

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-880
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/06020/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Assembly Member for Aberconwy
Chair - Petitions committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff
CF99 1NA
Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

7 May 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 30 April regarding the petition from Active Music Services.

I note that the petition calls on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to produce a National Plan for Music Education with dedicated central funding in line with the rest of the UK and provides a number of examples to support it.

We are committed to providing children and young people with access to high quality universal access to music education across Wales.

The Welsh Government is not directly responsible for the provision of music services; this is the responsibility of local authorities, who receive funding through the Revenue Support Grant. However, I recognise the current pressures facing music services and the need to take action as soon as possible.

That is why I have provided additional funding of £3 million to support music service provision across Wales in 2018-19 and 2019-20. In 2018-19, £1.5 million was provided directly to local authorities to prioritise as they see fit according to local needs, against a range of suggested criteria towards the provision of high quality, universal access to music education for all learners. The suggested criteria cover a range of areas where the funds can be spent and include:

- Ensuring access for pupils in receipt of free school meals.
- Purchasing new and endangered instruments.
- Ensuring pupils have access to lessons, exams and courses.
- Covering costs of attendance at orchestras, choirs and bands.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales

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.

- Initiating a 'rock and pop' ensemble.

In 2019-2020, £1.5 million will be allocated to music education following consideration of the outcomes from the study into future delivery of music services.

I also made available £100,000 in 2018-19 for the National Youth Arts Wales to support the important work they are doing and increase opportunities for our young musicians.

The Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee inquiry on funding for and access to music education: *Hitting the Right Note*, sets out 16 recommendations focused on improving music service provision across Wales.

My officials are currently taking forward work to address the recommendations within the report. This includes undertaking a consultation exercise with key stakeholders in the music sector across Wales to discuss the proposal of a feasibility study. Following this work, officials have procured an independent contractor to carry out a feasibility study to identify and assess options for the future delivery of music services in Wales.

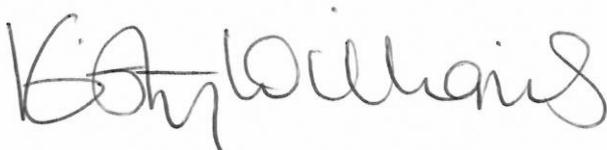
Some of the recommendations within the *Hitting the Right Note* report refer to a National Plan for Music, which the Committee later confirmed as being a National Plan for Music Education. Consequently I agreed for the feasibility study to explore the creation of a national plan for music education.

The objectives of the feasibility study are to:

1. Review existing evidence and generate new evidence to identify existing methods of delivery of music education services across Wales.
2. Identify best practice in existing methods of delivery of music education services across Wales.
3. To consider alternative models of music services and identify the needs and demands for such services, recommend support needed to support alternative services
4. Review existing evidence and generate new evidence to consider the feasibility of options available for delivery of music education services across Wales. This will need to:
 - a. Consider whether responsibility for delivery should be transferred to a single national 'arms-length' body and present options for what form this body should take and funding options for any proposal.
 - b. Identify and consider what other options for delivery of music services across Wales could be feasible and deliverable.
5. To consider whether a National Plan for Music Education should be prepared, and if so identify and recommend the content of any National Plan for Music Services education.

Consultancy Coop have been awarded the contract to undertake this study, we anticipate this will be completed and a report available in August.

Yours sincerely



Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education