



Eich cyf/Your ref Petition P-05-804
Ein cyf/Our ref HID/00120/18

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales

5 March 2018

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 9 February seeking my views on the petition instigated by RAY Ceredigion about funding to support local authorities to meet their play sufficiency duties in line with their Play Sufficiency Assessments.

In November 2012, the Welsh Government commenced the first part of the duty under section 11 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010, Play Opportunities for Children. This part of the duty requires local authorities to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities for children in their areas, in accordance with regulations. The Play Sufficiency Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2012 set out the requirements of the assessments and the matters they need to take into account.

Welsh Ministers commenced the second part of this legislation on 1 July 2014, which places a duty on local authorities to secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas, so far as reasonably practicable, having regard to their assessments. The duty also requires local authorities to publish and keep up to date information about play opportunities for children in their areas.

The Welsh Government places great value on play and its importance in the lives of children in our society. Children have a fundamental right to be able to play. It is central to their enjoyment of life and contributes to their health and well-being.

We have demonstrated our commitment by the allocation of just under £5 million since 2013-14 to support local authorities to meet their play sufficiency duties. I am pleased to report that local authorities have been able to provide significant benefits to their communities through the use of the funding. Ceredigion County Council has allocated approximately £35,000 from this funding to RAY Ceredigion for the provision of play sessions throughout this period. This includes the allocation of £7,155 under the Welsh Government's All Wales Play Opportunities Grant during the current financial year.

RAY Ceredigion has also benefitted from our Families First funding, receiving approximately £112,000 to provide play sessions for Ceredigion County Council since 2013-14. The organisation has recently been invited by the Council to quote for services in 2018-19 under the grant.

Local authorities also have the discretion to use their Welsh Government Out of School Childcare Grant funding for play-related purposes. The Out of School Childcare grant contributes to the delivery of a range of Welsh Government priorities, outlined in the Early Years & Childcare Plan and the Tackling Poverty Action Plan. It supports local authorities in offering sufficient out of school childcare in their local area. This enables better outcomes to be achieved for the people of Wales.

In utilising this funding, local authorities should address the needs of their local population and are encouraged to:

- identify and meet gaps in provision based on the results of their Childcare Sufficiency Assessments and Play Sufficiency Assessments;
- improve childcare and play provision; and
- support the childcare and play workforce with training as required.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

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

Huw Irranca-Davies AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Gofal Cymdeithasol a Phlant
Minister for Children and Social Care