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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Nick Ramsay AM  
Public Accounts Committee Chair  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

25 November 2019

Dear Mr Ramsay

### **Inquiry into the Regulatory Oversight of Housing Associations – Update**

Thank you for your letter of 29<sup>th</sup> October informing me that the Committee were pleased that all the recommendations have been completed; and that the Minister had committed to reviewing the scope of the regulations regarding tenant services; and also welcomed the Minister's statement in relation to social housing tenants.

In your letter you requested clarification on how the question of skills and capacity of the Regulation Team is being addressed in the short term. As the Minister for Housing and Local Government commented in her reply to the Regulatory Board for Wales' (RBW) report, *resource matters are kept under constant review in the context of ongoing resource constraint across the Welsh Government*. This remains the case.

Specially, in response to the concerns raised by the Committee and RBW, a number of initiatives have been put in place. The RBW, in its report, "... *welcomed some planned changes to the structure of the regulation team and the approach to implementing the framework...*" The changes referred to were designed to ensure the regulatory function continues to be robust and effective, built around the current resource and skills base. The team has been transitioning to the new operating model over the last few months and, as a result, the commitment to deliver at least one regulatory judgement for each Registered Social Landlord (RSL) in Wales continues to be provided and cases of regulatory concern are being effectively managed.



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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

In addition, recognising that there are different skills and experience in the team, the Minister approved funding for an externally facilitated development programme which has commenced and will run over the coming five months or so. As well as further developing the approach to assessing governance, in our experience the underlying cause of most problems we have encountered in RSLs, the programme also includes an extensive training and development phase for all staff in the team to help to resolve the skills deficits. The development programme will be extended to staff in other branches of the Division with the aim of ensuring there are people with knowledge of regulation outside of the team, who can contribute in the event of any significant work/capacity pressures.

Looking to the future, the Committee can be assured that any changes or developments to regulation, as a result of initiatives which are planned or underway, will be very carefully analysed in terms of the implications for the regulation resource base. Appropriate arrangements will also be put in place to ensure a fit for purpose regulatory regime is maintained that protects tenants and public investment in social housing.

Yours sincerely



Tracey Burke