

Dyddiad /Date:
Gofynnwch am/Please ask for:
Llinell uniongyrchol/Direct line:
Ebost/Email:

4 March 2020
D Hopkins



Janet Finch-Saunders, AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

Petition P-05-893 Save Our Parks in Wales

Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your letter of 30th September, 2019, on this matter.

The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) understands the value of parks, play areas and green spaces, and these are important assets for the people of Wales. These facilities add value to local communities and support their health and general wellbeing.

There are excellent examples of well maintained parks and other open spaces in many local authority areas in Wales, and these exemplars have been maintained against a background of austerity in public sector budgets over some years. The entire local authority estate including parks, open spaces, playing fields and footpaths is substantial and generally well used.

However, it is important to understand that not all parks and open spaces are the responsibility of the twenty two local authorities in Wales: These Councils work closely with community groups, town and community councils, and third sector organisations across Wales. This collaboration is valuable when considering new models for sustainable service provision which can support community wellbeing. This may include community asset and service transfer programmes, for example, designed to enable communities to enhance or maintain community facilities and services. This approach is being supported by a number of national grant programmes from the Welsh Government and Big Lottery aimed at supporting citizens and communities to become actively engaged in shaping and developing their localities.

The approach of the WLGA generally, however, is to support fundamentally the principle that decisions on spending by local authorities should be determined by them, taking account of local need and funding available. That means that where any additional

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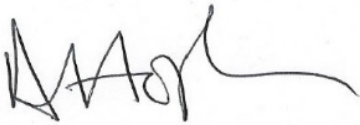
**Croesawn ohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg a byddwn yn ymateb i ohebiaeth yn yr un iaith.
Ni fydd defnyddio'r naill iaith na'r llall yn arwain at oedi.**

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English and will respond to correspondence in the same language.
Use of either language will not lead to a delay.

duties or requirements are placed on local authorities, these should be clearly defined and fully funded.

So whilst the WLGA would promote the idea that the maintenance of green spaces to a standard appropriate to their intended use, the ring-fencing of funds for managing green spaces is not something that local authorities would wish to see. Rather, overall funding for public services at a level that enables the local distribution of resources across all services in accordance with each local authority's needs and plans is preferred to specific or targeted funding.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely



**Pennaeth Addysg dros dro
Interim Head of Education**

**Croesawn ohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg a byddwn yn ymateb i ohebiaeth yn yr un iaith.
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