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Y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau  
Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

Ein cyf/Our ref SF/JH/344/09

Helen Mary Jones AC/AM  
Cadeirydd/Chair  
Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl  
Ifanc  
Children and Young People  
Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff CF99 1NA

12 October 2009

Dear Helen Mary,

### Welsh Assembly Government Draft Budget 2010/2011

Further to your letter of 8<sup>th</sup> October I am pleased to provide additional information to support the evidence paper already provided in advance of the Committee Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> October. In my role as Minister for Children I present summary information on several areas which cut across Cabinet colleagues' portfolios. Should you require further detailed information I would be very happy to supply that in concert with my Cabinet colleagues.

I will address each of the areas raised in your letter in turn, starting with the activity in relation to **Child Poverty**. Significant funding is being made available through a wide range of our policies and initiatives that contribute towards tackling child poverty including:

- Flying Start;
- Want2Work project to help people into employment
- Genesis Cymru Wales 2 to assist people to overcome a range of barriers from preventing them entering the workforce or training
- Cymorth programme
- Funding over 3 years to increase take-up of council tax benefit and housing benefit.

The work being carried out in relation to Children's budgeting will also specifically consider the financial provision made for children in poverty.

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Another of my priorities is the **provision for disabled children**. We have taken forward a number of initiatives to improve services and support learners with a range of additional learning needs and disabilities.

We have established the “Unlocking the Potential of Special School Project” with an initial £5.1m being allocated in 2009 and a further £4m over the next two academic years to 2011-12. This has had a substantial impact on both mainstream and special schools by developing confidence among teachers in meeting the needs of children with a range of SEN. In order to develop Early Support in Wales, £2.2m has been made available to improve the delivery of services to disabled children under 5 and their families. To assist with the delivery of this programme, Children in Wales have been awarded the tender to produce resource materials. In addition, I have allocated £500,000 for 3 years from 2008-09 to develop the role of transition key workers in Wales for young people with a disability.

I am advised that my colleague the Minister for Health and Social Services (HSS) is considering budget allocations within her portfolio and detailed budgets are still to be finalised. However, I am aware that HSS have an indicative budget for **Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)** of £2.184m. This budget will be used to develop and establish CAMHS services as set out within the Strategy 'Everybody's Business' and the National Service Framework for Children Young People and maternity Services in Wales.

Through the **Parenting Action Plan** we have sought to enhance support and information to all parents in Wales, from early year's provision through to teenage years. We are committed to develop, in partnership with key stakeholders a new strategic plan for parenting. This will reflect our achievements to date, the findings from the Cymorth and Flying Start evaluation exercises as well as the Children and Young People's Committee Report in May of this year.

Flying Start draws on a range of options, at the centre of this programme are the parenting programmes. We stipulate that each family accessing the scheme must have access to parenting courses at a level that is meaningful to them. The provision of £32m in 2009-10 has increased to £39m in 2010-11 which includes the £7m transfer from Cymorth. Within our Cymorth programme one of the main themes is 'Family Support'. This ensures families have access to support that will foster positive relationships between parents and children. The allocation of £51.7m in 2009-10 reduces to £44.7m in 2010-2011 due to the agreed transfer of £7m to the Flying Start programme.

The Committee will be aware that work is being undertaken by officials with regard to the **Funding for Children's Budgeting research and data collection**. In 2006, work was undertaken to identify the proportion of the Welsh Assembly Government budget spent on children. This was in response to a requirement to understand the resources which are spent on children, in order to inform policy development and to comply with a responsibility under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to report on the amount and percentage of national budgets spent on children.

In March 2009, a statistical article was published by the Assembly Government. This provided outturn figures for 2005-06 and 2006-07, for the proportion of the Assembly Government budget spent on children and presented an estimate of the proportion to be spent on children in the period 2007-08 to 2010-11. The work found an estimated 28% of the Welsh Assembly Government's expenditure was allocated to children, equating to £4.4 billion and based on existing spending plans until 2010-11, the proportion of Assembly budget allocated to children was projected to remain around 28%.

My officials have established a Task and Finish Group to scope out the area of work linking to UNCRC. The group will report their recommendations in the Spring of 2010.

Officials have prepared a specification for initial work to develop and pilot approaches to participative budgeting in Wales. This is linked to developing the financial literacy and capability of children and young people at both national and local level. This is one of 16 priority areas identified in the UNCRC Action Plan for Wales. This will be launched in Cardiff on the 20<sup>th</sup> November. The Statistical Directorate is working on analysing how much of the Welsh Assembly Government budget is spent on children. We are improving our methodology by including data on 18-25 year olds and providing age related data. The analysis and methods will be published in a Statistical Article.

The 2010-11 budget for the **Advocacy Unit** is £850,000 an increase of £500,000 on the current year. This includes funding for the National Advocacy and Advice Service, the facilitation of the National Independent Advocacy Board, publicity and promotion, advocacy training and registration.

Aside from the Minister for Health and Social Services' contribution to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services, which are presented above, the following highlights a number of cross cutting budgets which impact on children's issues within **other Ministerial Portfolios**.

My colleague, the Minister for Environment Sustainability and Housing provides funding to the EcoSchools and the Wales Youth Forum to promote young people's education and engagement on sustainability and climate change issues. On Climate change the "Countdown to Copenhagen" Conference attracted nearly 400 young people, significantly more than the target number. We have jointly developed a young person's version of the Climate Change Strategy consultation document and are holding two youth engagement events through CYP networks. In addition, funding is provided for projects in Neath, Port Talbot and Conwy to encourage children in schools to cycle to school. In support of children's wellbeing and quality of life DESH work to improve good quality and affordable housing for people across Wales.

My colleague the Minister for Enterprise & Transport runs a number of programmes with a cross-cutting nature that are complementary to programmes within my own portfolio. These include; Pre-VENT KS3 initiative which is an Heads of the Valley led initiative, with funding of £6.94 million targeting pupils in Key Stage 3 (11-14) with low basic skills, help to improve self-confidence and early vocational taster opportunities; Pre-VENT 14-19 supported by funding of £14.9 million, which targets needs associated with Basic Skills and addressing those not in employment, education or training (NEET) issue by increasing access to Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) activity and the E-Learning Strategy with funding of £250,000 to support three e-learning pilots (Victoria Primary School to support net books/ laptops for pupils, Merthyr Tydfil – laptops for pupils and the University of Glamorgan – Networking Module). The priority of the 'health' dimension of the Heads of the Valleys programme is to improve health and reduce health inequalities by addressing the wider determinants of health and wellbeing – and therefore will impact on Child poverty. The Youth Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Strategy for Wales (YES), launched in 2004 seeks to equip young people with a "can do" attitude and a drive to create opportunities for themselves. A revised YES strategy (2009 – 2015) is currently being developed in consultation with key partners across the education sector to deliver against this commitment. Flexible Support for Business has been involved in the consultation process.

Finally, the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government provides complementary support to actions on Child Poverty by spending £2.5m to deliver the Child Trust Fund Cymru commitment. In addition the Substance Misuse Action Fund which has funding of

£3m to help improve services for children and young people with a focus on psychosocial interventions and reduces pressure on CAMH services in Wales.

I hope that this provides sufficient detail in accordance with your request.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a distinct 'H'.