

Senedd Cymru

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Welsh Parliament

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Vaughan Gething MS, Minister for Health and Social Services

Julie Morgan MS, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

Eluned Morgan MS, Minister for Mental Health, Wellbeing and Welsh Language

Dyddiad | Date: 06 November 2020

Pwnc | Subject: **Welsh Government Draft Budget 2021-22**

Dear Ministers,

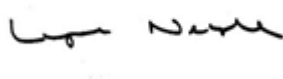
In line with our usual practice, we are writing in advance of the publication of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2021-22 to request written information to inform our scrutiny.

As in previous years, we will base our approach on the four principles of financial scrutiny: affordability, prioritisation, value for money and budget processes. We will also seek evidence from the Minister for Education on matters of relevance to our remit.

We note the Welsh Government's intention to publish the 2021-22 Draft Budget on 21 December 2020, following the UK Government's announcement that its one-year Spending Review will take place on 25 November. Our intention is to hold evidence sessions as soon as possible after the Christmas recess – the Clerk will be in touch to finalise details once the Business Committee has agreed the Senedd Timetable for 2021. We would be grateful to receive the detailed information outlined in the Annex to this letter at least two working weeks before the date on which that meeting takes place.

Given the shared interest across committees in some of the areas listed in the Annex to this letter, I have copied the Chair of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee, Dr Dai Lloyd MS.

Yours sincerely,



Lynne Neagle MS

Chair

Cc Dr Dai Lloyd MS, Chair, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg | We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



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ANNEX – Request for written information in advance of Draft Budget scrutiny

The Committee would welcome a response to each of the points listed:

1. Transparency of expenditure on children

As in previous years, we emphasise the importance of presenting the Draft Budget transparently to enable full and thorough scrutiny. We request a transparent narrative explanation (and numeric depiction) of the following:

- reductions/removal or increases/additions relating to specific areas of the Draft Budget compared to previous financial years (e.g. grants being reduced or ceasing to exist altogether/being increased or introduced);
- what proportion any changes to the overall amount previously allocated represent;
- where exactly this change is being made in the Draft Budget, and whether money will be returned to/taken from central reserves or allocated to/from other budget lines; and
- information on the impact COVID-19 has had on allocations.

We further request that Ministers ensure that resources relating to children and young people are presented clearly so that we can identify the assigned resources, assess the extent to which they are being prioritised, and understand how they will deliver value for money.

2. Commentary on allocations

- A breakdown of the 2021-22 Health and Social Services MEG allocations as relevant to children and young people by Spending Programme Area (SPA), Action and Budget Expenditure Line (BEL), including an analysis and explanation of significant changes since the 2019-20 First Supplementary Budget.
- Indicative 2022-23 Health and Social Services MEG allocations as relevant to children and young people, if available.
- Commentary on each of the Actions within the Health and Social Services MEG as relevant to children and young people, including an analysis and explanation of changes between the Draft Budget 2021-22 and the First Supplementary Budget 2020-21.

3. Impact of expenditure on progressing children's rights under the Rights of the Child and Young Persons (Wales) Measure

In terms of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 21-22 **across all its portfolios**, the Committee:

- reiterates its request for a CRIA to be undertaken for the draft budget as a matter of course; and
- requests a copy of the overall CRIA undertaken by the Welsh Government to inform the allocations in the draft Budget 2021-22. If a specific CRIA has not been undertaken, the reasons for this and a copy of any alternative integrated impact assessment.

In respect of the **Health and Social Services MEG**, the Committee would be grateful to receive information about:

- how the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has influenced allocations to budget lines within the MEG; and
- details and/or examples of any changes made to allocations within the Health and Social Services MEG following considerations of children's rights, equalities, sustainability, the Welsh language, or the Wellbeing of Future Generations.

4. Policy and legislation allocations

The Committee requests an update on allocations within the Draft Budget 2021-22 Health and Social Service MEG in the following areas of interest:

- **Costs of legislation:** Planned expenditure on implementing the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act in the run up to it coming into force.
- **Child Poverty:** Allocations to reduce poverty and prevent more children living in low income households in the context of the current economic position arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Flying Start:** Revenue and capital funding; the latest position on the outreach funding. Value for money and progress on assessing outcomes in relation to allocations and expenditure.
- **Families First Programme**
- **Childcare:** including the childcare offer and any additional allocations arising from the review of parental entitlement, commentary on additional allocations in the second Supplementary Budget October 2020; Parents, Childcare and Employment (PaCE); workforce development; other childcare funding.
- **Family Information Services**
- **Parenting support,** including any updates on any allocations associated with the implementation of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act.

- **Safeguarding services**
- **Looked after children:** including fostering services; Edge of care services / services to prevent children becoming looked after; Leaving care support. Value for money and progress in tracking outcomes in relation to expenditure.
- **Adoption:** services including post-adoption support.
- **Advocacy services:** including allocations to support the National Approach.
- **The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service**
- **Children and young people's rights and entitlements:** including allocations to Young Wales and value for money. Allocations to implement the recommendation of the Committee's report on Children's Rights.
- **The Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales**
- **Play policy and services:** including Play Wales and the Playworks holiday hunger scheme.
- **Disabled children's services**
- **Childhood obesity:** Information allocations to implement 'Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales'.
- **Neonatal Services:** The allocations to deliver the latest revision of the All Wales Neonatal Standards; the Welsh Government's priorities for neonatal services for the next 12 months; and how the budget allocation for 2021-22 will help to deliver performance improvement.
- **Perinatal Mental Health:** information on:
 - the impact of COVID-19 on perinatal mental health services and allocations to address that;
 - allocations to support the further development of services across all areas of Wales, including in relation to quality standards, care pathways and in-patient provision [Specifically: the level of investment to establish a specialist in-patient perinatal mother and baby unit in Wales; and a breakdown of the funding by Health Board for community perinatal mental health support services, including commentary on the objectives for this funding, and what arrangements Welsh Government has in place to monitor spend and evaluate its impact].

5. Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Well-being

As a key focus of the Committee's scrutiny during this Fifth Senedd, we would welcome:

- Detailed commentary in relation to children and young people's mental health and emotional well-being, including the financial implications for the Health and Social Services MEG in 2021-22 of the Welsh Government's response to the recommendations set out in the Committee's Mind over Matter report and follow up recommendations.

- Information on allocations for children and young people's mental health and emotional well-being in 2021-22 and where they can be found in the Health and Social Services MEG i.e. Details of the relevant Spending Programme Areas, Actions and Budget Expenditure Lines (BEL).

We would further welcome details of:

- Funding for delivery of priorities for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing as set out in the revised Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan.
- Details of funding to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, including how this will address the disproportionate impact on certain groups (including, for example, those with pre-existing mental ill health, looked after and vulnerable children, and low income groups).
- How this Draft Budget will support a 'whole-system', cross-Government and cross-sector approach to children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, including a focus on prevention/early intervention and building resilience.
- Funding to support the development and sustainability of the children and young people's healthcare workforce, including specific reference to the children and young people's mental health workforce.
- Information on the £7 million mental health service improvement fund, to include (in relation to children and young people) details of how this funding is being utilised by health boards in 2020-21, and the objectives/priorities for this funding for 2021-22.