

SP20

Blaenoriaethau ar gyfer y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb,  
Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau

Priorities for the Equality,  
Local Government and Communities Committee

Ymateb gan: Carnegie UK

Response from: Carnegie UK

Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Andrew Carnegie House  
Pittencrieff Street  
Dunfermline  
Fife, Scotland, KY12 8AW  
Tel: +44 (0)1383 721445  
Fax: +44 (0)1383 749799

[www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk](http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk)

1 September 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Priorities for the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee**

The Carnegie UK Trust welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Committee's consultation on upcoming priorities across the policy areas of local government, housing, communities, poverty, and equality of opportunity and human rights in Wales. The Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds through influencing policy, and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work.

We have chosen to respond to the policy areas in which we have relevant experience and evidence, including in-work poverty and public services reform. Further information on our work is available on our website [www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk](http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk).

#### **In-work poverty**

The Trust is interested in fulfilling work, and the links between work and wellbeing. Access to fulfilling, paid work has long been a significant determinant of people's wellbeing. Economically, fulfilling work provides a secure income, while in social terms fulfilling work can offer a sense of purpose, social connections and personal agency.

While work is important for lifting people out of poverty, work in itself is no longer a protection against poverty, with many now experiencing in-work poverty. Low pay and insecure work (temporary or zero-hour contracts) can present many problems in maintaining a standard of living that provides stability and security, in turn having an impact on personal wellbeing.

Soon to be published data analysis into work and wellbeing commissioned by the Trust in 2016 indicates a number of concerning shifts that contribute to in-work poverty in the UK. These shifts include heightened levels of job insecurity, low skilled and low paid work, underemployment and unpredictable hours, and a rise in self-employment (with many self-employed people experiencing significant levels of underemployment). The analysis included looking at a regional breakdown of the data, which revealed that Wales experiences the highest levels of underemployment in the UK.

The Trust's Chief Executive Martyn Evans chaired the Fairer Fife Commission, established in 2014 by Fife Council. The Commission produced a report which defined a Fairer Fife as 'a Fife where all residents have the capability to live good lives, make choices and reach their full potential and where all children are safe, healthy and happy'. The report made a series of recommendations for achieving a Fairer Fife that is poverty free, with access to fair work, and is affordable.

Recommendations included Fife becoming a living wage region, and taking a leading role in supporting sustainable and fair self-employment. The Fairer Fife report can be downloaded here (<http://bit.ly/21pdT8D>). While specific to Fife, the process that the Fairer Fife Commission went through to define fairness in Fife, and chart a series of recommendations for achieving a Fairer Fife, is a model that could prove useful in the Welsh context.

The Trust recommends that the Committee consider its approach to in-work poverty within the broader context of fair and fulfilling work.

### **Local government reorganisation and reform**

The Trust has taken a leading role in discussions across the UK and Ireland on the transformation from a welfare state to an 'Enabling State'. This shift is characterised by a recognition that traditional 'top down' approaches can no longer solve the complex social problems that we face as a society, and that the state needs to play a more facilitative and enabling role which empowers individuals and communities to have more control over their personal wellbeing, and our collective wellbeing as a society. We have been working with the third sector and governments at all levels across the UK to better understand this shift, and identify policy tools to encourage individual and community empowerment.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 provides a window of opportunity for local governments in Wales to take a more enabling approach to ways of working. The Act requires public bodies, including local authorities, to think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems, and take a more joined up approach. These features of the Act are aligned with the principles of an enabling state.

The Trust recommends that any proposals relating to reorganisation or reform of local government in Wales are considered within the context of The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015, and the Trust's 8 steps to an enabling state (see <http://bit.ly/1UbVmlQ>).

We hope that you find these comments helpful. If you would like to discuss our response, or would like to find out more about our work, please contact Rebekah Menzies, Policy Officer ([rebekah@carnegieuk.org](mailto:rebekah@carnegieuk.org)).

Yours sincerely,



Douglas White  
Head of Advocacy