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Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth
Minister for Local Government and Government Business



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-535
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00478/14

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions committee

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Dear Bill

Thank you for your letter of 30 April with regard to a petition received from Jonathan Edwards to protect Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) from severe budget cuts in Wales.

Collectively, public services in Wales face significant challenges in relation to future funding outlook, following the Comprehensive Spending Review and recent UK Budget spending cuts. This requires FRAs to engage in decisive and radical financial and service planning, so as to align public services quickly to the lower levels of resources likely to be available.

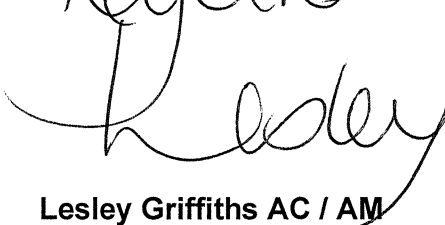
The Welsh Government continues to provide a considerable amount of central grant funding to FRAs, in addition to the core funding they receive from Local Authorities.

In 2013-14 the amount made available by Welsh Government totalled £26 million and included:

- Over £3.5 million to support community fire safety
- £4 million to support national resilience – (New Dimension and the Firelink radio communication system)
- £18.5 million “top up” grant to cover employers contributions to fire-fighter pensions.

Overall budgets for the FRAs in Wales, have not fallen significantly until 2013-14. Information in respect of 2014-15 will be published in mid-June 2014. FRAs also receive funding for capital investment purposes and are encouraged to use such funds to improve services for the future.

The majority of funding for FRAs in Wales is raised through a levy on the constituent Local Authorities in each area. It is, therefore, a matter for FRAs and Local Authorities to work together during the annual budget-setting process, to agree an appropriate funding level which supports local priorities for community safety and response capability.

Regards


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