



Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee
CELG(4)-15-14 Paper 2

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Cardiff CF10 5FL

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To: Christine Chapman AM, Chair, Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee
CC: Sarah Beasley, Committee Clerk

7th May 2014

Dear Chair,

I write to you regarding my report on community services, 'The Importance and Impact of Community Services within Wales', which was published in late February¹.

The report has been well received and has helped to generate discussion on the future of community services in Wales. As my report emphasises, older people must not be disproportionately affected by any changes to community services. Older people make a significant contribution to our communities and require key services to allow them to continue as economic assets.

Recent debates in the media and in the Senedd on the future of public buses, public toilets, libraries and day/community centres has demonstrated the importance of these services, not only for older people but for others in society. Removing these services will lead to a range of physical and mental health problems for older people, which will ultimately cost public service providers more in the medium to long term.

The Committee may wish to consider the evidence provided in the report, which may be useful for the forward work programme. Should the

¹ http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/Publications/pub-story/14-02-25/The_Importance_and_Impact_of_Community_Services_within_Wales.aspx

Committee decide to carry out a public inquiry on the effects of reducing community services and their consequential impact on older people and others then I would be happy to participate and provide evidence, as well as advise on the shaping of the inquiry should the Committee find this useful.

With further difficult decisions ahead for public service providers in an increasingly challenging economic climate, this is an opportune time to highlight this key issue and ensure that older people can continue to contribute to the economy and play a full and active role in communities across Wales.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Communities, Local Government and Wellbeing Lead, Iwan Williams (ewan.williams@olderpeoplewales.com, 02920 445 045), should you wish to discuss the report in further detail.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Rochira". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Rochira
Older People's Commissioner for Wales