

Alun Davies AC/AM

**Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language**



**Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government**

Ein cyf/Our ref MAP/ARD/2000/17

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair of the Committee
Children, Young People & Education Committee

21 June 2017

Dear Lynne,

Thank you for your letter of 25 May regarding the Children, Young People and Education Committee's ongoing scrutiny of Youth Work in Wales following the publication of their report.

As you are already aware, I have committed to reviewing Extending Entitlement, the statutory direction and guidance for youth support services in Wales. My officials are currently working closely with Margaret Jervis MBE to develop a consultation document ready for the autumn. Margaret is currently busy meeting with a range of stakeholders to help shape this document. We plan to publish our new updated Extending Entitlement in summer 2018. Following the publication of Extending Entitlement my officials will begin the process of consulting on a new National Youth Work Strategy. Therefore a new National Youth Work Strategy will not be in place before the launch of the Extending Entitlement. A copy of the youth work strategy review and implementation action plan can be found below.

On 9 March, we awarded a contract to Glyndwr University to carry out a review of the impact of our National Youth Work Strategy. We expect to receive their final report in July. I want the findings of this report to support the review of Extending Entitlement and the development of the consultation document, I believe this is essential. I understand that stakeholders were able to respond to the review by attending a focus group or by responding to an online consultation that was open for 4 weeks.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

All stakeholders will have further opportunities to have their voices heard, when we formally consult on Extending Entitlement later this year and again on the new national Youth Work Strategy. I have attached a copy of our action plan for the review and implementation of the National Youth Work Strategy.

You have asked for an update on how many local authorities have undertaken sufficiency assessments and if I am satisfied that these have led to a comprehensive overview of the current provision available to young people. Local authorities are not currently required to undertake sufficiency assessments however this is being explored as part of the review of Extending Entitlement. Following the formal consultation of Extending Entitlement I will decide if we should take forward sufficiency assessments for youth work in Wales.

The Welsh Government provides core funding for statutory youth services through the Revenue Support Grant. This provides local authorities with the flexibility to best deploy the resources to meet their local needs and priorities, including their youth work provision. The new Extending Entitlement will provide local authorities with direction and guidance for youth support services, including youth work and therefore providing them with greater clarity.

We are currently in the process of externally reviewing our additional youth work grants, including the National Voluntary Youth Organisation (NVYO) grant, all evaluations are due to be completed this summer. It will be at this point I will consider our options and then announce my decision, which will include any changes to the NVYO grant. I am fully aware of timescales for current NVYO recipients, including the need to know of any future funding decisions by 31 December.

My officials have recently met with the Principal Youth Officers Group (PYOG) and the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS), where they shared information relating to all current reviews taking place and how they all link. In July I will be meeting representatives from the Boys and Girls Clubs and Youth Cymru to hear about the benefits of the NVYO grant and the extra resources that it has enabled them to bring into in Wales, I will also be meeting with the PYOG.

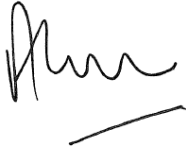
I'm sure you will agree that we are at a crucial point for youth work where we have the opportunity to take a step back and consider all our options relating to: funding, statutory guidance, sufficiency, the role of a new national board, a new youth work strategy and, how we support the youth work sector to work together. I can assure you that the Welsh Government is taking a strategic approach.

You have also asked what I mean by 'youth support' and how this relates to youth work. Extending Entitlement (2002) provides the direction and guidance to Local Authorities, relating to section 123 of the Learning and Skills Act (2000), for Youth Support Services. Youth Support Services is defined as services that will encourage, enable or assist young people aged 11 to 25 to participate effectively in education or training; take advantage of opportunities for employment; or participate effectively and responsibly in the life of their communities. Youth work contributes to Youth Support Services.

My officials are currently following our Public Appointments procedures to appoint the Chair for the new National Youth Support Service Board, once the Chair is in place we will then look to appoint the other board members. It is essential that we ensure the voices of young people are heard, I will therefore be exploring how we can work with the new Youth Parliament and Children in Wales.

I have also attached my update to the Committee relating to your recommendations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alun', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Alun Davies AC/AM
Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language

**National Youth Work Strategy for Wales (2014-18)
review and implementation action plan**

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| Issue invitation to quote for a review of the impact of the National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014-18 | 3 Feb 2017 |
| Deadline for tenders | 3 March 2017 |
| Contract awarded | 9 March 2017 |
| Presentation to Youth Work Reference Group | 23 June 2017 |
| Final bilingual report and Executive Summary | Summer 2017 |
| Report to feed into the draft Extending Entitlement consultation paper | Summer 2017 |
| To note any comments relating to youth work from the Extending Entitlement consultation | Winter 2017 |
| Work with the Youth Work Reference Group to begin to draft a new youth work strategy | Winter 2017 - Spring 2018 |
| Formal consultation for a new Youth Work Strategy | Summer / Autumn 2018 |
| Publish a new Youth Work Strategy | Spring 2019 |

Six month update to the Children, Young People and Education Committee report : What type of youth service does Wales want? Report of the inquiry into Youth Work

June 2017

Recommendation 4 was accepted in principle.

The Committee recommended that:

The Minister should introduce a national model for youth work, encompassing statutory and voluntary provision. The Minister should report to this Committee on progress within 6 months of the publication of this report.

Any consideration of a national model for youth work needs to be informed by the review of Extending Entitlement and the review of the National Youth Work Strategy.

The formal consultation for Extending Entitlement will take place in the autumn. Feedback from this consultation will inform the new Extending Entitlement direction and guidance which will be formally launched summer 2018.

A review of the existing National Youth Work Strategy is currently being carried out by Glyndwr University, this review will inform the Extending Entitlement consultation paper. A formal consultation process for a new National Youth Work Strategy will be carried out following the publication of Extending Entitlement. The Youth Work Reference Group will play a key role in the development of a new youth work strategy.

We have begun the process to establish an independently chaired, National Youth Support Service Board. The Board will be able to provide constructive challenge and scrutiny of the Welsh Government's policies and proposals for Youth Support Services, including youth work. The Chair and Board members will be subject to the Public Appointment process. I expect the Chair to be in place by the autumn. The Chair will then support me to appoint all other board members, who we will have in place by spring 2018.

Recommendations 5, 6 & 7 were accepted in Principle

The Committee recommended that:

5) The Minister should report back to the Committee within 6 months of the publication of this report on how he intends to assess the extent to which his commitment to universal, open access provision, in English and Welsh, is being delivered.

6) Within 6 months of the publication of this report, the Minister should commission an exercise to map voluntary youth work provision across Wales. The exercise should be refreshed periodically.

7) The Minister should ensure that youth work sufficiency assessments are undertaken by local authorities as part of their population needs assessments and report back to the Committee on progress within 6 months of the publication of this report.

My officials have begun to explore if sufficiency assessments might be a suitable vehicle and the best way forward to assist local authorities in mapping out and developing their local youth work offer. We plan to include the consideration of sufficiency assessments within the formal consultation of Extending Entitlement. This will ensure stakeholders have an opportunity to have their views heard.

I believe that sufficiency assessments may be able to provide a better understanding, at a local level, of what youth work provision within the statutory and voluntary sector looks like on the ground. I do not believe a national mapping approach is the best way forward. I am happy to report back to the Committee as this work continues to progress.