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Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi  
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref SF/HL/1368/13

The Chair  
Children and Young People  
Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

24<sup>th</sup> May 2013

### Children and Young People Committee Meeting - 9 May 2013

Dear Ann Jones,

May I take this opportunity to thank you and the Committee for allowing me to present written evidence in relation to the progress on our compliance with the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Getting it Right Update 2013.

During the meeting I agreed to provide further information on three areas:

- examples of where Children's Rights Impact Assessments (CRIAs) have had an impact on the development of policy and legislation;
- up to date information on the various types of training provided on the UNCRC; and
- details of the input provided by stakeholders during the development of the Getting it Right Update 2013

I have enclosed this information as an annex to this letter.

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Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

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## Children and Young People Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2013

### **1. Examples of where Children's Rights Impact Assessments (CRIAs) have had an effect on specific legislation or policy or informed Cabinet discussions, which has led to positive changes.**

While the processes to implement the Measure have only been in place for a relatively short space of time, it is very reassuring to see that we are already seeing some positive outcomes.

Since the due regard duty was introduced on May 1 2012, CRIA's have been completed from departments across the Welsh Government which affects all aspects of lives in Wales. Some examples include;

- Active Travel (Wales) Bill 2013
- Cosmetic Piercing of Young People too Young to Give Consent – Research Request for Public Health Wales
- Human Transplantation (Wales) Bill
- 0-7 Early Years Planning
- Social Service and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill
- The Welsh Government Budget
- A New Mandatory Powers of Possession for Anti Social Behaviour (consultation)
- Placing Children on Remand in Secure Accommodation – Amendment to the Children (Secure Accommodation) Regulations 1991. (consultation)
- Framework for Action on Independent Living for Disabled People (consultation)
- Sustainable Development Bill – helping shape a better future for Wales
- Consultation on Legislation to End Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales)
- Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Bill (consultation)
- Homes for Wales - Housing Bill (Homelessness and Gypsy Travellers)
- Implementing the Mobile Homes Act 1983 on Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller Sites (Consultation) - 1 vote per one mobile home
- 0-14 Literacy and Numeracy – Review of Funded Interventions
- Schools causing concern – Guidance for schools and local authorities

### **Examples of positive changes**

The Organ Donation analysis has focussed that policy attention on the need for a strong children and young people strand within their communications campaign, and on the need for communications to promote discussions within families so that parents can guide their children on their rights regarding organ donation.

The Active Travel Bill CRIA ensured that particular groups of children were involved in its development and their views were taken into account.

The Welsh Government completed a CRIA in relation to our budget and for the first time published a leaflet alongside the Draft Budget 2013-14 which provided more accessible information on the Welsh Government's Budget for children and young people. Ministers also took steps to engage school children in discussions around the Budget proposals, again building on the strand of participative budgeting.

Whilst the duty on Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC has only been in place since May 2012, the Welsh Government signed up to the UNCRC in January 2004 and adopted the UNCRC as the underpinning basis for its policies concerning children and young people. Therefore Welsh Government policies and legislation have considered children's rights for some time. The CRIA is a way of analysing, scrutinising and recording this process.

## **2. Up-to-date information on the various types of training provided on the UNCRC and the number of staff who have completed that training.**

The training available for Welsh Government officials is delivered in a variety of formats which includes on-line learning or tailored options to accommodate the needs and requirements of teams or individuals.

### On-line Training

There are currently two versions of the on-line training available to Welsh Government officials.

- There is the 'in depth version' which provides much fuller details on the UNCRC and the duty imposed on Ministers. It will take the participant a maximum of 2 hours to complete. It was encouraged that officials at policy lead level undertake the training.
- There is a shorter introductory version. This training is a basic introduction to the participant to the UNCRC but with options to learn more and follow links to further information. This option can take anything from 10 minutes upwards.

The training was developed by Welsh Government officials, with support from external stakeholders. The on-line training was available on the external Welsh Government and was consulted on as part of the Children's Rights Scheme development in 2012. Alterations were made accordingly. Also, the training was presented to the UNCRC Monitoring Group in 2011 and the group were actively encouraged to contribute their thoughts and opinions. This invitation was extended beyond the meeting and the group were invited to keep the constructive dialogue ongoing throughout the training's development.

The training is non compulsory for Welsh Government officials however they are strongly encouraged and there are promotional campaigns regularly.

Current recorded figures of officials who have undertaken either the full or short online training is 1666. However please note that this figure does not include the significant number of staff who piloted the training or completed the training before a system was in place to record details of the officials who have undertaken the on-line training. It also does not take into account the number of staff who have received much more in-depth and tailored training.

Below is a breakdown by each Department<sup>1</sup> as recorded:-

Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science - 740  
Department of the First Minister and Cabinet - 15  
Department for Education and Skills - 83  
Department for Health and Social Services and Children - 200  
Legal Services - 5  
Department for Local Government and Communities - 187  
People, Places and Corporate Services - 69  
Permanent Secretary's Division - 15  
Strategic Planning, Finance and Performance - 62  
Sustainable Futures - 290

### Other Training

We have developed a number of additional training opportunities for officials. To prepare officials of the introduction of the Measure training sessions to raise awareness were conducted at various Welsh Government locations.

We have had specific requests from branches/teams across all Director General areas to conduct face to face tailored training on the UNCRC and the Measure. The training was adapted to suit the needs of each request and was also conducted throughout the Welsh Governments estate. Sessions have been held in Cardiff, Carmarthen, Merthyr, Aberystwyth and Llandudno Junction. Video conferencing has also been used to train teams.

Additionally a number of Lunch 'n' Learn sessions have been held at the Cardiff and Merthyr offices. It is estimated that 60 have attended the sessions.

The majority of lawyers from the Welsh Government Legal Services have undertaken a dedicated one day training session under the heading of 'UNCRC Training for Welsh Government'. This session included a half day lecture from Nottingham University School of Law who introduced and covered an international focus on the human rights of children, UK law, socio – economic rights, democracy and the courts as well as specific issues under

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the figures indicate the position prior to the recent Cabinet re-shuffle.

the UNCRC: related to Child Participation Rights. They also received a presentation to provide a policy insight and background to the Measure and to describe and discuss the CRIA in place. The training is a recognised accredited Law Society professional development worth 5.5 (CDP) points.

Collectively, over 2000 officials have completed training on the UNCRC, the Measure and the duty on Ministers, the CRIAs and what the implications are for them in providing information and advice to Ministers.

### **3. A note on the input of stakeholders with regard to 'The Getting It Right Update 2013'.**

The Getting it Right Action Plan is the Welsh Governments response to the concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child following the submission of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Periodical Report from the UK Government in 2008.

As a result of discussions with our stakeholders 16 priority areas alongside 4 additional areas has been identified. To address these priority areas, a 5 year rolling 'Getting it Right' action plan was developed.

The Getting it Right Implementation Support Network, consisting of internal and external stakeholders including representatives from the Children's Commissioners office, UNICEF, Save the Children, Local Government, Funky Dragon amongst others was established to maintain an overview of the progress made on the 'Getting it Right' action plan and to advise on how we could work together to further implementation of the UNCRC.

As we were nearing the next reporting round of the UN Committee and as a result of the Programme for Government and the First Ministers committee to focussing on outcomes, we as a Government worked with our stakeholders to revise the action plan to be much more outcomes focussed looking at the impact that these policies had on the lives of children, young people and families in Wales.

This Getting it Right update was to highlight:

- The situation in Wales at the onset of the reporting period through statistical figures. (2008)
- The policies that that Welsh Government had introduced during the reporting period. (As indicated in the Action Plan)
- The most recent corresponding statistical figures available to highlight the progress, or lack, the policies have made.
- Current and Future Actions relating to the policy area

Throughout the transition to an outcome focussed way of working discussions were had with the Implementation Support Network. Feedback and advice was constantly sought.

On 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011 a meeting of the Implementation Steering Group was convened. Both the Action Plan and Getting it Rights update were presented to the group with a request for observations. Following constructive feedback the recommendations made were implemented and the second draft was presented to the group in March 2012.

During the meeting with the group in March a specific request was made to the stakeholders to provide details/suggestions of anything they would consider would enhance the reports but primarily the Getting it Right update.

Limited feedback was received and this centred on the structure of the report. One significant addition to the report during this period was to introduce an additional column to highlight future developments. This recommendation was proposed by the group as it would allow the Welsh Government to indicate what further actions was being considered to address the observations of the UN Committee. A column was added to the template to include this.

During the next meeting of the group in September 2012 a revised version was shared and another request for feedback was made to the group for additional thoughts. This would be the final meeting prior to the Getting it Right update being published alongside the compliance report.

From the onset of the reporting process in 2009 to the publishing of the Getting it Right update in 2013 the Welsh Government has facilitated and welcomed the input of stakeholders.

