

Julie Morgan AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref JMSS/00058/24

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

05 March 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter regarding petition P-06-1404 and the demand for greater clarity and rights for people on direct payments or the *Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG)* to live independently. I welcome the opportunity to set out the Welsh Government's views as you consider your response and am copying my reply to the clerking team of the Petitions Committee as requested.

I support the right of disabled people to live fulfilled lives and to control how they are supported wherever possible. The 2014 Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the associated Codes of Practice set out a clear and consistent approach local authorities must follow to meaningfully engage and involve individuals in the planning and provision of services to meet their needs.

WILG ended as grant funding in 2018-19. All funding (£27 million) was transferred into the Revenue Support Grant allowing local authorities to continue to provide support to recipients, either by maintaining payments to individuals in 2018-19 in advance of their transfer to support under an authority's social care provision, or by providing support under those arrangements where a transfer of support has occurred. From 2019-20 onwards all support to recipients was to be provided through a local authority's social care provision.

Direct Payments are helping many disabled people live as independently as possible. It is vital more people are made aware of their benefits and that access and delivery are consistent across Wales. We have liaised with Auditor General for Wales and Local Authorities to embed the recommendations in the 2022 [Direct Payments for Adult Social Care](#) report into Statutory Guidance. We are also using the report's findings and broader evidence to better understand the personal assistant workforce and to develop a co-

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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.

ordinated set of actions to secure rights and improve consistency of experience and support for both direct payment recipients and personal assistants.

Our forthcoming Social Care Bill contains a measure that will improve the interface between Continuing Health Care and Direct Payments. It will allow people to control their own life and align the expectations with duties that local authorities have for social care.

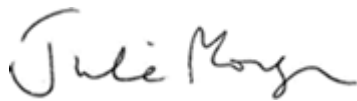
More broadly, we are taking forward the programme of work set out by our Disability Rights Taskforce. It brings together people with lived experience, Welsh Government Policy Leads and representative organisations. The work of the Taskforce is based on a common understanding of the Social Model of Disability, human rights, and co-production.

We will also be introducing new guidance for Local Authorities that will require them to self-assess their performance and delivery against eight quality standards. This includes demonstrating, with evidence, how they promote voice and control of individuals needing care and support and help them live as independently as possible. They will need to demonstrate how the views of service users and carers are reflected in the authority's assessment of its performance.

My officials are working with individuals across the sector to ensure these commitments are delivered in a timely manner. I expect to see clear progress to be made on them during this year.

Thank you for writing to me on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Morgan', written in a cursive style.

Julie Morgan AS/MS
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Deputy Minister for Social Services

cc: petitions@senedd.wales