

CYPE(6)-04-22 - Paper to note 12

Comisiynydd
Plant Cymru

Children's
Commissioner
for Wales

By email only

To: Chair
Children, Young
People and
Education
Committee
Senedd Cymru

20 January 2022

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letter dated 30th November 2021, in follow up to my annual scrutiny session with the Committee.

Your letter raised two points; in relation to a paper on my legal powers and remit, and in relation to our ongoing work in respect of Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs).

Our work this year in reviewing the work of RPBs is drawing to a conclusion, with a public report to be made available in mid-February. I will ensure that a copy is directed to the Committee given the keen interest in this area of work. The report will contain recommendations to further improve RPBs' practice and effectiveness in Wales. There will be a fuller progress report shared with the Welsh Government to enable them to continue their ongoing monitoring and scrutiny role of the Boards, directing them as to our latest findings and the advice from the young people who have taken part in our sessions also. My team, as part of our strategic planning process, is currently determining how our work will continue in this field. We will update you on this when our work plan is published at the start of April.

The Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing has had the benefit of a debriefing session with the young people engaged in this work, and they have shared clear messages with her and her officials on the key areas in



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Croesawn ohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg yn ogystal â'r Saesneg ac mewn amryw o fformatau
We welcome correspondence in the medium of Welsh and English as well as alternative formats

which RPBs require further prompting or pace in their actions.

In relation to the potential of the third sector in supporting the work of RPBs, I am aware that the Welsh Government has set up a working group to consider enhancing the contribution of citizens, carers and third sector in RPBs' work. I understand the group first met last term although my office is not represented in this work. My published report won't show much change from previous engagements on how citizens have been involved in shaping the Boards' work, although there will be some reflection of young people's participation in some regions to shape their work and priorities. I would politely suggest that perhaps the Committee may wish to make further enquiries of the Welsh Government in this regard following the publication of my report in a few weeks' time.

As regards the paper I mentioned in the scrutiny session, on my statutory powers and remit, I can confirm that I've now had the opportunity to meet with my link branch of officials and with my link Minister to discuss this paper. I am continuing to meet with other Government officials this month to discuss the paper however, so I'm afraid I am not yet in a position to share the paper. However, my full intention is to share the paper with the Committee as soon as possible. I am also likely to publish the paper before the end of my tenure as Commissioner, as I reflect on the post and its role in public society in Wales. I will keep the Committee informed of my plans in this respect.

I also plan to hold a public lecture on 4th April 2022, to talk about the conclusion of my term and the policy landscape for children in Wales going forward. I anticipate that the legal remit of the office will be a relevant factor to those discussions so will ensure that any publication of papers precedes such a lecture. The First Minister has kindly agreed to introduce the lecture and event details will be published soon; I will ensure that the Committee Members have the details should they wish to join.

Thank you again for your Committee's work in scrutinising the work of my office; we feel that it's a critical element of our governance structure and would hope to see this annual scrutiny continue for my successor.



Yours sincerely,



Sally Holland
Children's Commissioner for Wales

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a gwladau a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd cysylltu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi | We welcome receiving correspondence and calls in Welsh. We will respond to correspondence and calls in Welsh, and contacting us in Welsh will not lead to delay.

