



Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-(P)/KS/2442/17

John Griffiths AM
Chair
Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

17 July 2017

Dear John

Thank you for your letter following the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children's appearance at the ELGC Committee. During his appearance, I understand the Cabinet Secretary referenced our new approach to prosperity for all including cross-Cabinet working in relation to child poverty and a national poverty action plan.

A key aim of Taking Wales Forward (2016-2021) is to deliver prosperity for all, with the understanding that prosperity brings security to individuals, families and communities. Supporting people to live independently and prosperously must underpin everything that we do and supporting economic growth and highly skilled well paid jobs cuts across the work of government. A whole-government approach to economic growth which focuses on creating and attracting high quality jobs and responds to regional needs is required. The work of Valleys Taskforce and action to support community resilience across Wales will help shape how we support the development of strong communities to alleviate the effects of poverty. However, we need to consider how all of our core services and budgets across Government can be utilised to help achieve the impacts we want to see.

Prosperity is not just about material wealth. It is about every one of us having a good quality of life, and living in safe, supportive communities. I have the lead for co-ordinating the prosperity approach across Government, however, this is embedded across the aims of all cabinet colleagues and cross departmentally. I am therefore working closely with Cabinet colleagues to shape how this approach is at the heart of everything we do, which puts a sharp focus upon delivery. It would not be prudent to publish a bespoke national poverty action plan at this point. Instead, the forthcoming national strategy will underpin the commitments set out in Taking Wales Forward and will be the vehicle for us to deliver on our aim of prosperity for all.

I am currently considering the appropriate mechanism for stakeholder engagement and I have commissioned my officials to review key groups and forums across government which can play a role to ensure this is a central theme in everything we do.

Our 2010 Children and Families (Wales) Measure will continue to provide the legislative framework for tackling child poverty in Wales. As you are aware, this places a duty on Welsh Ministers and named public bodies to set objectives for tackling child poverty. As part of this Measure, Welsh Government has a duty to publish a child poverty strategy and undertake a review of progress on a three year basis. The most recent Child Poverty Strategy was published in 2015 which set out five strategic objectives for tackling child poverty and improving the outcomes of low income families in Wales. On 13 December, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children published our latest statutory report on progress. We will continue delivery across Government to drive forward progress on our child poverty strategic objectives.

As our approach to prosperity for all is cross-cutting, I welcome the Committee's inter-connected approach including your focus on making the economy work for people on low incomes. I look forward to hearing the Committee's recommendations on the wider prosperity agenda.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke above the name.

Ken Skates AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure