

Rebecca Evans AM
Minister for Housing and Regeneration
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

24 November 2017

The Welsh Government's Supporting People Programme

Dear Rebecca,

At its meeting on 20 November 2017 the Public Accounts Committee took evidence from Community Housing Cymru (CHC) and Cymorth Cymru on the Welsh Government's Supporting People Programme.

During the evidence session the witnesses raised significant concerns regarding the Welsh Government's budget proposals which describe how the Welsh Government is considering creating a single grant in the area of early intervention, prevention and support to replace a number of existing grants. The Committee were presented with compelling evidence to retain the current hypothecated funding arrangements for the programme.

The Committee note that the Welsh Government's Budget Proposals set out that:

“A single grant could enable local authorities and public service board partners to better align services in pursuit of their wellbeing objectives. Such a move would support service re-design in line with the principles and aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. With a larger, single grant, individual smaller grant constraints could be lifted and funds used to meet locally determined needs in a way that makes sense at a local level. This would remove artificial barriers to effective service delivery. Greater alignment and simplification of administration would also



enable a reduction in the bureaucracy associated with grants helping to deliver the needed efficiency savings of £13.4m.”

In written evidence to the Public Accounts Committee, CHC state that:

“Welsh Government is working, via the funding flexibilities pathfinder project, to roll Supporting People into one grant, along with other Tackling Poverty funds, across 7 LAs and in the other LAs to provide 15% flexibility between grant streams. While CHC welcomes any approach which will allow for alignment of strategic priorities and reduction in bureaucracy, we remain concerned about what this move means for the long-term protection of housing-related support in Wales.”

In oral evidence, CHC and Cymorth Cymru outlined in further detail their concerns that the proposal to merge Supporting People Programme with Families First, Flying Start and Communities First in year 2, has been undertaken without consultation with the Supporting People sector. This they believe risks the value of the Supporting People Programme to some of the most marginalised groups in Wales, which will have a serious consequences for the most vulnerable members of our society.

Given the strength of concern expressed by the witnesses with regards to the future of the Programme the Committee wish to draw your attention to the evidence provided to us and ask that you give thorough consideration to the issues raised as part of your deliberations in setting the final budget.

I attach a link to the [transcript](#) of the Committee’s meeting of the 20 November 2017 and enclose copies of both organisations supporting papers.

Yours sincerely,



Nick Ramsay AM

Chair

cc. Mark Drakeford AM, Cabinet Secretary for Finance

John Griffiths AM, Chair of the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

Simon Thomas AM, Chair of the Finance Committee

