

Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM
First Minister
Welsh Government
Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

6 April 2017

Dear First Minister

Meeting on 17 February 2017

Thank you for attending the meeting of the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister held in Carmarthen on 17 February.

Following the meeting, the Committee agreed that I should write to you with the following observations and some additional questions arising from your remarks.

The Welsh Government's approach to reducing poverty

Members were interested to hear about the Welsh Government's revised approach to tackling poverty in light of the significant changes which have been made in this Assembly, including:

- the allocation of lead Ministerial responsibility for poverty to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure;
- the focus in 'Taking Wales Forward' on increasing prosperity;
- the phasing out of Communities First, the flagship anti-poverty programme of the Welsh Government;
- the acknowledgement that the Welsh Government's target to end child poverty by 2020 will not be met;
- the fact the Tackling Poverty Action Plan may not be renewed and the abolition of the Tackling Poverty External Advisory Group.



There are a number of areas that we would like to explore with you in more detail following the meeting:

1. How you intend to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the new approach and the interventions developed and delivered by the Welsh Government, and whether it is your intention to establish new targets or indicators in relation to reducing poverty or mitigating its effects.
2. How each of your Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers is seeking to increase prosperity within their portfolios, in line with your intention for tackling poverty to be a shared responsibility for all government departments and Cabinet Members.
3. The precise definition of 'prosperity' that the Welsh Government will be using and how you intend to establish what success would look like.
4. How support for people for whom employment is not a realistic option, such as some people with chronic illnesses or disabilities, children and older people, will be maintained and developed within the overall focus on economic prosperity.
5. How the Welsh Government's new approach will work with groups and communities that are far removed from mainstream programmes that seek to improve economic prosperity, such as gypsy and traveller communities.

Communities First

In relation to the announcement that Communities First will be phased out, there are several areas on which Members would welcome further clarity.

We welcome your acknowledgement of the need to continue to invest in programmes aimed at tackling health inequalities and supporting people to live healthier lives, such as smoking cessation and prevention of Type 2 Diabetes.



However, given that many of these projects have been delivered through Communities First, we would appreciate additional information about how the funding for these health improvement projects and programmes will be provided in the future.

We would also like to know how the end of Communities First will affect the geographical footprint of other programmes such as Lift, Flying Start and Communities for Work.

Play facilities for children with disabilities

Finally, during the Committee's engagement with local stakeholders in advance of the meeting, the issue of a lack of suitable integrated play and recreation facilities for children with disabilities was raised with us. We would be grateful if you could provide information about whether and how the Welsh Government is taking steps to help increase the number of integrated public play facilities for children with disabilities across Wales.

I would be grateful for your response on the points above in due course.

Yours sincerely



Ann Jones AM
Deputy Presiding Officer
Chair, Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister

