



Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/235/20

Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair, Finance Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

22 June 2020

Dear Llyr,

I am writing to provide further information on a few issues that were raised during our recent scrutiny session on the first supplementary budget.

Additional COVID-19 funding to Health Boards

£573m has been allocated to the Health & Social Services MEG in this budget to support the COVID-19 response. This includes over £113m that the Minister for Health & Social Services was able to repurpose within his MEG to direct towards the immediate COVID-19 response.

Over £490m will be directed to supporting Health Boards and Trusts. Allocations include funding for personal protective equipment, field hospitals, additional staffing, testing and additional medical equipment and consumables.

Throughout the early part of the pandemic we were able to ensure that funding approvals were made swiftly and cash support for the NHS response was in place at the right time. NHS organisations are now submitting regular monthly monitoring information which is identifying the cost impact of COVID-19 both through the early months of the year and forecasts for the rest of 20-21. Officials are working through this information and first quarter allocations are expected to be confirmed before the end of June.

Test Trace Protect Strategy

The allocation of £57m for Testing was to support the initial requirements of the All Wales Testing Strategy that was announced at the end of March. The majority of this funding will be going to Public Health Wales to support the work they have been doing to enable Wales

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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.

to gradually scale up its capacity for testing key workers and, more recently, anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of the infection.

The focus is now on the recently announced Test, Trace, Protect policy for Wales. We are ensuring this can be delivered effectively in Wales and working with the UK Government. The funding issued so far only forms one element of the strategy and the full scope of the funding required for the rest of this financial year is still being worked through and could not be included in this budget.

I will provide a further update on the developments of this programme and monitoring of its effectiveness in my response to the Committee's report on the first supplementary budget.

Armed Forces Liaison Officers

I can confirm that the Armed Forces Liaison Officers scheme is in operation this year and is being funded within the Housing and Local Government MEG. Decisions on funding beyond 2020-21 will be taken as part of the annual budget for 2021-22 in the normal way.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Cyllid a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Finance and Trefnydd