

Gwenda Thomas AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref SF/GT/1162/12

Christine Chapman AM
Children and Young People's
Committee Chair
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

4 April 2012

Dear Christine,

Thank you for your letter received on the 6 October 2011 requesting an update on two issues raised during the Children's Commissioner for Wales's meeting with the Children and Young People's Committee on 5 October 2011, following the launch of his annual report. Firstly, I would like to apologise for the delay in responding to you. However I hope that my response will provide you with a clear steer on the Welsh Government's progress with these two particular issues.

Your first issue related to the Welsh Government's progress in implementing the recommendations of the previous Children and Young People Committee's report on child budgeting. Children's budgeting refers to a number of different strands of work that we are taking forward; however, the previous committee were particularly interested in Budget Statements. A Statistical Article was published in July 2010 setting out the breakdowns for 18-25, 26-64 and those aged 65 and over. We have committed to publish an analysis of budget spending by age grouping every three years to coincide with the publication of the Children and Young People's Wellbeing Monitor. The link is <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/articles/expenditureanalysis/?lang=en>

As part of this commitment to the UNCRC, we have also developed toolkits on financial capability and participatory budgeting for children and young people's organisations and services to use. Both of these resources have been piloted across Wales with young people from a wide range of backgrounds with varying degrees of ability. We are currently holding discussion about launching and promoting the toolkits and making them available on a number of websites.

I would like to reaffirm the Welsh Government's continued commitment to Children's Budgeting; however our first priority should be ensuring that we make the most effective use of our interventions to deliver our outcomes for children. Children and young people's budgeting may assist in this and as part of the Welsh Government's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Children and Young People's Budgeting has been identified as a priority within 'Getting it Right', our UNCRC Action Plan for Wales. It is a key component in taking forward our progress towards the full realisation of the UNCRC in Wales.

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Your second issue related to the delay in the production of the Child Poverty Strategy Delivery Plan, ensuring that children and young people whose lives are affected by poverty have the same chances in life as their better off peers is one of the Welsh Government's highest priorities.

Our Programme for Government sets out the key actions we are taking to tackle poverty and worklessness, improve skills, and improve the health and educational outcomes of children, young people and families living in poverty. The Programme for Government also contained a commitment to develop a single Tackling Poverty Action Plan. This will bring together the contribution made by the Welsh Government as a whole to tackling poverty, while keeping a strong focus on child poverty.

A written statement has recently been issued by all Ministers and Deputy Ministers in the Welsh Government on the tackling poverty agenda in the current context of challenging economic uncertainties and the added likelihood of a whole new group of people entering poverty as a result of the economic downturn and the UK Government's Welfare Reform agenda.

<http://wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2012/tacklingpoverty/?lang=en>

As you can see from the written statement we plan to issue a fuller outline of the plan to stakeholders in May.

I would be grateful if you could share this information with the Committee.

*Yours sincerely,
Gwenda.*

Gwenda Thomas AC / AM

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