

Minister for Health and Social Care

Eluned Morgan MS

Deputy Minister for Social Services

Julie Morgan MS

Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Lynne Neagle MS

8 November 2022

Welsh Government Draft Budget 2023-24

Dear Eluned, Julie and Lynne,

As last year, we would like written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2023-24. The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive.

As you may know, Senedd officials have coordinated requests from all Senedd committees to arrange with Welsh Government officials when the Welsh Ministers and Deputy Ministers will give evidence on the Draft Budget. We have requested that you and your officials appear before Committee at 9.30am to 11am on 18 January 2023.

I would be grateful to receive the written information no later than 16 December 2022. I note that the Welsh Government intends to publish the Draft Budget on 13 December 2022. Please contact my clerk if you are concerned about meeting our proposed deadline in light of the budget timetable.

Given the shared interest across committees in some of the areas listed in the annex to this letter, I have copied in the chairs of the Health and Social Care Committee and the Equality and Social Justice Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant

Jayne Bryant MS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Annex A: Request to the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding CYPE Draft Budget scrutiny 2023-24

Our approach to scrutiny of the Draft Budget

Our financial scrutiny aims to ensure accountability, promote better decision making and improve value for money in terms of allocations intended to improved outcomes and enhance the rights of children and young people.

It will follow four key principles, as recommended by the Finance Committee:

- **Affordability:** to consider the big picture of total revenue and expenditure, and whether these are appropriately balanced.
- **Prioritisation:** whether the division of allocations between different sectors/programmes is justifiable and coherent.
- **Value for money:** are public bodies spending their allocations well – economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- **Budget processes:** whether they are effective and accessible and whether there is integration between corporate and service planning and performance and financial management.

1. Transparency of budget presentation

Our predecessor committee emphasised the importance of presenting the Draft Budget transparently to enable full and thorough scrutiny. To continue this approach, we request a transparent narrative explanation (and numeric depiction) of the following in respect of the Health and Social Services MEG:

- 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; and
- 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.
- 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. Children's rights and the allocation of 'the maximum available resources' for children and young people

As we recommended last year, and as our predecessor Committee continually advocated, we believe a Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) should be undertaken for the Draft Budget as a whole and published as a standalone document, prior to being incorporated in the overall Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment.

We believe this is vital to demonstrate that the Welsh Government is meeting the requirements of the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure. Publishing a CRIA is in line with the arrangements the Welsh Government itself has put in place, which has established the CRIA as 'the agreed' mechanism to support Ministers to meet the duties under that Measure in both the [Children's Rights Scheme itself](#) and the associated [Children's Rights Scheme: manual for Welsh Government staff](#).

In line with assessing the whether 'due regard' has been given to article 4 of the UNCRC and the Welsh Government's duties under the Rights of the Child and Young Persons (Wales) Measure the Committee:

- Requests a copy of the overall Child's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) undertaken by the Welsh Government to inform the allocations in the draft Budget 2022-23 **across all its portfolios**,
- If a specific CRIA has not been undertaken, the reasons for this.
- A copy of any alternative integrated impact assessment as well as assurances that this assessment demonstrates that the duty of "due regard" to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has been exercised.

In respect of the **Health and Social Services MEG**, the Committee request:

- A copy of the completed Children's Rights Impact Assessment template: guidance for staff.
- template for this draft Health and Social Services MEG for 2023-24 which sets out how children's rights are put into effect in these budget allocations, with reference to specific articles in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as relevant.
- Details of what discussions have taken place with other relevant Ministers in respect of allocations which have a significant impact on children's health and social care, for example the Minister for Social Justice in terms of the budget of the Children's Commissioner for Wales and broader policy issues such as child poverty.

- Information about how the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has influenced allocations to budget lines within the MEG.
- Information about how equalities, sustainability and the Welsh language have been considered in budget allocations.
- Information about how have you taken gender budgeting into account in budget allocations
- 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.

3. Action and BEL allocations in the Health and Social Services Major Expenditure Group

The Committee requests a breakdown of the 2023-24 Health and Social Services MEG allocations as relevant to children and young people by Spending Programme Area (where applicable), Action and Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) to include:

- Commentary on each of the Actions within the Health and Social Services MEG, including an analysis and explanation of changes from:
 - the Draft Budget 2022-23 to the First Supplementary Budget June 2022; and
 - the First Supplementary Budget June 2022 to the Draft Budget 2023-24.
- A description of any changes to baselines used in the Draft Budget 2023-24 that has been made from the First Supplementary budget June 2022.
- Indicative 2024-25 Health and Social Services MEG allocations as relevant to children and young people and any additional indicative allocations which can be provided.

4. Policy and legislation allocations Draft Budget 2023-24

An update on allocations within the Health and Social Service MEG in the following areas of interest to the Committee including:

- Allocations to deliver all **Programme for Government** and **Co-operation Agreement** commitments relevant to children and young people and the CYPE Committee portfolio.
- Details of the assessment made of the value for money and affordability of delivering these priorities and objectives and how their cost-effectiveness will be monitored.

- Allocations across the **Ministerial Portfolio** as listed below and as relevant to children and young people and the CYPE Committee portfolio

Children's Health

- Public health as it relates to children and young people, including vaccination
- Obesity strategy
- Research and development in health and social care as it relates to children and young people specific
- Children and young people's mental health services, including neonatal mental health services
- Eating disorder services
- Suicide prevention as it relates to children and young people
- Substance misuse, including any assessment and associated costs in terms of reported rises in vaping among children and young people
- Autism services
- Patient experience, involvement and the citizen's voice

Children's Social Care

- Children's and young people's rights and entitlements, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Safeguarding, including any implications arising from the publication of the final report by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and the Welsh Government's 2019 National Action Plan on preventing and responding to child sexual abuse
- Adoption and fostering services
- Children and young people's advocacy
- Early years, childcare and play, including the Childcare offer and workforce
- Early childhood education and care
- Flying Start for children 0-3
- Families First and play policies

5. Detailed information on allocations in respect of children looked after and associated prevention and support measures

The Committee requests detail information on the allocations within the overall Draft Budget 2023-24 as relevant to our recently launched inquiry **Services for care experienced children: exploring radical reform**, including:

- **Before care:** *Safely reducing the number of children in the care system.* Including allocations for family support, edge of care services and parental advocacy.
- **In care:** *Quality services and support children in care.* Including discussions with the Minister for Finance and Local Government about the potential rising costs of children's social care and mitigating any impact on children
- **After care:** *On-going support when young people leave care* including the latest position on the basic income pilot and on funding for When I am Ready both in foster care and the potential expansion to residential care.

6. Costs of legislation

- Implementation of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill in its first year in force and any adjustments to allocations made in light of the first year of implementation.
- Financial implications or anticipated in 2022-23 and 2023-34 of any subordinate legislation relevant to children and young people within the Minister's portfolio.
- Information on the financial impact of any relevant UK Parliament legislation.

7. Impact of the cost of living on Draft Budget 2023-24 allocations

Information on the anticipated impact of the cost of living on the Health and Social Services MEG in 2023-24 and the Minister's broader policy responsibilities for:

- The delivery of services to children and young people by the Health Boards in Wales and the impact of the rising costs of energy on this provision.
- Policy and oversight of the provision of all social service activities of Local Authorities in Wales and any associated discussions with the Minister for Finance and Local Government, specifically:
- The impact of the costs of living on children's safeguarding services both in terms of potential increased needs and any increased costs associated with service delivery

- Impact of the costs of living in terms of the delivery of children's social care, for example the increased costs of residential and foster care; the increased costs of living for households supporting Kinship Care arrangements or Special Guardianships.