

CYPE(5)-26-19 - Paper to note 1

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair, Children Young People & Education Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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Dear Lynne

Childcare Funding (Wales) Act 2019

Many thanks for your letter of 18th September about the Childcare Offer.

Things have moved on considerably since the Committee's scrutiny of the now Childcare Funding (Wales) Act 2019, with full roll-out of the Childcare Offer across Wales achieved in April this year, a year earlier than planned. As the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services said in her oral statement on 24th September, this is testament to the commitment and hard work of local authorities and all stakeholders involved. It is a huge achievement and the WLGA and local authorities very much welcome the high level of engagement the Welsh Government has had with authorities - both individually and collectively - throughout the process.

The WLGA and local authorities recognise and understand the reasons behind the Welsh Government's decision to suspend work with HMRC for the time being. However, it is not (and never has been) the case that the 22 Local Authorities are each individually administering the Childcare Offer. The position since April is that ten of the 22 Local Authorities, known as the 'delivery' authorities, are administering the scheme on behalf of the remaining 11 authorities, known as the 'engagement' authorities, as follows:

Cardiff, Caerphilly, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea are standalone authorities, delivering for themselves;

Blaenau Gwent delivers for Torfaen;

Ceredigion delivers for Carmarthenshire, Powys and Pembrokeshire;

Flintshire delivers for Denbighshire and Wrexham;

Gwynedd delivers for Anglesey and Conwy;

Newport delivers for Monmouthshire and the Vale of Glamorgan;

Rhondda Cynon Taf delivers for Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend.

(NB: The above arrangements reflect Option 5 in the Welsh Government's revised Regulatory Impact Assessment which accompanied Stage 2 of the Bill).

Dr Chris Llewelyn
Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive

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**Croesawn ohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg a byddwn yn ymateb i ohebiaeth yn yr un iaith.
Ni fydd defnyddio'r naill iaith na'r llall yn arwain at oedi.**

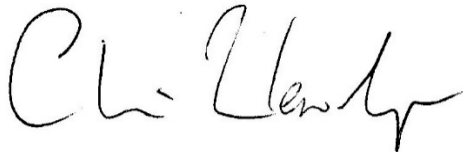
We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English and will respond to correspondence in the same language.
Use of either language will not lead to a delay.

Local Authorities now have much more experience of processing applications and administering eligibility checks than they had in May 2018. Since the seven original Early Implementer Local Authorities began testing delivery of the Offer in 2017, the Welsh Government and Local Authorities have worked closely together on the practical arrangements for administration of the scheme.

In moving to the current delivery arrangements, Local Authorities have had the benefit of the lessons of early implementation, and their own and other stakeholders' views and ongoing feedback have helped to shape the system as it is now operating. There will always be room for further improvements and refinements, but the fact that as of July some 16,000 children were accessing the Offer shows that Local Authorities are successfully meeting the challenge of delivering it across Wales and, as the Deputy Minister said in her oral statement 'are well-placed to continue this important work'.

Local Authorities and the WLGA look forward to continuing to work with the Welsh Government and childcare providers on the detail of the long-term delivery arrangements for the Childcare Offer.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely



Dr Chris Llewelyn

Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive

cc: Julie Morgan AM, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

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