Well-being Plans. Whilst all the documents have a local flavour and address local need, the outline structure and developmental approach was the same. This has been beneficial to the Health Board and other partners working across multiple local authority boundaries.

2.3 The Health Board has been an advocate for the development of opportunities for regional PSB collaboration in order to build on the work achieved through the Regional Co-ordinator. An inaugural workshop bringing together members from each of the three PSBs, as well as Powys PSB, is being hosted in Pembrokeshire on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018. Whilst the focus of each PSB reflects local issues there are agenda items common to each area, which means highlights the potential for more effective use of time for such discussions to be held jointly. It is hoped that following on from the first regional meeting there will be an appetite from PSB members, and the individual PSBs, to meet more regularly as a region.

2.4 As noted in section 1 above, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion PSBs will be establishing a series of Delivery Groups to drive forward the well-being objectives and actions identified in the Well-being Plans. It has been agreed that PSB members will take responsibility for acting as either the Expert Lead or Chair/Vice-Chair of the Groups, with officers from PSB organisations providing officer time to support the work of the Delivery Group. This work will be in addition to organisational responsibilities as there are no new or additional resources available to deliver the PSB agenda.

2.5 Whilst the Health Board, along with other PSB members understand the need to make progress on areas of collective action, in order to maintain momentum the work of the Delivery and Sub-groups needs to be integrated into existing workloads. This is proving to be both a challenge and an opportunity for the Health Board at a time of substantial transformation and clinical change. It highlights however, the need to ensure that well-being objectives can be

embedded into the work of all organisations to ensure that the golden thread provides the impetus to effective collaboration and partnership action.

**3. Evidence of issues or barriers that may impact on effective working, and examples of good practice and innovation**

- 3.1 In all three PSBs there is a real sense of willingness and support from PSB members to make progress against the PSB well-being objectives. All partners can see the potential collective and organisational benefit of the actions that have been agreed but organisational pressures can sometimes restrict the capacity of the Health Board, and other partners to contribute as fully as they'd like to the work.
- 3.2 The WFG Act has driven the Well-being Plan to focus on areas of collective action that the PSB members can make progress on by working together. However, formal feedback received from external organisations during the consultation periods have raised different expectations and the PSBs are working to ensure that the overarching Well-being Plans continue to be "added value" focused rather than very detailed and operationally focused.
- 3.3 A lot of work is undertaken outside of the formal meetings, which is an outcome of the strong partnership working relationships which are developing. The "informal" discussions are as a direct result of the opportunity for senior leaders to meet together on a regular basis through the PSB. This is helping organisations to deliver their core business and statutory duties more effectively.
- 3.4 The PSB work will be subject to scrutiny by designated local authority overview and scrutiny committee in each area. These arrangements will take some time to mature to ensure an appropriate focus of scrutiny. At present the membership of these committees is drawn from local authority members; this might require further reflection as arrangements evolve to ensure that all named statutory bodies are included in the scrutiny assurance process, not just as a PSB member subject to scrutiny.
- 3.5 The perceived sovereignty of each PSB can be a potential barrier to closer joint working and collaboration between areas, and in this regard the leadership role of the Chair and Vice-Chair is crucial. The Health Board and other partners working across local authority boundaries are continuing to encourage joint working between PSBs across the West Wales area.

**Evidence from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to the Welsh Government Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee consultation on local approaches to poverty, WbFGA and Public Service Boards**

**Dr Sarah Aitken, Executive Director of Public Health, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board**

**13:06:18**

1. ABUHB welcomes the opportunity to provide evidence on poverty reduction in the context of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) (WFG) Act 2015 and Public Services Boards. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) is responsible for promoting wellness, preventing disease and injury, and providing health care to a population of approximately six hundred thousand people who live in the areas of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and South Powys. ABUHB covers diverse geographical areas with a mix of rural, urban and valley communities. The valley areas experience high levels of social deprivation, including low incomes, poor housing stock and high unemployment.
2. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) serves the five Public Service Boards (PSBs) in Gwent, namely:
  - Blaenau Gwent
  - Caerphilly
  - Monmouthshire
  - Newport
  - Torfaen
3. The Chair and the Chief Executive of ABUHB are statutory members of all five PSBs in Gwent, and they are represented by an Executive Director and Non Executive Director on each PSB. The Executive Director of Public Health sits on four PSBs, with the Deputy Director of Public Health sitting on the Caerphilly PSB. In addition, to providing representation on the PSB itself, ABUHB also provides representatives for the committees that support the PSBs.

- 4. To gain an understanding of the structure and functions of the Public Services Boards:** The Well-being of Future Generations Act establishes Public Service Boards (PSB) in each Local Authority area in Wales. The four statutory members of each PSB are the Local Authority, the Local Health Board, the Fire and Rescue Authority for the area, and Natural Resources Wales.
5. Statutory members are collectively responsible for fulfilling the board's statutory duties. This means unanimous agreement of the statutory members is needed in relation to fulfilling these duties (e.g. to publish assessments of local well-being, local well-being plans and annual progress reports).
6. ABUHB has established clear governance mechanisms for its duties under The Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Public Partnerships and Well-being Committee (a Board Sub-Committee) provides governance and oversight of ABUHB's collaborative work through PSBs and the interface with the ABUHB Integrated Medium Term Plan. To provide a clear focus for ABUHB PSB members, the Public Partnerships & Well-being Committee identified 4 of ABUHB's 10 Wellbeing Objectives which can only be taken forward in partnership through the Well-being Plans of the five Gwent PSBs, which are:
- To provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.
  - To achieve impact on preventable heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, respiratory and liver disease.
  - To improve Community & Personal Resilience, Mental Health and Wellbeing.
  - To enable people to age well and for those that need care to receive it in their home or as close to their home as possible.
- 7. To explore the effectiveness of PSBs, resourcing and capacity:** The focus of the five Gwent PSBs business to date has been on developing Well-being Assessments and high level Well-being Plans in line with the requirements of the WBFGA. Within the Well-being Assessments and the Well-being Plans of all the five Gwent PSBs it is recognised that the

broader social determinants of health play a much bigger role in shaping health outcomes than healthcare services, and addressing the causes of poverty calls for both targeted and universal actions across the social gradient of health. Action to tackle poverty feature throughout a range of commitments within the PSB Wellbeing Plans, including employment programmes, quality housing and access to quality childcare.

8. ABUHB membership of PSBs has created an opportunity for ABUHB PSB members to maximise the Health Board's influence on the causes of ill health and health inequalities by exercising an important system leadership role to influence PSB partners to take collective action to address the six aspects of peoples' lives that the evidence suggests are critical for tackling health inequalities, which are:

- giving every child the best start in life;
- enabling all children, young people and adults to maximize their capabilities and have control over their lives;
- creating fair employment and good work for all;
- ensuring a healthy standard of living for all;
- creating and developing sustainable places and communities;
- strengthening the role and impact of ill-health prevention.

9. All five PSBs in Gwent have acknowledged within their Well-being Plans the need to improve public services in order to support their most deprived communities. Some of the PSBs have specifically agreed a focus on specific geographical areas of socio-economic disadvantage (e.g. a place-based approach in Blaenavon in Torfaen, the 'Deep Place' approach being adopted in Lansbury Park in Caerphilly and Newport PSB have agreed a joined up approach to capital investment and regeneration in Ringland). However, ABUHB recognizes that it will be important for PSBs not to focus just on the most disadvantaged areas as this will not reduce inequalities sufficiently. Reducing health inequalities will require both universal action and action that is of the scale and intensity proportionate to the level of disadvantage, known as proportionate universalism, and ABUHB representatives at the Gwent PSBs are strongly advocating for this approach.

10. Only Monmouthshire PSB explicitly mentions rural poverty within its Well-being Plan which acknowledges the impact of market failure within a rural context and how this impacts on the lives of those living in a rural setting. Opportunities for accessing investment through the City Deal and advances in technology, such as automated vehicles, have been identified as possible ways to mitigate against the impact of limited public transport in rural communities, as has the need for improved Broadband coverage and speed in some areas of the county. Action also includes developing a better understanding of the future of work in the area and identification of the skills required in the workforce and exploring the potential for specialist centres of excellence in Monmouthshire e.g. food/hospital, agriculture, tourism and technology.
11. All PSBs in Gwent have included Adverse Childhood Experiences as a priority for action and this is a clear example of where public services, led by Gwent Police, are collaborating to address socio-economic disadvantage.
12. **To gather evidence of issues or barriers that may impact on effective working, and examples of good practice and innovation:** there is some evidence that having new public services partners involved in PSBs is helping to develop some new approaches, for example Blaenau Gwent PSB has supported a funding proposal to Natural Resources Wales to develop Green and Active Spaces, and Tai Calon Housing Association are leading the PSB work-stream 'Working together on Universal Credit'.
13. On a regional basis, there is recognition that the Gwent Strategic Well-being Assessment Group has enabled some effective collaboration amongst public service organisations. During the summer of 2017 the Gwent Strategic Well-being Assessment Group (G-SWAG) commissioned the development of a Well Being Planner to facilitate a collaborative process by which a set of regional well-being priorities for Gwent could be developed. The following 6 regional well-being priorities were

subsequently identified as Gwent wide issues that would benefit from a consistent approach across Gwent:

- Make the best use of our natural resources to promote well-being- to be led by Natural Resources Wales.
- Work towards climate resilience and reduce the regions carbon emissions- to be led by Natural Resources Wales.
- Reduce Cancer Inequities, to be led by ABUHB
- An ACE informed approach to public service delivery and community safety, to be led by Gwent Police.
- Maximise the city deal benefits for Gwent, with a particular focus on improving regional transport, to be led by Monmouthshire Council.
- Gwent Green Energy project, to be led by Torfaen Council.

**14.** ABUHB, along with other Regional and National organisations that sit on the five Gwent PSBs, has considerable challenge in staffing the partnerships structures for all five PSBs.

**15.** ABUHB is one of the largest employers in Gwent, and is working towards being recognised as an exemplar public sector organisation by providing apprenticeship, training and employment opportunities and by promoting good employee health and well-being, reducing sickness rates and leading the way on pay equality and providing good-quality and stimulating work.



## National Assembly for Wales' Equalities, Local Government and Communities Committee - inquiry in relation to Public Services Boards (PSBs)

Submission from Third Sector Support Wales (TSSW)  
May 2018

### Background to inquiry

1. Representatives from Third Sector Support Wales (TSSW) welcome the opportunity to provide evidence to the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee on the structure and effectiveness of Public Services Boards.
2. Third Sector Support Wales is a network of support organisations for the whole of the third sector in Wales. It consists of the 19 local and regional support bodies across Wales, the County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) and the national support body, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).
3. Our shared goal is to enable the third sector and volunteers across Wales to contribute fully to individual and community wellbeing, now and for the future. We work with citizens, volunteers and third sector groups to identify and address what matters to them. Our core activities to strengthen the third sector and volunteering focus on:
  - Enabling and supporting
  - Being a catalyst
  - Engaging and influencing
4. We have four pillars of activity that make up our universal offer, these are:
  - Volunteering
  - Good governance
  - Sustainable funding
  - Strategic engagement and influencing
5. The Chief Officers of the 19 CVCs are third sector members of each PSB across Wales.

## **Inquiry Terms of Reference**

6. The response from TSSW will be structured around the Terms of Reference for the inquiry, which are to:
  - gain an understanding of the structure and functions of the PSBs;
  - explore the effectiveness of PSBs, resourcing and capacity; and
  - gather evidence of issues or barriers that may impact on effective working, and examples of good practice and innovation.
7. For reference, please see historic comments on PSBs submitted by WCVA in previous Welsh Government consultations:
  - Local approaches to poverty reduction: The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and Public Services Boards, December 2017
  - Public services fit for the future, September 2017
  - Reforming local government: Resilient and renewed, April 2017

## **Gain an understanding of the structure and functions of the Public Services Boards (PSBs)**

### **Third sector involvement in PSB structures**

8. CVC Chief Officers and/or Chairs are involved in each Public Services Board (PSB) as an invited member on behalf of the third sector, and an important partner in engaging the third sector in understanding the PSB's work programmes and local service delivery by disseminating information through local third sector networks and facilitating opportunities for the sector to be involved in the work of the PSBs.
9. CVCs have been engaged in the development of well-being assessments and well-being plans and, as members of the PSB sub-groups and Public Engagement Networks, are working to involve local people and communities in how we develop a relationship and ongoing conversation that addresses what matters. This kind of approach requires a step change in the behaviours and skills sets of all PSB members.
10. CVCs and WCVA members report that the work of PSBs feels very distant from the reality of the day to day work of third sector organisations and it can be difficult to make the strategic agenda relevant. Large third sector national organisations wish to support the implementation of the Act but are not clear how to contribute to local implementation. It is also difficult for the smaller third sector organisations to recognise how they contribute to the PSB work.
11. For PSBs to be considered relevant, local people and communities need to feel involved in the process and a connection to the language that is used to express the issues citizens and communities face. Public Services Boards (PSBs) must work to the guidance in the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales and ensure that their membership includes those with experience of working in communities at grassroots level in order to include first-hand intelligence about the issues people face. To do so, there should be

increased involvement of the third sector and/or community representatives at PSB level, which might be achieved through an action plan arrangement between voluntary and community organisations, the third sector and PSBs.

12. The third sector has the potential for three levels of involvement with PSBs:

- Engagement with those who are seldom heard. The sector can be an avenue both for the dissemination and collection of information and as part of (not *the*) route for involvement.
- The third sector has a wealth of qualitative data that can identify current unmet need and be fed into the future trends work and assessments. This is not always recognised.
- Third sector as the deliverer of solutions in terms of meeting need and providing services differently.

## Culture

13. The culture of PSBs feels like a local authority owned agenda, notably in areas where the number of local authority representatives outweighs that of other organisations. The perception of the current balance of power is reflective of the status quo, a 'two-tier' system with a clear onus on the four statutory partners versus the 'other' members; resulting in weak collective ownership of the work. This has been addressed in some areas e.g. in Pembrokeshire, the CVC Chief Officer is currently the vice-chair of the PSB.

14. The communication from the Future Generations Commissioner challenging PSBs to collaborate on certain key areas of work came too late in the development of the Wellbeing Plans. PSBs operating in one unitary authority do not currently have any governance arrangements established for cross boundary working. In addition, barriers to cross-boundary working may be impeded in some areas by differing party politics that are not conducive to working together. The recent Commissioner analysis of individual plans is welcome, but very challenging and would have had more value in shaping plans if available at an earlier stage. Some recommendations are substantially different from the pathway that had been established in the development of action plans

15. The commitment to working with the third sector is well understood at policy level. However, in practice the language and bureaucratic processes inhibit the sector from engaging more deeply. In addition, the approach to developing well-being plans by comparing corporate plans with emerging priorities, does not work from a third sector point of view as we are not a corporate entity, making it difficult to identify opportunities for collaboration.

## Collaboration

16. At present there is a risk of new PSB partnership sub-groups duplicating work of existing partnerships rather than allocating work streams to existing structures. PSB Well-being Plans need to be embedded in normal working practices and deliver outcomes. PSB plans often have not been embedded

into PSB partners' own operational plans due to a timing disjoint - it may mean that strategic plans may not be inclusive until after year one of the PSB Action Plan has been reviewed. It is important that all Partnerships have a thread back to the PSB and Wellbeing Plans. With limited resources Partnerships that don't have a pathway could be deemed to have no real value. The interlinking of delivery Partnerships to the Strategic PSB will be crucial in determining the use of limited resources.

17. A key role for TSSW partners is to work through PSBs to ensure that there is an understanding of existing community assets at grass roots level, whose role should be acknowledged within each plan and considered in terms of how services are co-produced locally.

### **Synergy between WBFGA and SSWBA**

18. There are synergies between the two Acts and their implementation on the ground that could be strengthened. CVC Chief Officers are involved in both the PSBs and Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs), which enables links between the local and regional agendas to be identified and scope understood for collaboration to ensure local and regional needs are met.

19. The governance structures for PSBs and RPBs also differ in terms of their arrangements for third sector membership and citizen involvement:

- PSBs have one or more local third sector member(s) eg in Pembrokeshire PAVS and PLANED are members;
- RPBs have two third sector members (one local, one national organisation); service user and citizen members.

20. Whilst the specific remits of PSBs and RPBs differ, there is clear synergy between partners who are involved in implementation on the ground. A structured link between the PSB and RPB governance arrangements could provide scope for a more joined up approach, more efficient use and pooling of budgets, etc.

21. The North Wales RPB recently received a presentation on Integrated Service Boards (of which there are three in the region), indicating a third governance structure that could potentially link with the RPBs and PSBs.

### **Explore the effectiveness of PSBs, resourcing and capacity**

#### **Capacity**

22. CVCs observe that resources are available to support the delivery of social care and the work of the RPBs, e.g. the Integrated Care Fund, Delivering Transformation Grant; Dementia Fund; Transformation Fund, etc with significant capital being made available. In contrast, resources for the implementation of the work of PSBs appear to be minimal.
23. There is no dedicated resource for PSBs. Capacity is an issue. It remains to be seen whether or not PSBs simply become another 'solution looking for a

problem' and therefore an additional layer of bureaucracy. This was perceived to be the case with LSBs. If so, PSBs will be experienced as capacity and resource consumers, rather than capacity and resource creators.

24. Whilst genuine attempts have been made to enable people to 'have their say', this falls very short of co-production. Authentic community development cannot be incidental or accidental. It needs a deliberate approach, with dedicated resource. A community development fund (akin to ICF) for PSBs would be very welcome. Crucially, this should be a PSB fund, not something in the control of the local authority, and used exclusively for change and new work, not to maintain same old.
25. To bring about the transformative change that is envisioned by the Acts, we see a clear need for development support at strategic level for all PSB (and RPB) members in *collaboration* in order to bring about a set of changed relationships and behaviours (how to work effectively together); and for practitioners and front line staff on how to effectively implement the principle of *involvement*. This is new to many professionals and citizens and needs support and resource.
26. PSBs are encouraged to consider taking a similar approach to the Valleys Taskforce, by listening to the voices of local people and reflecting concerns in language that is readily understood. A 'you said / we listened / together we did' co-productive approach provides a benchmark against which public bodies can be accountable for their actions to improve the well-being of citizens. One survey respondent to WCVA's survey said simply: '*ask them, listen to the answers and act on the outcome*'. This was a core principle at the outset of Communities First, but it has become lost along the way.

### Resources for third sector involvement

27. CVC Chief Officers consider their membership of PSBs to be of strategic importance to the third sector and therefore dedicate time accordingly. However, concerns are expressed at the apparent level of expectation of third sector members, which often falls to CVCs, to become involved in sub groups and project specific work. CVC Chief Officers are also involved in numerous regional partnerships (RPBs, health collaboratives, economic regeneration partnerships, RSPs, etc), none of which have displaced local (or locality) working arrangements.
28. This level of involvement is resource intensive for CVCs, and it is difficult for members of other third sector organisations to justify their involvement in workstreams when the work of the PSBs feels so distant from reality. One possible alternative is for sub roles to be allocated to other organisations who may have specific knowledge. They would, however, require resource to engage and would need to be hooked in with local CVC networks.
29. Whilst we welcome the positive legislative context which actively promotes third sector involvement in the implementation of the Act, the expectation and 'ask' of the third sector members of PSBs (and RPBs) needs to be articulated more clearly, consistently applied and with proper consideration of the

resource implications for CVCs and the wider third sector to engage with the plethora of meetings associated with PSBs and RPBs. To demonstrate the level of demand for CVC involvement in local and regional partnership arrangements, during 2017/18 NPTCVS facilitated the involvement of the sector in 74 strategic planning/working groups and its Director sat on over 50 key strategic external bodies; CVSC participated in approximately 60+ boards/forums/partnerships/panels and GVS was represented on almost 60 strategic partnerships and joint working groups.

30. At national level, Welsh Government has funded a part time post at WCVA for six months (Delivering Transformation Grant Co-ordinator) to support and promote the third sector's involvement in the delivery of the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales), including pro-active co-ordination of the third sector RPB reps to strengthen their links with third sector networks. The disconnect on the ground between the two Acts has been highlighted as an issue by a range of stakeholders.

## Delivery

31. The function of PSBs, to date, has focused on the well-being assessments leading to the establishing of the well-being plans. These are now in place and, for example in Powys, has 12, very high-level priorities. In many cases, the implications for operational delivery are not yet clear and nor is it understood how plans will be translated into action that builds on existing community assets. However, in Ceredigion, for example, delivery mechanisms are clear with project groups for each workstream established and involving third sector and Cabinet Member involvement.
32. The intelligence held by front line staff within both the public and third sectors is an under-utilised resource, particularly with third sector organisations, because often data collection methods are not sufficiently robust and protocols for sharing data may not be sufficiently developed. For example, one respondent to the survey undertaken by WCVA told us that: *'...we don't even know what PSBs do, who they are or how we can better engage with them. They should be interacting with the organisations on the front line and giving us an opportunity to feed back what we see and the struggles facing people.'* This should not be considered solely as a task for third sector members of the PSB to address, but rather the PSB acting as one to engage with a spectrum of service providers, to find ways of enabling third sector organisations to share evidence and data in a way that is useful and useable for local planning purposes. If this breadth and depth of engagement is envisaged, it must be matched with an investment in capacity and skills to achieve a step change.

## **Gather evidence of issues or barriers that may impact on effective working, and examples of good practice and innovation**

33. There is a risk that PSBs only acknowledge and report on the funded/contracted activity and ignore the considerable voluntary/community activity that will feed into the targeted outcomes in the Plan, under-valuing the role of the third sector's contribution to well-being. Unfunded

preventative/community activity is vital for PSB plans to have an impact, yet this is not recognised.

34. Engaging fully and positively with elected members (County Councillors) is a problem - many see the PSB as an unelected quango, rather than a key partner in the delivery of well-being objectives for their constituents. This situation is not helped by the legislation, which puts the elected members in the role of scrutineers, not partners. Scrutiny would be better undertaken by a multi-agency panel (reflecting the membership of the PSB) and/or by citizen scrutineers. In Ceredigion, Cabinet representatives are sitting on each project group in an attempt to support positive links between elected members and key stakeholders.
35. The involvement of town and community councils on PSBs is also an issue. Town and community councils have an important role to play in developing resourceful communities, but in many cases they are reluctant partners. One Voice Wales has a seat on the Ceredigion PSB, but have found it difficult to engage. They have also been invited to put forward a representative to the Pembrokeshire PSB. Engagement with town and community councils will be essential in the implementation phase, particularly around those priorities associated with developing community resourcefulness.
36. The legislation makes it clear that PSBs should work in a citizen-centred way, involving people in the co-design and delivery of Well-being Plans. Whilst this process was not perfect (short timescales made it impossible to do things right), every effort was made to engage with as many people as possible, and this helped inform the development of the Well-being Plans. Pembrokeshire PSB took the decision not to target specific user groups within the Well-being Plan, taking the view that the Plan seeks to improve *community well-being*. Nevertheless, pressure has been brought to bear individuals/groups who want to see their particular area of interest written into the plan - for example, Older Persons' Commissioner (older people); Public Health Wales (first 1000 days); Arts Council for Wales, etc. Welsh Government and other national agencies must resist the temptation to micro-manage PSBs - this is what adopting a "*citizen centred approach*" means in practice.
37. The complex maze of corporate planning structures and timetables to create shared plans is also perceived to be a risk to implementation. A common measurement matrix of outcomes should be produced and all plans, whether within a public sector body or third sector, can be utilized to feed into local, regional and national monitoring. Failure to establish common monitoring will result in perceived gaps in some service areas when they do not exist but are measured differently.
38. CVCs have been engaged in the development of population assessments and well-being plans and, as members of the PSB Public Engagement Networks, are working to involve local people and communities in how we develop a relationship and ongoing conversation that addresses what matters.
39. A number of priorities in PSB plans can potentially only be delivered regionally if Welsh Government plans outlined in the Green Paper for greater regional

service delivery are implemented. There is little synergy at the moment between local and regional planning of services.

40. CVCs have undertaken a range of engagement work with local organisations, which could be shared more widely as good practice, e.g:

- Interlink RCT, BAVO and VAMT have established a local network/reference group specifically on well-being/WBFGA/PSB work to inform the CVC's role as third sector member of the PSB and to act as a point of contact for the PSB with the sector;
- NPT CVS has supported the development of a Citizen Engagement Scheme which has been formally adopted by the PSB;
- PAVS is a member of Pembrokeshire Co-production Network that brings together participation and engagement practitioners from across the PSB partnership. The intention is to establish the Network as the primary mechanism for PSB engagement with citizens and communities across Pembrokeshire. PAVS' Chief Officer is leading on this work in her role as Vice Chair of the PSB but progress is slow due to lack of resources;
- Some third sector organisations have welcomed the well-being plans and checklists as a useful tool for helping organisations to frame what they are aiming to achieve in the context of local well-being;
- NPT CVS leads on the transport sub-group which is exploring alternative transport solutions for communities in the area. This is a multi-agency group involving Third Sector as well as statutory partners and has recently secured funding to undertake a feasibility study (NPT CVS);
- Participation in work around digital inclusion, which has included a third sector digital survey that was developed by NPT CVS and the sector, supported by the Council.
- Mantell Gwynedd were successful in obtaining 480k of funding from the Lottery's Third Sector Skills fund which will enable North Wales CVCs to upskill staff so they are able to undertake the work of measuring social value. It is by understanding the social value of activities that we can work towards effectively managing the creation of well-being and this is essential to making the intentions of the Act a reality. The main focus of the project is to measure the value of activities and how they relate to the national well-being goals.

41. Community Voice was a strategic grants programme managed and funded by the Big Lottery Fund in Wales that came to an end in March 2018. The programme aims to build the capacity of citizens to engage in planning and running services and projects that respond to their communities' needs and advance community benefit. The programme provided £12 million to CVCs through eleven Community Voice grants. CVCs were each responsible for their portfolio of 5-10 individual projects to deliver locally co-produced initiatives, facilitating more effective engagement with key public sector organisations, helping people to influence decisions about services they receive and developing local services that better meet their needs. Big Lottery Fund have undertaken an evaluation of the programme, from which lessons could be shared. Without resources from this programme, the depth and breadth of citizen involvement achieved by each CVC is minimal.

42. Interlink (RCT) has a member of staff seconded to work at the Future Generation's Commissioner's office for approximately one day per week to support involvement and help link to SenseMaker initiatives. It is a connection to a member of staff who is an involvement 'practitioner' and provides a mechanism for feedback about what is happening on the ground in relation to strategic plans and programmes.
43. PAVS leads on the Pride in Pembrokeshire award scheme on behalf of the PSB, which recognises volunteer-led activity in local communities that improves individual and community well-being. Groups receive a certificate, a cheque for £200 and editorial/photograph in the Western Telegraph, giving them a platform to promote their work to the general public, potential funders and volunteers. This is a good mechanism for sharing good practice as well as publicising the PSB.
44. We recommend that PSBs seek to engage more effectively with each other in order to share experiences and good practice and offer a more effective, coherent approach to their work - recognising, of course, that different regions have different needs and so each PSB will still need to work in its own way.

**Third Sector Support Wales**  
**May 2018**

# Agenda Item 6

## Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

13 June 2018 – papers to note cover sheet

Paper no.	Issue	From	Action point
ELGC(5)-18-18 Paper 5	Inquiry into pregnancy, maternity and work	The Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport	Additional information provided following the evidence session on 9 May 2018
ELGC(5)-18-18 Paper 6	Inquiry into pregnancy, maternity and work	Leader of the House and Chief Whip and the Minister for Children, Older People & Social Care	Additional information provided following the evidence session on 23 May 2018
ELGC(5)-18-18 Paper 7	Inquiry into Rough Sleeping in Wales	Welsh Government	Welsh Government response to the Committee's report: "Life on the Streets preventing and Tackling Rough Sleeping in Wales"

John Griffiths AM  
Chair  
Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

4 June 2018

Dear 

I am writing in response to your letter of 15 May, requesting further information following my attendance at a scrutiny session of the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> May.

Set out below is a response to your questions.

**The percentage of flexible working patterns, and take-up of shared parental leave from men, in the Welsh Government**

*Flexible working patterns:*

- 21% of staff work part time hours;
- 1% of staff have a term time working arrangement;
- 26% of staff are on a work pattern other than "STANDARD".

*Shared parental leave:*

- Four men are recorded as having taken up shared parental leave for the 2017/18 period.

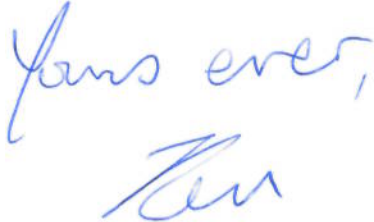
**A note on any training on unbiased recruitment that might be provided to small businesses as part of the Economic Contract.**

The Economic Contract requires businesses seeking Welsh Government support to commit to growth, fair work, promoting health, up-skilling and learning in the work place and reducing their carbon footprint. This focus on fair work and responsible business provides a clear opportunity for the Welsh Government to engage in conversation with businesses on their recruitment practices. Where, through this discussion, a business demonstrates a need or interest in understanding more about options for adopting and strengthening more

inclusive recruitment arrangements, businesses will be signposted to the Business Wales offer, which provides Equality and Diversity advice to SME's on a variety of different subjects including:

- recruitment advice - strategies, best practice to drive growth and confidence
- staff engagement
- policy development and implementation
- legal compliance

This support is delivered through a combination of online information and learning modules, workshops and one-to-one advice from a specialist adviser.



**Ken Skates AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport

Julie James AC/AM  
Arweinydd y Tŷ a'r Prif Chwip  
Leader of the House and Chief Whip

Huw Irranca-Davies AC/AM  
Y Gweinidog Plant, Pobl Hŷn a Gofal Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Children, Older People & Social Care

Ein cyf/Our ref MA P JJ 1967 18

Y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb, Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau  
Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee  
ELGC(5)-18-18 Papur 6/Paper 6

5 June 2018

Dear John,

Thank you for your letter dated 24 May asking for the information we agreed to provide and further evidence on the areas the Committee did not have the opportunity to pursue.

**Initial analysis of the childcare offer pilot schemes-**

We have commissioned an independent evaluation which will include in-depth analysis of the childcare offer, and its early implementation by the seven local authorities. This will report in autumn 2018 and will be published.

We monitor the Offer closely and receive weekly, monthly, and termly data from early implementation local authorities. Monitoring data shows:

- More than 4,000 applications have been received;
- More than 400 providers are taking part;
- Nearly 40% of children taking part in the Offer are using childcare delivered through the medium of Welsh or bilingually;
- 81% of parents applying for the Offer find affording childcare difficult;
- At least 60% of parents taking up the offer earn less than the median average salary for Wales (£26,000), and no more than 5% earn more than £52,000.

We have also received feedback from parents, providers and local authorities that we are taking the right approach through our early implementation of the offer. In particular:

- Parents value the choice we have given them over whether to use childcare close to home or work, and the ability to co-locate siblings;
- Providers have been broadly positive about the £4.50 rate, and the flexibility to charge for food and transport in line with their business model and the services they provide has also been welcomed;
- Early implementation local authorities particularly value the flexibility of cross-border provision.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

### **Data on Stem**

Unfortunately, whilst we do hold a longitudinal dataset which tracks people after they leave university, it doesn't hold the level of detail that would be required to be able to say whether someone has taken maternity leave and returned back to work. Therefore we are unable to provide you with the detailed breakdown you have requested.

### **Clarity on whether parents can claim the offer if a family member is providing care as a registered provider or within a setting of a registered provider**

Currently registered childminders who are caring for a child who is also a relative cannot receive funding through the childcare offer for that child. If a child is attending any other form of childcare provision, such as a private nursery or playgroup, then that setting can be funded to provide care for that child through the offer. We are aware of the potential issues this may cause around fairness and capacity within the sector. Therefore, we are currently reviewing our policy on registered childminders delivering the offer for relatives.


### **Parents Childcare and Employment (PaCE)**

Parents Childcare and Employment (PaCE) is a £13.5m programme jointly funded by the ESF and Welsh Government, working in partnership with DWP. PaCE targets economically inactive parents aged 25 and over, and parents aged 16-24 who are NEET. All parents enrolled onto PaCE will have childcare as their main barrier preventing them accessing education, employment or training opportunities. PaCE builds upon services offered via Flying Start and Families First and operates outside current Communities First areas, to complement other projects such as Communities for Work.

PaCE Advisers help overcome childcare barriers for parents in ways other than financial. For example, advisers will contact employers and ask for flexibility around working hours for parents, or arrange training in hours that are conducive to the parent balancing those hours with their childcare needs. Up to the end of April 2018, PaCE had engaged almost 3000 participants, with 958 of those entering employment. At least 95% of participants in PaCE across Wales are female.

Please note that responsibility for PaCE rests with the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language. Consideration is currently being given to whether European funded programmes such as PaCE can be extended beyond their current end dates.

Yours sincerely



**Julie James AC/AM**  
Arweinydd y Tŷ a'r Prif Chwip  
Leader of the House and Chief Whip



**Huw Irranca-Davies AC/AM**  
Y Gweinidog Plant, Pobl Hŷn a Gofal  
Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Children, Older People &  
Social Care

## **WELSH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EQUALITY, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE REPORT: LIFE ON THE STREETS: PREVENTING AND TACKLING ROUGH SLEEPING IN WALES**

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The Welsh Government recognises in ‘Prosperity for All’ it is unacceptable that people are forced to sleep on the streets in a prosperous society. Rough sleeping is the most acute form of homelessness and we recognise those living rough often have complex needs and require a joined up response from a range of services to support them. In recognition of the priority the Welsh Government places on reversing the current rise in rough sleeping, we recently published a Rough Sleeping Action Plan and will continue to work across Government, the wider public sector and the third sector to jointly tackle these issues.

### **Recommendation 1**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government:**

- **immediately strengthens the Code of Guidance for Local Authorities in the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness to set out a clear expectation that rough sleepers should be determined as in priority need for accommodation under current legislation;**
- **brings forward an Order under section 72 of the *Housing (Wales) Act 2014* to specify that “rough sleepers” have priority need for accommodation as the first step in a phased approach to abolishing priority need entirely; and**
- **works with local authorities and the homelessness sector to develop an appropriate and sufficiently robust process for verifying rough sleepers for the purpose of assessing priority need for accommodation.**

[Janet Finch-Saunders AM did not support the above recommendation]

### **Response: Accept in principle**

The Welsh Government is in the process of revising the ‘Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness’ to provide specific technical updates in order to ensure clarity in respect of the current law. The updated code will be published later this year and will be subject to consultation.

Whilst the code sets out the letter of the law, we accept that the spirit of the legislation is not always adhered to in practice. As such, we will look to develop a best practice user guide for the application of section 68 interim accommodation duties.

Meeting needs, regardless of priority, is primarily a housing supply issue and this

Government has made clear its commitment to social housing and to building more affordable homes. We have previously outlined to the National Assembly our willingness to review the approach to priority need. It is vital we fully understand the potential impact and unintended consequences of any change to the current approach before considering any changes to priority need. As outlined in response to recommendation two, we are in the process of commissioning an independent assessment and would not wish to prejudge the outcome of that work.

The Welsh Government is already working with local authorities through the Street Homelessness Information Network (SHIN) to improve data in respect of rough sleepers. Once operational, SHIN will provide local authorities with up to date information on rough sleepers. Local authorities have legal responsibilities to make enquires into a person's circumstances and satisfy themselves that an applicant is homeless. SHIN will make this process easier in the future.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

## **Recommendation 2**

**The Committee recommends that, as a matter of urgency, the Welsh Government undertakes work on the implications for local authorities and the housing and homelessness sector of abolishing priority need. This should include an assessment of the financial implications for authorities as well as any potential increase in demand for temporary accommodation. The outcome of this work should be used to establish a detailed timetable for abolition, to inform future funding decisions, and to plan and commission services.**

## **Response: Accept in principle**

As set out in response to recommendation 1 above, the Welsh Government is already in the process of commissioning an independent assessment of the potential implications and risks associated with changing the current priority need approach. The independent assessment will examine the implications of a range of potential changes to help inform a decision on the way forward.

As the Committee acknowledges, it is important that any change in current approach is only taken when the full implications of such a change are fully understood.

The independent assessment will also examine how best to mitigate any potential risks associated with a change of approach, including timing implications.

**Financial Implications:** The cost of the independent assessment will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

### **Recommendation 3**

**The Committee recommends that if the Welsh Government is not minded to accept their recommendation of a phased approach to abolishing priority need (Recommendation 1) they recommend that it:**

- **amends the definition of “vulnerable” in section 71 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to reflect current case law (the *Hotak* judgment), and**
- **amends that Act to include a power for the Welsh Ministers to further amend the definition of “vulnerable” by Order, subject to the affirmative procedure.**

### **Response: Reject**

As outlined in response to recommendation two, the Welsh Government will await the outcome of the independent assessment of the implications of changing priority need. Any decision to change the current approach can only be taken when the full implications of such a change are understood.

**Financial Implications:** None

### **Recommendation 4**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government re-establishes the Prisoner, Accommodation and Resettlement Working Group. The aim of the group should be to foster stronger working relationships and collaboration between all relevant parties and to secure a continued commitment to the effective implementation of the National Pathway. They also recommend that the Welsh Government uses this Working Group to improve homelessness support services for prisoners serving short sentences.**

### **Response: Accept**

The Prisoner Accommodation and Resettlement Working Group was initially established as a task and finish group in order to investigate and support the establishment of a process to ensure the equality of access to homelessness services for those leaving custody. The group was responsible for the development of the *National Pathway for Homelessness Services to Children, Young People and Adults in the Secure Estate*, which was launched in December 2015.

With the publication of the research into the impact of the legislation (and the Pathway) on those leaving custody, due to be published Summer 2018, the Welsh Government will be looking closely at the recommendations. As part of this process, we will be forming a working group focused on those leaving custody to take forward the work in this area. Whilst we accept this recommendation, we are clear that the membership and terms of reference for the new working group will reflect the outcome of the research, and its recommendations.

In addition, the Welsh Government is actively engaged with the Accommodation Steering Group which has recently been established by the Ministry of Justice. The Group is exploring options for expanding the accommodation offer available for those leaving custody.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**The Committee recommends that if the Welsh Government is not minded to accept their recommendation of a phased approach to abolishing priority need (Recommendation 1), they recommend that it reinstates automatic priority need for accommodation for prison leavers.**

**[Janet Finch-Saunders AM did not support the above recommendation]**

#### **Response: Reject**

As outlined in response to recommendation two, the Welsh Government will await the outcome of the independent assessment before considering any change to priority need. Any decision would only be taken when the full implications are understood and when we can be sure to avoid unintended consequences.

**Financial Implications:** None

#### **Recommendation 6**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government considers alternative funding arrangements to ensure that the financial consequences of rough sleeping are shared more equally between the authority where the applicant has a local connection and the authority providing homelessness support services (where there is no local connection).**

#### **Response: Accept**

We will consider whether there is a case for using alternative funding arrangements to enable local authorities to share the burden of providing services in particular areas to particular groups. This will need to be examined as part of the wider consideration around the approach to priority need. As any changes to priority need will have an impact on the issue of local connection, as cases will be formally referred back to home areas.

Under the current legislation, prevention assistance is not dependant on local connection. The local authority must take reasonable steps to help to prevent homelessness.

For cases of homelessness as defined under section 55 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, where the household is unintentionally homeless and in priority need, there is a mechanism within the Act to refer the case back to the home area. This does not, however, mean the applicant cannot be supported to remain in an area of their choosing, supported by their home area.

For all others, local connection is not a factor on whether a duty is owed.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

### **Recommendation 7**

**The Committee recommends that the Code of Guidance for Local Authorities in the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness sets out clearly the steps that should be taken by local authorities to ensure that suitable support is available to rough sleepers in a receiving authority ahead of any reconnection.**

### **Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government is in the process of revising the 'Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness' to provide specific technical updates in order to ensure clarity in respect of the current law. The updated code will be published later this year and will be subject to consultation.

Whilst the code is intended to set out the letter of the law, we accept that the spirit of the legislation is not always adhered to in practice. We also acknowledge that there are inconsistencies in service delivery to people from outside of the local authorities' jurisdiction.

As such, we will develop material with partners on best practice approaches to reconnection.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

### **Recommendation 8**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government monitors local authorities' use of local connection and reconnection services and the outcome for rough sleepers. The outcomes recorded and monitored should be those beyond the fact that an applicant has been reconnected.**

### **Response: Accept in principle**

The Welsh Government will explore with local authorities and the SHIN network whether and how information could be collected to monitor use of local connection and reconnection services and the outcome for rough sleepers.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

### **Recommendation 9**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government ensures that relevant third sector organisations and local authorities fully engage with the SHIN project.**

#### **Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government is already working, and will continue to work, with local authorities and third sector organisations to encourage engagement in the SHIN project – although ultimately, of course, it will be for the organisations themselves to fully engage.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

### **Recommendation 10**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government considers seeking powers over the administration of Universal Credit akin to those available to the Scottish Government.**

**[Janet Finch-Saunders AM did not support the above recommendation]**

#### **Response: Reject**

The Welsh Government does not support the devolution of welfare benefits or their administration to Wales. As a matter of principle we should all be entitled to an equal claim from our welfare state. The needs of citizens within the UK, wherever they live, should be equally met.

The Scottish Government does have powers over the flexibility of payment options for Universal Credit claimants via the Scotland Act 2016. The Scottish Government have worked with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and introduced 'Scottish Choices' in October 2017. Universal Credit remains reserved to the UK Government. The DWP administers Universal Credit and these 'Scottish Choices' are only available after the first payment of Universal Credit (UC) has been made. The flexibilities mean claimants can opt for payment twice a month, and housing to be

paid directly to the landlord. A claimant can make just one choice or both. The technical delivery of the options is managed by the DWP.

The Welsh Government wishes to see all Universal Credit claimants being offered an informed choice regarding how their Universal Credit is paid, through the promotion of flexible payment options. These include more frequent payments than just once per month; the payment of housing costs directly to the landlord; and split payments for those who would like them. These options are already available to Universal Credit recipients in Wales, and they do not require the devolution of benefits or their administration.

The Minister for Housing and Regeneration has repeatedly written to DWP Ministers asking for greater consideration to be given to proactively offering these informed choices to claimants in Wales. The DWP has now agreed to the setting up of a Joint Board with Welsh Government to look at the operational implementation issues for Universal Credit. The Board has set some initial priorities which are looking at flexible payment options and the extension of the landlord portal to landlords in Wales as Universal Credit full-service rolls out. The landlord portal helps to speed up the rent verification process.

**Financial Implications:** None

#### **Recommendation 11**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government works with local authorities and Registered Social Landlords to establish the reasons for the comparatively low level of social housing allocations to homeless households. Following this, the Welsh Government should set out the steps it intends to take to maximise the number of homeless households who are allocated social housing.**

#### **Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government is currently reviewing data on the number of allocations to homeless households by social landlords, linking this to our work on possession and eviction action against tenants. We are working with Housing Leadership Cymru and the sector to establish and roll out best practice on how vulnerable households are housed and supported to maintain their accommodation. We will also revisit the allocations data at a future point to establish what improvements have been made.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

### **Recommendation 12**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government sets out more clearly in its *Rough Sleeping Action Plan* the steps it intends to take to improve access to the Private Rented Sector for rough sleepers, including details of incentives for private landlords. The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government monitors and reports back to the Committee on the outcome of this work.**

#### **Response: Accept**

Since the introduction of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, improving access to the Private Rented Sector (PRS) has been an area of strong focus for the Welsh Government and local authorities. The PRS has a vital role to play in increasing the supply of good quality affordable housing and providing recipients of Housing First with increased choice. We have seen a significant share of the transitional funding allocated to local authorities used for the purpose of increasing the supply of properties from the private sector available to homeless people. For people who rent, issues of affordability, quality and security of tenure are very real. That is why the Welsh Government has, and continues to place great emphasis on ensuring the private rented sector is well regulated and well managed. In this way we can help ensure it offers a viable long term solution for those who choose or need to rent in the private sector.

The Welsh Government intends to undertake an assessment of how the transitional funding has been utilised to improve access to the PRS, what has worked and has not worked across Wales, with a view to informing our longer term plans to maximise the impact of the PRS sector within Wales.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

### **Recommendation 13**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government considers the lessons that can be learnt from the Step-by-Step project in Rhondda Cynon Taff, with a view to rolling out similar projects across Wales.**

#### **Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government will consider the evaluation and learning from the Step by Step project and consider how the key principles of the service might be adopted by other authorities.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

#### **Recommendation 14**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government provides further detail in its *Rough Sleeping Action Plan* on how it intends to work with local authorities and their partners to improve move-on from emergency accommodation.**

#### **Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government has previously set out that the plan is an evolving document and we will be working with key partners to develop further detail on the steps necessary to deliver against the plan.

We recognise that move on from emergency accommodation / supported accommodation is key, and that an effective pathway moving people through the system is essential. Local authorities, registered social landlords and the private sector all have a role in supporting people to regain their independence.

We will be working with these partners to review current move on arrangements in order to identify and promote best practice.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

#### **Recommendation 15**

**The Committee recommends that the Rough Sleeping Action Plan sets out more clearly:**

- **who will be responsible for taking forward each action, and**
- **the outcomes expected against actions, and how these will be measured and monitored (beyond the quarterly reporting arrangements referred to in the Plan).**

#### **Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government has previously set out that the plan is an evolving document and we will be working with key partners to develop further detail on the steps necessary to deliver against the plan.

The plan is intended to be a living document which will evolve to respond to new evidence. As the plan evolves, updated versions will be placed on the Welsh Government website.

**Recommendation 16**

**The Committee recommends that quarterly reports on the *Rough Sleeping Action Plan* should be published on the Welsh Government's website.**

**Response: Reject**

The Minister for Housing and Regeneration has already committed to updating the Assembly on an annual basis on progress made against the action plan. Whilst the plan allows for quarterly reporting, the Welsh Government does not intend to publish quarterly reports.

The plan is intended to be a living document which will evolve to respond to new evidence. As the plan evolves, updated versions will be placed on the Welsh Government website. The focus, however, is intended to be on achieving the actions set out in the plan, rather than creating overly bureaucratic reporting systems.

**Financial Implications:** None

**Recommendation 17**

**The Committee recommends that responsibility for the implementation of the *Rough Sleeping Action Plan* should be shared jointly between the Minister for Housing and Regeneration and the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services.**

**Response: Accept**

Prosperity for All makes clear the priority placed on housing and that the bedrock of living well is a good quality, affordable home which brings a wide range of benefits to health, learning and prosperity. In order to deliver against the National Strategy, the Welsh Government is already working across traditional portfolio boundaries to deliver this shared agenda. The Minister for Housing and Regeneration remains the lead Minister, but works closely with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services and all other relevant Ministers on implementation of the plan through the clear cross-government working which underpins Prosperity for All.

**Financial Implications:** None

**Recommendation 18**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government considers revising its *Rough Sleeping Action Plan* to include further preventative actions that can be taken forward to end rough sleeping in Wales including clear links to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. These actions should be**

**informed by the international evidence base and should have regard to the causes of, and risk factors associated with, rough sleeping.**

**Response: Accept**

The Rough Sleeping Action Plan was developed taking account of the international evidence base. As new evidence becomes available the plan will evolve to take account of this. As the plan evolves, updated versions will be placed on the Welsh Government website.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

**Recommendation 19**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government considers strengthening the *Housing First – National Principles and Guidance for Wales* to set out an expectation that local authorities should offer Housing First as a default approach to rough sleepers.**

**Response: Accept in principle**

The Welsh Government will consider strengthening the Housing First National Principles and Guidance. However, it is important to remember that Housing First is intended for those with the most complex needs and it may not be suitable for all rough sleepers.

Housing First is one of a range of housing options that may offered to rough sleepers, and we know that there is much work to be done in order to increase its use.

The principles document is the starting point and the Welsh Government will now look very closely at those Housing First projects funded last autumn to inform any decision about a further roll out of Housing First in Wales.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

**Recommendation 20**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government undertakes an analysis of the “congregate” and “dispersed” Housing First models, drawing on the international evidence base, including that set out in *Crisis’ Ending Rough Sleeping: What Works? An international evidence review*, with a view to assessing whether both models are suitable housing solutions for rough sleepers in Wales.**

**Response: Accept**

As part of the work to develop the Housing First principles document, the Welsh Government, working alongside experts from Cardiff University, undertook a review of international Housing First models. This process of analysing international and UK-wide evidence, such as the York University research into Housing First for Young People, will continue alongside evaluations of the projects currently in operation in Wales as well as any future pilots.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

**Recommendation 21**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government works with its partners to identify best practice models to deliver assertive outreach support and to reflect this in the Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness.**

**Response: Accept**

The 'Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness' is intended to assist with the interpretation of Part VI Housing Act 1996 and Part 2 Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

Alongside this guidance, the Welsh Government will work with partners to identify best practice examples of assertive outreach and will promote them. This will include assertive outreach for rough sleepers and those who may be struggling to maintain their accommodation.

In addition we will continue to encourage preventative services to actively promote their work and ensure they achieve maximum coverage within their locality.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

**Recommendation 22**

**The Committee recommends that the *Rough Sleeping Action Plan* sets out an expectation on local authorities and their partners that assertive outreach services should be developed and delivered in tandem with Housing First.**

**Response: Accept in principle**

Assertive outreach is a key component in working with some rough sleepers across our communities and this is recognised by the Welsh Government in funding a number of schemes via the Homelessness Prevention Grant.

The Welsh Government's Housing First principles document makes it clear that choice is one of the fundamental principles of the approach. We will therefore need to carefully consider how assertive outreach can be best utilised to support Housing First as part of the next phase of policy development, without undermining the core principle of choice.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

### **Recommendation 23**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government:**

- **sets out clear expectations that local authority enforcement officers should take part in the PATH training programme; and**
- **encourages the police service in Wales to engage with the PATH training programme, and to facilitate the uptake of the programme for Police Community Support Officers.**

### **Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government is currently considering the evaluation of the first phase of PATH training. We are already engaging with the WLGA and local authorities to encourage engagement in the next phase of the training.

Welsh Government provides funding for an additional 500 Police Community Support Officers across the four forces in Wales. Discussions are underway to identify how best to offer training for PCSOs specifically regarding Homelessness and trauma informed approaches. Officials in the Community Safety Division chair termly Steering Group Meetings with representatives from the four police forces in Wales in order to deliver a co-ordinated approach with regard to the CSO provision in Wales. This Steering Group is the appropriate vehicle in which to develop this training and ensure its delivery.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

### **Recommendation 24**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government makes representations to the Police and Crime Commissioners in Wales with a view to encouraging all police forces in Wales to ensure that officers make use of body worn cameras when interacting with rough sleepers.**

**Response: Accept**

Welsh Government hold regular meetings with the four Police and Crime Commissioners in Wales and as such will use this forum as an opportunity to encourage all police forward in Wales to make use of body worn cameras when interacting with rough sleepers.

**Financial Implications:** None

**Recommendation 25**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government considers undertaking work to assess the merits of diverted giving schemes and to identify best practice in this area. This should inform any public campaign by the Government to harness support for rough sleepers.**

**Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government will consider how best to harness the concern from the public in regard to rough sleeping. We will engage with our partners in the public and third sector to determine an appropriate way forward.

**Financial Implications:** Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

**Recommendation 26**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government sets out clear expectations that any diverted giving schemes should be motivated by the need to support rough sleepers and be developed in full consultation with the homelessness sector.**

**Response: Reject**

It is not the intention of the Welsh Government to develop guidance in respect of diverted giving schemes.

The Rough Sleeping Action Plan sets out the need to promote a positive message to the public about the best way to support a rough sleeper. This is intended to focus on removing stigma and raising public awareness and understanding of the issues. The Welsh Government already supports Streetlink, which enables members of the public to connect people sleeping rough with local services.

**Financial Implications:** None

### **Recommendation 27**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government, as a matter of urgency, sets a timeline for:**

- **publishing the findings of its Flexible Funding Pathfinders, and**
- **its decision on the proposal to merge the Supporting People Programme Grant with other housing and non-housing related grants.**

**This timeline should take account of the forthcoming devolution of the housing element of short-term supported housing funding to Wales.**

### **Response: Accept in principle**

Welsh Government accepts it is important to continue effective communications with local authorities to ensure they, and other stakeholders, are aware of the work of the pathfinders and any emerging findings. We have been holding monthly pathfinder meetings attended by the seven pathfinder local authorities and key stakeholders from WLGA, WCVA and Cymorth. These meetings allow Welsh Government to gain a greater understanding of changes pathfinders are making in response to the flexible funding programme as well as sharing best practice between local authorities. Additionally, we are facilitating discussions between the remaining local authorities to maximise the learning from the pathfinders.

Evidence gained from this and other engagement will form an important aspect to facilitate a decision, which will need to be made at the right time and not necessarily according to a static timeline.

**Financial Implications:** None

### **Recommendation 28**

**The Committee recommends that if the findings of the Flexible Funding Pathfinders show a reduction in funding for the Supported People Programme, or cast doubt on the sector's ability to maintain service delivery at existing levels, we recommend that the Supporting People Programme Grant should remain a separate, ring-fenced grant.**

### **Response: Reject**

Welsh Government is absolutely committed to supporting vulnerable people and to ensuring the outcomes for disadvantaged people and vulnerable groups improve. In 2018/19 the pathfinder local authorities are required to spend at least as much on Supporting People as the 2017/18 allocation unless they can demonstrate they

achieve the same or greater outcomes for less. Welsh Government will continue to monitor this.

A key principle underpinning the proposed Early Intervention Prevention and Support grant is the focus on outcomes. Local authorities are accountable for delivery of the outcomes across all programmes aimed at supporting vulnerable people, including achieving those outcomes delivered through the Supporting People Programme. The independent evaluation will test the pathfinder's implementation of flexible funding and how this might impact on longer term delivery. This, and other evidence, will be used to influence the future direction of travel.

**Financial Implications:** None

### **Recommendation 29**

**The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government provides further assurances that the Rough Sleeping Action Plan will be adequately resourced, that cross-government funding will be made available, and that funding to ensure the effective implementation of the Plan will be kept under review.**

### **Response: Accept**

The Welsh Government is already investing heavily in tackling all forms of homelessness, with an additional £10m in each of 2018/19 and 2019/20 plus an additional £10m for youth homelessness in 2019/20.

It is not the intention to assign individual budget lines to actions in the plan, as much of this work is already funded or is about improving current practice. Where additional investment is required for developments such as Housing First, we have demonstrated our commitment by providing additional funding last year to support pilot projects. As the plan evolves and new evidence emerges, including evaluation from current pilots, we will consider whether further funding is required.

**Financial Implications:** An additional £10m has already been allocated in the budget for each of 2018/19 and 2019/20 to tackle homelessness, including rough sleeping. Any additional costs will therefore be met from existing programme budgets.