

## Consultation - Priorities for the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

To help the Committee with its planning, **we are keen to hear from stakeholders over the summer about the issues you think we should be focusing on**, and we will consider your responses early in the autumn.

We have had an initial, informal, discussion and identified a number of areas that we may wish to include in our longer term programme. These are set out below, and it would be helpful to have your views on these:

- EU funding of tackling poverty programmes  
The Welsh Government has allocated £192 million from the European Social Fund (ESF) to support ESF priority 1, 'tackling poverty through sustainable employment' over the course of the 2014-2020 programme period. To date, £70 million of this has been allocated to specific projects. The Committee could look at ideas for the way forward for tackling poverty programmes beyond EU membership.
- In-work poverty  
Half of people in Wales living in poverty are in work. Working families and young people in Wales are at greater risk of poverty now than they were a decade ago. The Committee could look at how the Welsh Government can successfully reduce and prevent in-work poverty.
- Poverty and welfare reform  
The Committee could consider the implications of welfare benefit changes on poverty in Wales, and the effectiveness of the Welsh Government's response. The Committee could focus on three welfare reform measures that have had a significant impact on Wales: the introduction of the housing benefit social housing under-occupation measure; universal credit; and the replacement of disability living allowance (DLA) with the personal independence payment (PIP).
- The effectiveness of Communities First  
The Committee could look at what the Welsh Government's flagship tackling poverty programme has achieved over 15 years, how it is monitored and whether it is providing value for money.
- Post-legislative scrutiny of the new homelessness duties imposed by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014;



Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 changed homelessness legislation in Wales, with the focus moving to prevention. The Committee could look at the impact and effectiveness of the new legislation and whether it is delivering the promised outcomes.

- Housing supply

The former CELG Committee undertook a short inquiry into barriers to homebuilding in 2013. In light of the most recent projections of housing need and demand, the Committee could look at the broader issues currently affecting supply across the social, private or whole sector. This could include examining initiatives to bring empty properties back into occupation. This work could tie in with the Right to Buy Bill, which is expected in the autumn term.

- Local government reorganisation and reform

Following the outcome of the Assembly elections in May 2016, the Welsh Government announced its intention to revisit its proposals for local government reorganisation and reform, as set out in the Fourth Assembly. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government has indicated he will be bringing forward new proposals in the autumn term, which the Committee will wish to scrutinise.

July 2016

