

2nd February 2026

Buffy Williams MS
Chair, Children, Young People, and Education Committee

Dear Buffy,

Youth Work in Wales

Thank you for your active consideration of my previous letter to you in November last year about youth work in Wales. I understand that you have a general scrutiny session with the Cabinet Secretary for Education in the Welsh Government on 4th February. I thought I would follow up with some further thoughts.

The Interim Youth Work Board, which I chaired, published a clear set of recommendations in *Time to Deliver (September 2021)* and since then the Youth Work Implementation Board has taken that work further. It could prove instructive to ask to what extent Lynne intends to now implement the recommendations in *Time to Deliver*.

The three pressing issues remain:

Firstly, the so called 'definition' of youth work is neither a definition nor a statement that reflects the aspirations of a sustainable model of youth work delivery as set out in *Time to Deliver*.

Secondly, the proposal to establish a national body for youth work in Wales is welcomed by the sector but the rather top-down bureaucratic controlling body that seems to be envisaged is at odds with the offer of CWYVS and the WLGA to work with Welsh Government officials to develop a partnership model.

And, if there is to be a new framework for youth work with 'Draft Directions' and 'Draft Statutory Guidance' as outlined in last year's consultation paper, with little or no amendment, I fear that would be a mistake as the proposals are unrealistic and unworkable.

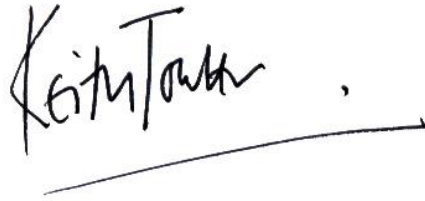
I wonder if it would be useful to see if the Welsh Government will maintain the well-established approach to the values of youth work services as set *Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes* rather than the rather narrower ideas set out in the 2024 consultation. I attach a link to the *Principles and Purposes* below.

<https://educators.wales/sites/default/files/2023-02/YOUTH%20WORK%20IN%20WALES%20PRINCIPLES%20AND%20PURPOSES%202022.pdf>

To my knowledge the responses to the 2024 consultation have still not been published and I have not seen a Child Rights Impact Assessment in relation to what the Welsh Government propose.

I would be grateful if you would also share my letter with the membership of the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Towler". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the signature is a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Keith Towler