

6 October 2021

Dear Colleague,

### Consultation - Childcare and parental employment: the pandemic and beyond

The Senedd's Equality and Social Justice Committee will shortly undertake an inquiry into how the pandemic has impacted childcare and parental employment, focussing on the barriers that childcare provision can present for parents, particularly women, entering and progressing in the labour market.

#### Invitation to contribute to the inquiry

The Committee would like to invite you to submit written evidence to assist in its consideration of the inquiry. In responding to the consultation, it would be helpful to have your comments in response to the terms of reference below:

- The extent to which current childcare provision in Wales sufficiently supports parents, particularly mothers, to enter, remain and progress in employment, and what changes might be needed to improve the effectiveness of childcare provision in doing this.
- What impact the Childcare Offer in particular has had in achieving the Welsh Government's objective of "helping parents, particularly mothers, to return to work or increase the hours they work".
- The impact of limited childcare availability on Wales' productivity levels.
- How childcare arrangements have affected parental employment during the coronavirus pandemic, particularly in relation to mothers. What lessons might be applied to provide better support during any future lockdowns or increased restrictions.
- Whether Welsh Government-funded childcare provision is flexible enough to support employment of parents, particularly mothers, in different demographic groups and experiencing different circumstances.
- The impact of high-quality formal childcare provision on reducing the attainment gap, and the potential benefits of extending childcare provision to tackle inequalities.
- What Wales can learn from other models of childcare provision operating in the rest of the UK and internationally and emerging practice in terms of supporting parental employment, and the extent to which these models might be transferrable to the Welsh context.



- How financial and practical implications such as availability of childcare would need to be considered by the Welsh Government in any future policy developments to extend childcare provision.

Submissions should arrive by **Sunday 14 November 2021**.

If you wish to submit evidence, please send an electronic copy of your submission to:

[SeneddEquality@Senedd.Wales](mailto:SeneddEquality@Senedd.Wales)

## Guidance

Submissions should be no longer than five sides of A4, with numbered paragraphs, and should focus on the terms of reference.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please provide a brief description of the role of your organisation.

Please see the [guidance for those providing evidence for committees](#).

## Bilingual Policy

The Committee welcomes contributions in both or either of our official languages, English and Welsh. Information not submitted bilingually will not be translated and will be published in the language of submission only. We expect organisations to implement their own standards and schemes and to comply with their statutory obligations.

## How we use your information

We will usually publish correspondence or written evidence on our website. If you have responded in a personal capacity, your name will be published along with your contribution, unless you have asked for your contribution to be anonymised. If you have responded in a professional capacity, the published version of your response will include your name, your job title/role, if relevant, and the name of your organisation.

## Contact details

If you wish to speak to someone regarding this consultation, please use the following contact details:

Committee Clerk

Equality and Social Justice Committee

Welsh Parliament

Cardiff Bay, CF99 1SN

Email: [SeneddEquality@Senedd.Wales](mailto:SeneddEquality@Senedd.Wales)

Telephone: 0300 200 6565

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenny Rathbone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long, sweeping underline.

Jenny Rathbone MS  
Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.  
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.