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To: William Graham AM, Chair, Enterprise and Business Committee
CC: Rachel Jones, Deputy Clerk, Enterprise and Business Committee
CC: Martha Howells, Second Clerk, Enterprise and Business Committee

14th August 2015

Re: Employment Opportunities for People Over 50 Report

Dear Chair,

I would like to thank you for undertaking this much needed inquiry and for the publication of the report on 16th July¹.

Ensuring that older people in Wales can remain in or re-enter employment and reducing the very significant number of older people not in employment, education or training are key issues, not just for them as individuals but also for our wider economy. I am pleased that a number of areas addressed in my oral and written evidence are reflected in the final report.

The eleven recommendations included in the report are welcomed and are key to ensuring that the wealth of knowledge, skills and experience that older people possess is better used and applied in the labour market in Wales, helping individuals, employers and local economies in the process.

Having given thought to the three recommendations that refer to my role:

Recommendation 1: The Welsh Government should take the lead, and work with the Older People's Commissioner for Wales...to commission research in respect of people aged 50 and over"; and



“Recommendation 7: The Welsh Government, in conjunction with the office of the Older People’s Commissioner for Wales, should commission research into ‘self-employment and people over 50’”:

Whilst much of my work is collaborative in approach, it is important that the Welsh Government understands that it has the lead accountability as part of its overall Strategy for Older People in Wales Phase Three 2013-23, with which your report closely aligns, for undertaking both the above and the wider recommendations outlined. It is my view that a lead Minister should be designated to ensure that this is transparent and has full Ministerial support. I would suggest that this best sits with Julie James AM as Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology, and I have written to her specifically in respect of this (my letter is attached).

Just a small but important point in respect of clarity on the Ageing Well in Wales Programme. Although it was established and is hosted by me, it is not a Welsh Government programme nor mine. It is a collaborative partnership which receives no specific Government funding.

With specific reference to Recommendation 4 I will be launching a “Say No to Ageism” campaign in October of this year upon which the Welsh Government can work in partnership with me and others.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your invitation to attend the Committee meeting on 7 October to scrutinise the Welsh Government response. I shall be attending and I look forward to working with you further to ensure that the employment prospects for older people across Wales are improved.

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

Best wishes,

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

Sarah Rochira
Older People's Commissioner for Wales