

Andrew Slade  
Director General – Economy, Skills & Natural Resources  
Group  
Welsh Government

7 October 2020

Dear Andrew

### **Effectiveness of Local Planning Authorities in Wales**

At our meeting on 28 September, the Committee considered the Welsh Government's response to the recommendations in our Report on the Effectiveness of Local Planning Authorities in Wales. Members were pleased to note that all the recommendations have been accepted. However, in some areas it was unclear how the actions outlined in the response would implement the recommendations made.

I would welcome clarity and further detail on the following recommendations.

#### **Recommendation 5**

I note that a change to primary legislation will be required to implement the recommendation and make Place Planning a statutory consideration. The Committee felt that the commentary did not provide assurance that its recommendation will be addressed. Place Planning is becoming central to how we use our towns and cities, particularly in light of the repercussions of Covid-19 and the climate emergency for communities. Place Planning needs to be embedded within the planning system.

Given this position, the Committee would welcome clarity on the following points:

- Will Welsh Government legislate to make place planning a statutory requirement? If so, by when?
- If not, how does Welsh Government intend to make place planning effective given the evidenced problems of poor compliance with voluntary requirements to date?



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## Recommendations 6 and 7

These recommendations relate to Section 106 agreements. Although you have accepted both, some of the actions to implement them are caveated around other pressures, such as Brexit, Covid-19 and the legislative programme. We are concerned this may prevent progress. Can you clarify to the Committee how you intend to make progress in this important area given the well documented failings of the existing system?

Similarly, in relation to Recommendation 7, local authorities have been asked to consider how they could take this forward under the Local Government Bill. In reality the Committee felt this will not happen quickly and to all intents and purposes regional approaches to Planning Policy will be some years away. Given the importance of S106 agreements, we would welcome a clearer set of actions from Welsh Government on how it will deliver this recommendation.

As a general point, whilst the Committee was pleased that Welsh Government accepted all recommendations, we felt it would be appropriate for the response to include target timescales to enable the Committee to judge progress.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



**Nick Ramsay MS**  
**Chair**

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

