

**COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

Context

1. My term as first Minister has spanned three Government terms, against a backdrop of recession and austerity. When I took office on 10 December 2009, the credit crunch had already led to a global recession, and a series of UK Government budget decisions marked the start of nearly a decade of austerity, characterised by real terms falling budgets.
2. Austerity has hit the people of Wales hard and had a dual impact on the Welsh Government. It has reduced our options for meeting people's needs and left us vulnerable to the impact of UK Government budget cuts in non-devolved areas – most notably in relation to welfare reform. Government is never easy. But the cumulative impact of austerity has meant that we have not had enough resources to do all of the things we would want to do at a time when the level of need has increased across Wales due to reasons outside our control.
3. The Referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union was held in June 2016, and had an outcome that few of us could have predicted at that time. I have acted to ensure a strong Welsh Government response to Brexit, protecting our interests in negotiation with the UK Government, and supporting Welsh business to be ready for the UK's withdrawal from the EU. But I have not been content for either austerity or Brexit to define my time as First Minister. I have been determined to keep up momentum to improve services and provide the support that people the length and breadth of Wales depend on.
4. I believe the past nine years have been ones of sustained progress, as set out below.
5. In 2011 the people of Wales voted decisively for full legislative powers, affirming that devolution is now the settled will of its people. We have used these powers and led the way in the UK and the world with ground-breaking legislation designed to improve the lives of everyone in Wales.
6. April 2018 marked the introduction of the first Welsh taxes for almost 800 years – another important step in the evolution of the Welsh Government. We are now responsible for collecting Landfill Disposal Tax and Land Transaction Tax – and from April 2019, 1.3 million taxpayers living in Wales will pay Welsh rates of income tax. We are exploring how these new tax powers can complement our range of policy levers, with proposals for a vacant land tax, social care levy, tourism tax and measures to discourage disposable plastics.

**COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

A Decade of Delivery

7. I have been First Minister across three administrations, and we have consistently delivered against the commitments that we made – from the One Wales coalition programme, through the ‘Five for a Fairer Future’ commitments and the 2011 Programme for Government, through to the current national strategy *Prosperity for All*.
8. All of the ‘Five for a Fairer Future’ commitments were met in full, with 500 new Community Support Officers on our streets, a doubling of Flying Start childcare provision, longer GP opening hours, Jobs Growth Wales exceeding its targets, and school spending growing over the five years of this term.
9. We have recently reported progress against *Prosperity for All* and two years into this administration we are on track with delivery. We have fully delivered a number of commitments including tax cuts for small businesses across Wales, through our High Street Rates Relief Scheme. We introduced the £80m New Treatment Fund, which has delivered faster access to 137 new medicines for a range of conditions.
10. We are on track with our other commitments. We have increased to £40,000 the amount of money people can keep before they have to fund the full cost of their residential care, and extended the number of places where working parents can access 30 hours of free childcare for their 3 and 4 year olds, with more than half of local authorities now covered by our pilots. We are making significant progress towards delivering the 100,000 all-age apprenticeships programme, with 16,000 starts in the first half of 2017/18, and we are on track to invest £100m in improving our schools’ performance, alongside our structural reforms to the curriculum.
11. I have made a personal commitment to end youth homelessness within a decade, backed up by an additional £10m investment next year. We have passed legislation that has helped to prevent 18,000 households in Wales from becoming homeless since 2014, and published the *Rough Sleeping Action Plan* to develop collaborative and innovative ways to support individuals off the street.
12. I was proud to announce my aim for this to be a Feminist Government. We have made good progress in some areas of gender equality, with the gender pay gap narrowing significantly since 2009. But there is more to do. We have recognised that women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination are often excluded from wider progress. In response we commissioned a Gender Equality Review to develop a roadmap for achieving gender equality in Wales. I was pleased to receive the first phase of the review which set out what we already do well, how we can improve, and looked at examples from Governments around the world.

**COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

Prosperous and Secure

13. Our aim is to enable people to fulfil their ambitions through secure and sustainable employment and to create the right environment for businesses to grow and thrive.

Impact

14. The economy and labour market in Wales have performed well since 2009.

Despite the UK's slow recovery from the recession and the negative impacts of the UK Government's policies, we have seen important improvements, including areas where we have outperformed other parts of the UK.

15. Our employment rate is the highest since comparable records began, with the gap between Wales and the UK reducing since 2009. For the first time ever in the period to August 2018, the employment rate in Wales was higher than in Scotland. Similarly, the level of unemployment in Wales has declined by almost a third since 2009, and at 3.8 per cent, is the lowest since comparable records began and below the UK rate of 4.0 per cent.

16. High economic inactivity has been a long-standing problem in Wales. Over recent periods, inactivity in Wales has been lower than or similar to that in many other parts of the UK. GVA per head in Wales has improved relative to the UK over the period since 2009, increasing by 1.8 percentage points. This is the third best of all UK countries and regions (after London and the West Midlands).

Achievements

17. In December 2017 we published our *Economic Action Plan*, setting out our innovative approach to strengthening our economic foundations, future-proofing the Welsh economy and supporting the conditions which allow everyone to benefit.

18. By the end of this administration, we will have the most generous childcare provision for working parents anywhere in the UK. Early indications are that the childcare offer is having a positive impact - helping parents financially and enabling them to balance the demands of work and family life.

19. A key commitment has been to make sure that the economy grows and that the people of Wales are able to benefit from the opportunities and share in this prosperity. Our *Employability Action Plan* sets out the steps that we will take to help people into the right jobs, to equip them with the right skills to progress and to remove barriers to employment.

20. We are committed to promoting Fair Work. Our Fair Work Commission will advise us on the changes we need to make to improve working conditions for all employees in Wales. We are already working with businesses, through the

COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE

Economic Contract and our Calls to Action to provide decent, secure and rewarding employment.

21. We are simplifying the funding streams available to support businesses and focusing on three thematic sectors. This builds on a long history of supporting core industries in Wales as well as supporting the businesses of the future.
22. Recognising the importance of the steel industry and steel related businesses to Wales, we have supported the sector to help ensure its sustainability. Increasing the level of research and development undertaken by the steel sector in Wales is essential to securing its future, and in February 2018 I launched the new Steel and Metals Institute to reinforce our steel and metals research capability.
23. In February 2016 Aston Martin was welcomed to Wales, creating more than 750 highly-skilled jobs, with a further 1,000 jobs created across the supply chain.
24. We launched the UK's first Development Bank, the new Development Bank of Wales in October 2017, to make it easier for businesses to get the capital they need to start-up, strengthen and grow. It has significantly increased investment levels, and launched a number of new funds which total some £233m, including the Wales Flexible Investment Fund and Angel Co-Investment Fund.
25. Decarbonisation is one of the calls to action in the *Economic Action Plan* and has been adopted by the Government as a priority area. We are committed to sustainable economic development and to seizing the associated economic opportunities.
26. Wales' recycling performance is one of the success stories of devolution. Working in partnership with local authorities, and supported by a shared investment of £750m in treatment capacity for food and residual waste treatment, we have achieved 63 per cent recycling for household waste in 2017-18. We are the best in the UK at recycling and the third best in the world.
27. We are playing our part in tackling climate change and protecting our environment. There has been a considerable increase in the percentage of electricity from renewable sources in recent years, rising from 16 per cent of Wales's national electricity consumption in 2009 to 43 per cent in 2016. Our Arbed and Nest schemes have helped to improve the energy efficiency of 27,000 homes since 2012.

**COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

Healthy and Active

28. We are improving health and wellbeing for individuals, families and communities in Wales by shifting our approach from treatment to prevention.

Impact

29. We are investing more in health than ever before and making cutting-edge treatment more accessible. In 2016-17, we spent 8 per cent more per person on health and social services combined than England, giving patients the right treatment, at the right time, and in the right place. We are spending over 14 per cent more per person on health and social services than we did in 2009-10.

30. Our health and care services face greater demand than ever before. Our Emergency Departments treated a record 1 million patients last year. Despite these pressures we have maintained and improved the levels of treatment people get. More people were seen within the 4 hour target last year than for 4 years despite exceptional pressures and increased demand. Last year our hospitals treated and discharged 19,000 more people within the 4 hour target than the previous year.

31. More people are starting the treatment they need within the target time. Almost 90 per cent of patients had been waiting less than 26 weeks for treatment in July 2018, the highest for 5 years.

32. Overall cancer survival continues to increase in Wales and premature death from cancer for people aged under 75 has fallen by 21.4 per cent since 2001. This has been supported by urgent suspected cancer performance improving from 80.5 per cent in April 2013 to 88.7 per cent March 2018. This was an improvement of over 8 per cent of people starting definitive treatment within the target time of 62 days.

33. We are leading the way internationally with the Welsh ambulance clinical response model. Ambulance services in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Australia and Canada have now replicated the clinical response model pioneered in Wales. We are funding a £60m programme over the next three years to replace the ambulance fleet with more modern, low carbon models, improving emissions performance and reducing fuel and maintenance costs.

Achievements

34. We have maintained funding for free prescriptions, removing barriers to treatment for people with long-term conditions and addressing a source of health inequalities.

35. NHS staffing is at record levels with over 90,000 employees, including consultants, midwives, nurses and health visitors. Following the launch of our

**COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

Train Work Live campaign, we have seen a significant increase in the number of GP training places in Wales filled, including in hard-to-recruit to rural areas.

36. Prevention and early intervention are central to our public health campaigns through which we are encouraging people to adopt healthier and more active lifestyles. We are seeing the results of this, with reductions in teenage pregnancies, smoking levels and overall alcohol consumption.
37. The challenges that the NHS faces have been well reported, and alongside delivering effective services today, we are planning for a sustainable health and social care system for the future. Earlier this year, working with partners across the system, we developed a shared vision for the future. *A Healthier Wales: our Plan for Health and Social Care* is the blueprint for a system where support and treatment is available across a range of community-based services, whilst at the same time ensuring that when hospital based care is needed, it can be accessed more quickly.
38. Our £100m Transformation Fund will support this reform of health and social care services. This builds on our work across the last decade to develop health and social services as a single system. Our Intermediate Care Fund has helped to break down the barriers between health, housing, social care and local government to keep older and vulnerable people independent and out of hospital. We have invested tens of millions of pounds in projects which have improved care and allowed people to either remain at home or be discharged from hospital as quickly as possible, demonstrated by the long term decrease in delayed transfers of care.
39. We have invested £1.6bn to develop and maintain our NHS Wales estate. This has included the development of the Noah's Ark Children's Hospital, Llandough Adult Acute Unit, ongoing improvements at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd and phase 1b of Morriston Hospital.

Ambitious and Learning

40. We are instilling a passion for learning in everyone from the earliest age, inspiring them to continue to learn and develop throughout their lives.

Impact

41. In 2016-17, public spending on education per person was 3 per cent higher in Wales than in England – an increase of 2 per cent in Wales over the preceding five years, compared to no increase in England.
42. We have seen sustained improvement in educational attainment. Up to 2016 there was a steady improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 inclusive threshold (Level 2 including a grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics), from 47 per cent in 2009 to 60 per cent in 2016.

**COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

Following the change in definition, provisional data for 2018 shows a 0.5 percentage point increase on 2017.

43. The overall learning activity success rate for FE in 2016/17 was 87 per cent, an increase from 81 per cent in 2009/10. The apprenticeship framework success rate was 81 per cent, compared with 80 per cent in 2009/10.
44. We are seeing the impact of our reforms more widely. The proportion of adults with no qualifications fell from 15 per cent in December 2009 to 9 per cent in December 2017, with the proportion of adults qualified to Higher Education level or above (level 4) increasing from 29 per cent to 37 per cent over the same period.
45. This year the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training fell below 10 per cent for the first time in a decade, helping more young people make a positive step into work or training.

Achievements

46. We continue to invest in giving children the best start in life through Flying Start, Families First and the Healthy Child Wales Programme. We are investing an additional £60m over three years to develop new childcare settings across Wales. This will allow childcare and the Foundation Phase to be delivered on a single site in more locations, as well as refurbishing existing settings to support the best quality childcare.
47. We have prioritised schools spending throughout the years of austerity, making sure that schools can play their vital education and community roles. We have acknowledged that some pupils need more support than others to reach their potential. Since its introduction in 2012, the Pupil Development Grant has supported over 450,000 learners from more disadvantaged backgrounds. We are investing unprecedented amounts – over £187m this year and next – to support our schools to improve outcomes for our disadvantaged learners.
48. We are investing over £3.7bn in the education estate in Wales as part of our 21st Century Schools and Education Programme. This is the largest investment in schools since the 1960s with over 100 projects already completed. There are another 63 schools under construction or improved, indicating the programme will significantly exceed targets.
49. I am proud that we have delivered the most generous financial package for students in the UK. We continue to provide financial support to young people and adult learners who wish to continue or return to further education. Since 2015, the Education Maintenance Allowance for 16-19 year olds has supported approximately 75,000 students from lower income households to remain in education.

**COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

50. Between 2011 and 2016 we honoured our commitment that no full-time higher education student from Wales should pay more for their degree in real terms than if they had been students in 2010/11. Over that period this meant that Welsh students avoided around £245m in debt. We have since made significant reform to our package of support for students. This means that all Welsh students will now receive support for living costs which is equivalent to the UK national living wage.

United and Connected

51. We are building a confident nation where people take pride in their communities, their Welsh identity and language, and our place in the world.

Impact

52. We are building resilient communities, culture and language. 85 per cent of people feel satisfied with their local area as a place to live. Three-quarters of adults attend or participate regularly in the arts, with attendance and participation having risen in recent years.

53. We have delivered modern and connected infrastructure and we have done so despite the fact that the Welsh capital budget in 2019-20 will be down 10 per cent, or £200m in real terms, compared with 2010-11. Since the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan was published in 2012 we have invested £9bn of capital funding.

54. We have made significant progress on Housing. More than 90 per cent of people in Wales were happy with their accommodation in 2017-18. Between 2009-10 and 2017-18, 21,226 additional affordable housing units were delivered across Wales.

55. Ofcom has reported that Wales now has the highest availability of superfast broadband among the devolved nations.

56. We helped protect existing markets, build networks and pursue new trade and investment opportunities, promoting Wales to the world. We have seen the value of Welsh exports continue to grow, increasing by £0.7bn in the year to June 2018.

Achievements

57. Despite ongoing austerity, we have invested to ensure that all parts of Wales are well connected and that people are able to travel for work and leisure. We have invested £1.8bn in transport schemes across Wales to improve connectivity and boost economic activity. We have dualled the A465 Heads of the Valleys road; improved the A55 corridor and are building the Newtown bypass.

**COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

58. We have assumed responsibility for the rail franchise in Wales, enabling us to tackle historic underinvestment. Awarding the 15-year, £5bn Wales and Borders Rail service contract allows us to deliver a high-quality, safe, affordable and accessible public transport network, and opens the door to us delivering the South Wales Metro and planning a North Wales Metro.
59. We have ensured Cardiff Airport grows as an international gateway to south Wales. Since its purchase in 2013, the Airport has become one of the fastest growing regional airports in the UK, now handling 1.5 million passengers a year with over 50 direct routes and more than 900 connecting destinations worldwide. This year, Cardiff International Airport unveiled a Master Plan for the next 20 years, building on the 9 per cent passenger growth over the past year.
60. We have leveraged in investment of £185m in next generation broadband. The Superfast Cymru scheme has made fibre optic connections available in all local authority areas providing almost 733,000 premises across Wales with access to fast fibre broadband. Since 2013, the availability of superfast broadband across Wales has more than doubled.
61. We are laying the foundations to support delivery of our vision for a million Welsh speakers: Cymraeg 2050 and have awarded £4.2m to 77 organisations across Wales to promote Welsh as a living, vibrant language.
62. We have always been committed to Wales taking its place in the international community. This has become more pressing as we contemplate a future outside the European Union. We have successfully pressed our position with the UK Government, securing significant changes to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act and protecting our devolution settlement. We are supporting stakeholders to plan for Brexit, through the £50m EU Transition Fund, whilst identifying opportunities for Wales to continue its positive relationship with Europe.
63. We have expanded our network of international offices in our biggest and growing markets for Welsh exports and inward investment, with new offices in Montreal, Berlin, and Doha, with Paris and Dusseldorf opening imminently.
64. We are seeing the impact of our actions. Alongside exports continuing to grow, Wales is now home to more than 1,100 foreign owned companies and investments from overseas companies such as Aston Martin Lagonda, Sony, GE Aircraft, General Dynamics and MotoNovo Finance. Since 2010 these companies have helped to contribute towards the creation of more than 26,000 new jobs across Wales; with a further 31,000 jobs safeguarded during this period.
65. As part of the Wales for Africa project, I planted the millionth tree for the Size of Wales Million Trees project in Uganda, aimed at reducing the impact of climate change and de-forestation. I also announced a new target of Ten Million Trees, which with our Ugandan partners and Size of Wales we are on course to achieve.

**COMMITTEE FOR SCRUTINY OF THE FIRST MINISTER
WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

66. Wales has hosted International Sporting Events raising our profile on the world stage. In 2010 the Ryder Cup attracted 77,000 visitors and generated a direct economic impact of £54m. We hosted the Rugby World Cup attracting over 500,000 visitors and generated a direct economic impact of £82m. In 2016 Cardiff the World Half Marathon Championship attracted 20,000 visitors and generated a direct economic impact of £3.9m. In 2017 Wales successfully hosted the Champions League Final attracting 92,000 visitors and generated a direct economic impact of over £40m.

Building Prosperity for All

67. My government has continued to use all powers available to it to build prosperity for all, leaving no-one behind. We have remained true to our values of social justice and equality, and place the needs and interests of the Welsh people at the heart of everything that we do.

68. It has been a privilege to serve as First Minister for the past nine years. I am proud of the record of my administration in delivering for the people of Wales. There is much still to do and the challenges ahead are very considerable, but I have no doubt that my successor will rise to the challenge as they take Wales forward under new leadership.

Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM

First Minister of Wales