

Elin Jones MS

Chair

Business Committee

10 June 2020

Dear Elin

Plenary debate request: Benefits in Wales

We would like to request a plenary debate slot before the summer recess to debate our Committee report on Benefits in Wales. We are aware of the Business Committee's decision to prioritise Covid-19 related business in Plenary, and while our report was published before the pandemic, we believe many of the issues that it raised, are relevant to the Welsh Government's response to Covid-19.

We had originally intended to have a debate in January 2020, but the Welsh Government's response, deferred further consideration of recommendations 9-17. This was because the Government was awaiting forthcoming research by the Wales Centre for Public Policy. The response was then further delayed because of the pandemic. We received an updated response on 20 May. We considered this response at our meeting on 4 June and agreed to request a plenary debate.

As can be seen by the Welsh Government's response (which I have enclosed), many of the issues raised by the report, can now be considered through the context of the pandemic. We believe a debate in the Senedd would allow Members to discuss a range of important issues about benefits in Wales and the pandemic, including the effectiveness of Welsh Government administered benefits in supporting the most vulnerable during the pandemic, and how the Welsh and UK Governments are working together to ensure Welsh needs are taken into account in any changes to the UK wide benefits system. The current crisis has reinforced a



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number of the conclusions and the recommendations we made, especially about ensuring that the benefits system responds to the specific Welsh context and needs of Welsh citizens. We believe these merit further debate by the wider Senedd.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke for the 'J' and a similar one for the 'n'.

John Griffiths MS

Chair

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

