

WGDB25-26(6)6 Taff Housing Association,

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Y Pwyllgor Cyllid | Finance Committee

Cyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru 2025-26 | Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26

Ymateb gan Taff Housing Association, | Evidence from Taff Housing Association,

1. What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the Welsh Government's 2024-2025 Budget?

Please outline your reasons for your answer to question 1 (we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

I am responding in my capacity as Head of Support Services, I am confident that the budget will impact other departments across the organisation, but I am not in a position to comment knowledgeably about it.

The HSG budget is vital to the provision of Support Services across Wales. As a Support provider we provide high quality services, that make a difference to hundreds of service users. Without a realistic budget to do this, we are not able to recruit skilled, experienced and committed workers to positions.

The budget should reflect the commitment of the Welsh Government to this sector, so that we are able to enable change and positive outcomes for those who need it. Our services are managing the impact of the housing crisis in Wales. We are being asked to provide intervention above that which has been commissioned, this is because vital services have been cut and access to those that are left usually have long waiting lists. We need to be able to offer an holistic service, where prevention underpins the services that we deliver.

I worry that there will come a point where the support collapses under the weight of demand, and this will only serve to create a bigger demand. There are a number of services desperately needed in housing, including safe and secure accommodation, support services that are skilled, experienced and committed and to achieve this we need to pay our colleagues their value and encourage them to enter and stay in the sector. The HSG budget should give providers confidence to deliver a service first time, that gives those that need it, when they need it. This would be a preventative measure.

We work within commissioned services, the budget that we are given is what we work with. There is little flexibility within these budgets and each commissioner will award to the most economically advantageous tender, this can put providers in a difficult position of choosing quality over quantity. There will be services that as an organisation we will not choose to bid for because the budget does not allow for us to provide the quality of service that should be expected.

2. How financially prepared is your organisation for the 2025-26 financial year, how will inflation impact on your ability to deliver planned objectives, and how robust is your ability to plan for future years?

Please outline your reasons for your answer to question 2 (we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

I believe that the organisation where I work will have worked hard to prepare for the financial year ahead. Commissioned support services will need to be financially viable for the business.

3. What action should the Welsh Government take to:

- help households cope with inflation and cost of living issues;
- address the needs of people living in urban, post-industrial and rural communities, including building affordable housing and in supporting economies within those communities?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

I am responding in my capacity as Head of Support Services, I am confident that the budget will impact other departments across the organisation, but I am not in a position to comment knowledgeably about it.

I feel that the Welsh Government could better spend funds on increasing the chances for those people living in poverty. People need good access to transport, so they can work, good access to health and well being services so that they feel well enough to work and contribute positively to their communities and good access to leisure facilities so that they feel included and good access to safe, secure and affordable housing so that they feel welcome and cared for in their community. Lots of barriers exist to prevent these opportunities for being accessible and leave people with no alternatives but to seek benefits and remain in their current status.

4. Have Welsh Government business support policies been effective, given the economic outlook for 2025-26?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

5. Are Welsh Government plans to build a greener economy clear and sufficiently ambitious? Do you think there is enough investment being targeted at tackling the climate change and nature emergency? Are there any potential skill gaps that need to be addressed to achieve these plans?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

6. Is the Welsh Government using the financial mechanisms available to it around borrowing and taxation effectively?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

7. The Committee would like to focus on a number of other specific areas in the scrutiny of the Budget. Do you have any specific comments on any of the areas identified below?

Is enough being done to tackle the rising costs of living and support those people living in relative income poverty?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

My lived experience tells me that there are still a high number of people that are living in relative income poverty, there is still high demand for food banks, shops are disappearing from our highstreets. Local authorities are cutting services including leisure activities which are now considered a luxury, the worlds of people become smaller.

How could the budget further address gender inequality in areas such as healthcare, skills and employment?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

Is the Welsh Government's approach to preventative spending represented in resource allocations (Preventative spending = spending which focuses on preventing problems and eases future demand on services by intervening early).

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

I think that spending on preventative measures makes far more sense than reactive services, but these services need to be funded adequately, providers need to be given long term contracts so that thorough evaluations can be carried out. Currently short term contracts restricted by uncertain budget amounts give the services uncertainty and therefore they become reactive and quickly overwhelmed

How should the Welsh Government explain its funding decisions, including how its spending contributes to addressing policy issues?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

How can the documentation provided by the Welsh Government alongside its Draft Budget be improved?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

How should the Welsh Government prioritise its resources to tackle NHS waiting lists for planned and non-urgent NHS treatments. Do you think the Welsh Government has a robust plan to address this issue?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

Is the Welsh Government providing adequate support to the public sector to enable it to be innovative and forward looking through things like workforce planning.

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

Has there been adequate investment from the Welsh Government in basic public sector infrastructure.

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

How should the Budget support young people?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

How is evidence and data driving Welsh Government priority-setting and budget allocations, and is this approach clear?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

Is the support provided by the Welsh Government for third sector organisations, which face increased demand for services as a consequence of the cost of living crisis and the pandemic, sufficient?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

What are the key opportunities for the Welsh Government to invest in supporting an economy and public services that better deliver against the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).
