

**Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc
Children and Young People Committee**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



Jocelyn Davies AM
Chair, Finance Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

19 October 2012

Dear Jocelyn

At its meeting on 10 October, the Children and Young People Committee scrutinised the Minister for Education and Skills and Deputy Minister for Skills and the Minister for Health and Social Services and Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services on the draft budget for the two portfolios relevant to the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee.

The Committee felt that the presentation of the budget had improved, although Members were still concerned about the lack of transparency around budgetary expenditure for children, particularly within the health budget. The Committee are also keen for the presentation of the budget to be developed over time in order that there is a clear link between budget allocations and anticipated outcomes for children and young people.

The Committee was concerned that there was no provision within either budget for any additional costs arising from forthcoming legislation.

The Committee was confused by the Welsh Government's approach to ring fencing, which appeared to vary from Minister to Minister. The Minister for Health told us she was not keen on ring fencing budgets within her portfolio, whilst the Minister for Education provided information about ring fenced funding within his portfolio, for example, the School Effectiveness Grant. We therefore believe that a basic principle is needed which clearly states when ring fencing will be used and the rationale for doing so.

Bae Caerdydd
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

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Despite both Ministers assertion that the extremely tight budget would not impact on their ability to deliver their policy objectives, the Committee felt this could lead to difficulties should additional or contingency funding be needed to ensure delivery of the Programme for Government objectives.

We will be writing to the relevant Ministers setting out our more detailed concerns and these are included in an annex for your information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Chapman".

Christine Chapman AM
Committee Chair

**Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc
Children and Young People Committee**

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Leighton Andrews AM
Minister for Education and Skills
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

19 October 2012

Dear Leighton

We wish to thank you and the Deputy Minister for Skills for attending the Children and Young People Committee meeting on 19 October as part of our scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget Proposals 2013-14.

The Committee would like to raise an issue relating to the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Bill for your consideration. We are also writing to the Minister for Health and Social Services and the contents of both these letters are being copied to the Finance Committee to inform its overarching strategic scrutiny of the Draft Budget and will appear on the Committee's website.

School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Bill

The Committee has previously voiced concerns about the total implementation cost of the School Improvement Guidance and expressed the view that the Minister has significantly underestimated the costs associated with the operation of local determination panels. We are therefore concerned that the Minister has underestimated the overall cost of the Bill, and there does not appear to be any contingency within the budget, should this be the case.

Additional Information

You agreed to provide the following additional information:

- The type of technologies being used at Ysgol y Bont in Anglesey to support the construction of a new state of the art green school;
- Clarification of which budget line funds the Masters training programme;

Bae Caerdydd
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

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- Details of the projects delivered through the Minority Ethnic Achievement Education of Travellers' Children and Tackling Disaffection grants;
- Whether any local authorities have not bid for the Education of Travellers' Children Grant and have withdrawn services, as a result.

Thank you for assisting the Committee in its work, and we look forward to receiving your response to the points raised in this letter as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Chapman".

**Christine Chapman AM
Committee Chair**

**Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc
Children and Young People Committee**

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Lesley Griffiths AM
Minister for Health and Social Services
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

19 October 2012

Dear Lesley

We wish to thank you and the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services for attending the Children and Young People Committee meeting on 10 October as part of our scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget Proposals 2013-14.

The Committee would like to make a number of comments for your consideration. We are also writing to the Minister for Education and Skills and the contents of both these letters are being copied to the Finance Committee to inform its overarching strategic scrutiny of the Draft Budget and will appear on the Committee's website.

Transparency

The Committee felt that the presentation of the budget had improved, although Members were still concerned about the lack of transparency around budgetary expenditure for children, particularly within the health budget.

Members were also concerned that, despite our comments last year about ring fencing, there still appeared to be no clear principles about when and why ring fencing was used, and the approach seemed to vary from Minister to Minister.

National Adoption Service

The Committee expressed concern that there was no additional funding for the delivery of the proposed National Adoption Service. We had hoped that the recommendations from our inquiry into adoption services might influence policy thinking in this area and are disappointed that there is no flexibility within the budget to accommodate any substantive changes to the proposed model.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

The Committee was concerned that bringing together children and young people's and adult and older people's mental health services into an all-ages strategy and the subsequent removal of ring fence funding would further impact on the quality of CAMHS and make it more difficult to monitor spend in this area in future years.

Bae Caerdydd
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

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CAFCASS Cymru

Further to the evidence session, Members were still unclear as to what specifically the additional £527,000 that has been allocated in 2013-14 for CAFCASS Cymru running costs is for and what specific outcomes will be achieved by the allocation of this additional funding.

Additional Information

You agreed to provide the following additional information:

- Whether there are any resources available through Together for Mental Health for the development of age-appropriate training programmes for frontline staff for the diagnosis and management of ADHD.
- Whether any additional resources have been allocated for the implementation of the National Oral Health Plan for Wales specifically with regard to children and young people.

Thank you for assisting the Committee in its work, and we look forward to receiving your response to the points raised in this letter as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



Christine Chapman AM
Committee Chair