

Y Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a Llywodraeth Leol

Lleoliad:
Ystafell Bwyllgora 2 – y Senedd

Dyddiad:
Dydd Mercher, 25 Mehefin 2014

Amser:
09.00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



I gael rhagor o wybodaeth, cysylltwch â:

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Clerc y Pwyllgor

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Agenda

Cyfarfod preifat cyn y prif gyfarfod (09.00–09.15)

1 Cyflwyniadau, ymddiheuriadau a dirprwyon

2 Y Bil Safleoedd Carafannau Gwyliau (Cymru) – Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 6:

Darren Millar AC (09.15–10.30) (Tudalennau 1 – 28)

Darren Millar AC

3 Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42(ix) i benderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o'r cyfarfod ar gyfer y canlynol: eitem 4

4 Y Bil Safleoedd Carafannau Gwyliau (Cymru): Cyfnod 1 – trafod sesiwn dystiolaeth 6 (10.30 – 10.45)

Egwyl (10.45–11.00)

5 Sesiwn graffu gyffredinol: Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth (11.00–12.30) (Tudalennau 29 – 66)

Lesley Griffiths AC, y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth
Debra Carter, Dirprwy Cyfarwyddwr Cyllid a Pherfformiad Llywodraeth Leol
Lisa James, Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr yr Is-adran Democratiaeth, Moeseg a Phartneriaeth

6 Papurau i'w nodi (Tudalennau 67 – 101)

7 Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 (ix) i benderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o weddill y cyfarfod

8 Sesiwn graffu gyffredinol: Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth – trafod y dystiolaeth (12.30 – 12.40)

Mae cyfyngiadau ar y ddogfen hon

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Yn rhinwedd paragraff(au) ix o Reol Sefydlog 17.42

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Papur Tystiolaeth – 25 Mehefin 2014

Cyflwyniad

1. Mae fy mhortffolio'n cynnwys ystod eang o gyfrifoldebau polisi, ac rwy'n gyfrifol am amrywiaeth o raglenni cyflawni hefyd. Gan weithio gyda rhanddeiliaid allweddol ar draws y sectorau cyhoeddus a phreifat a'r Trydydd Sector, mae'r portffolio'n ariannu ac yn goruchwyllo'r gwasanaethau a dargedir ar gyfer unigolion a chymunedau ledled Cymru.
2. Fel y nodais yn y Rhaglen Lywodraethu, ffocws fy ngwaith yw cefnogi'r broses o ddarparu gwasanaethau cyhoeddus effeithiol ac effeithlon sy'n diwallu anghenion pobl yng Nghymru. Mae fy mholisiâu a'm rhaglenni'n seiliedig ar y nod hwn a'r ymrwymadau sylfaenol a nodwyd yn y Rhaglen Lywodraethu. Mae cynnydd da yn cael ei wneud, gyda 19 o'r 46 argymhelliad sy'n gyfrifoldeb i'r portffolio eisoes wedi'u cyflawni, yn cynnwys addewid 'Pump am Ddyfodol Tecach' i ariannu 500 o Swyddogion Cymorth Cymunedol.
3. Mae rhan fwyaf o gyllid fy mhortffolio yn cael ei gyfeirio at wasanaethau cyhoeddus drwy Awdurdodau Lleol. Mae'r portffolio hwn yn darparu'r rhan fwyaf o gyllid gan Lywodraeth Cymru i Awdurdodau Lleol drwy Setliad Llywodraeth Cymru. Dyma'r cyllid heb ei neilltuo sy'n adlewyrchu sefyllfa Awdurdodau Lleol fel haen Llywodraeth annibynnol a etholir yn ddemocrataidd. Fodd bynnag, rwy'n gweithio mewn partneriaeth ag Awdurdodau Lleol ledled Cymru i sicrhau bod ganddynt y capasiti corfforaethol a'r gallu sydd eu hangen i reoli darpariaeth gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yn effeithiol gan ddarparu gwerth am arian.
4. Mae Gweinidogion eraill yn gweithio'n uniongyrchol ag Awdurdodau Lleol mewn modd tebyg i ddatblygu eu hagendâu polisi a gweithredu eu rhaglenni hwythau.

Cyllid

	2013-14 (Cyllideb Atodol) £000	2014-15 (Cyllideb Derfynol) £000
Refeniw	4,705,164	4,568,893
Cyfalaf	22,920	22,920
CYFANSWM DEL	4,728,084	4,591,813

5. Mae'r gyllideb ar gyfer portffolio Llywodraeth Leol 2014-15 yn cynnwys:

- £ 4,271m o gyllid heb ei neilltuo drwy'r Grant Cymorth Refeniw;
- £ 140m ar gyfer Cyllid Refeniw Cyffredinol yr Heddlu;
- £ 35m ar gyfer y Gronfa Gofal Canolraddol;
- £ 3.4m i gefnogi Gweddnewid a Diwygio;
- £ £36m ar gyfer Gwella Llywodraeth Leol a Meithrin Democratiaeth Leol;
- £ 16.8m ar gyfer Swyddogion Cymorth Cymunedol;
- £ 4m o gyllid refeniw a £0.3m o gyllid cyfalaf ar gyfer trais yn erbyn menywod a cham-drin domestig ac ar gyfer polisïau atal caethwasiaeth a masnachu pobl;
- £ 7.2m o refeniw a £2.3m o gyllid cyfalaf ar gyfer Gwasanaethau Tân ac Achub a Diogelwch Tân Cymunedol yng Nghymru;
- £ 5.2m ar gyfer ein polisïau ar atal troseddau ieuenctid.

Blaenoriaethau i Gymru

6. Mae pob rhaglen a pholisi sy'n cael eu datblygu drwy'r portffolio hwn yn cefnogi blaenoriaethau Llywodraeth Cymru a nodwyd yn y Rhaglen Lywodraethu:

Cyllid Awdurdodau Lleol

7. Mae tua 160,000 o bobl yn gweithio'n uniongyrchol i awdurdodau lleol. Mae tua thri chwarter gwariant llywodraeth leol yn mynd ar gyflogau a chostau cyflogaeth. Caiff llawer o'r gwariant hwn ei ail-fuddsoddi mewn cymunedau a busnesau lleol. Rwy'n gweithio gydag Awdurdodau Lleol i hyrwyddo'r defnydd o Gyflog Byw, ac i leihau'r defnydd o gontractau dim oriau. Mae'r gwaith yn cael ei ddatblygu gan Gyngor Partneriaeth y Gweithlu, sy'n cynnwys cyflogwyr y sector preifat ac Undebau Llafur cydnabyddedig. Yn ddiweddar hefyd, rwyf wedi cyhoeddi Cod Ymarfer diwygiedig ar Faterion y Gweithlu, a elwir yn god dwy haen hefyd.
8. Mae gweithwyr awdurdodau lleol yn cyflawni ystod eang o gyfrifoldebau, wedi'u hariannu drwy gymysgedd o gyllid heb ei neilltuo, grantiau penodol, trethi lleol ac incwm arall. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi dyrannu £4.4 biliwn drwy Setliad Llywodraeth Leol ar gyfer 2014-15. Mae'r cyllid hwn yn cynnwys £4.264 biliwn o refeniw heb ei neilltuo a £143 miliwn o Gyllid Cyfalaf Cyffredinol. Yn ogystal â hyn, mae awdurdodau lleol yn derbyn dros £700 miliwn o grantiau penodol Llywodraeth Cymru drwy bortffolios Gweinidogion unigol.
9. Ar ôl iddo gael ei ddyrannu drwy Setliad Llywodraeth Leol, mae'r cyllid yn fater i'r awdurdodau lleol unigol. Mae penderfynu ar sut i ddefnyddio'r holl gyllid sydd ar gael i awdurdod yn un o dasgau a chyfrifoldebau allweddol Cyngorwyr lleol. Mae'n rhaid iddynt sicrhau bod safbwyntiau eu hetholwyr yn cael eu hadlewyrchu a'u cydbwyso gyda'r anghenion a'r pwysau ar wasanaethau lleol. Mae rhoi'r rhyddid i awdurdodau bennu eu cyllidebau eu hunain yn rhan bwysig o broses y Setliad, gan roi hyblygrwydd iddynt ymateb i bwysau a gofynion lleol.
10. Rwyf am sicrhau mwy o hyblygrwydd lle bo'n bosibl, drwy symud cyllid o grantiau penodol, sydd â baich gweinyddol cysylltiedig, i Setliad Llywodraeth Leol ac annog symudiad i gyfuno grantiau. Gall dadneilltuo cyllid grant sicrhau effaith gadarnhaol ar ddarparu grantiau gan ei fod yn rhyddhau cyllid a arferai gael ei wario ar weinyddu'r grant.

11. Mae gan Lywodraeth Cymru record dda ar ddadneilltuo. Dim ond tua 15% o'r cyllid refeniw a ddarparwyd i lywodraeth leol gan Lywodraeth Cymru sydd at ddibenion penodol. Yn ystod tymor y Cynulliad, mae £180m o gyllid a ddarparwyd fel grantiau penodol o'r blaen wedi'i ryddhau i'r Grant Cymorth Refeniw. Ar sail amcangyfrifon Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru ar gyfer cost gweinyddu grantiau, mae hyn yn awgrymu bod rhwng £9m a £18m a arferai fod yn orbenion rheoli bellach ar gael i'w gwario ar wasanaethau cyhoeddus bob blwyddyn. Rydym hefyd wedi darparu dros £230m y flwyddyn i gyflawni cyfrifoldebau newydd fel cyllid heb ei neilltuo yn hytrach na chreu grantiau penodol newydd. Unwaith eto, mae hyn wedi osgoi cymaint ag £20 miliwn o gostau gweinyddu diangen bob blwyddyn.
12. Mae hon yn broses barhaus ac mae'n bwysig ein bod ni'n ystyried pob llwybr i sicrhau mwy o hyblygrwydd i lywodraeth leol. Rwyf wedi pwysu ar lywodraeth leol, mae'n rhaid i'r sector allu rhoi sicrwydd i Weinidogion Cymru y bydd yn gallu cyflawni blaenoriaethau a gwella gwasanaethau pe bai'n cael mwy o hyblygrwydd.
13. Mae'n debyg y bydd yr heriau cyllido cyfredol yn para ymhell i'r dyfodol. Yn y blynyddoedd diwethaf, rydym wedi cymryd camau i ddiogelu llywodraeth leol rhag y toriadau gwaethaf a helpu'r sector i baratoi ar gyfer adegau mwy anodd. Fodd bynnag, yn sgil y pwysau parhaus ar wasanaethau a chyllidebau, mae'n rhaid i ni barhau i chwilio am ddulliau mwy gweddnewidiol o ddarparu gwasanaethau.

Pennu cyllideb ac ymgysylltu â'r cyhoedd

14. Yn ddiweddar, cynhaliais ymarfer i gasglu gwybodaeth gan Awdurdodau am eu dulliau ymgysylltu â'r cyhoedd, ymgynghori a chraffu lleol yn ystod y broses o bennu cyllideb ar gyfer 2014-15. Rwyf wedi ystyried y wybodaeth hon yn ofalus, gyda golwg ar amlygu arferion da gyda llywodraeth leol drwy Gyngor Partneriaeth Cymru a'i is-grwpiau. Rwyf hefyd yn bwriadu ysgrifennu at Weinidogion eraill yn crynhoi fy nghanfyddiadau.
15. Rwyf wedi datgan yn glir wrth Arweinwyr Cynghorau bod y pwysau ar gyllidebau'n golygu ei bod hi'n bwysicach nag erioed i gynnwys trigolion mewn penderfyniadau ar sut y caiff adnoddau lleol eu blaenoriaethu a'u gwario ac, yn arbennig, mewn penderfyniadau anodd am doriadau. Yn anad dim, gall ymgysylltu effeithiol arwain at atebion arloesol ar gyfer ymdrin â chyfyngiadau cyllidebol a gwella democratiaeth leol.
16. Mae'r wybodaeth a ddaeth i'r fei yn sgil fy ymarfer yn cyflwyno darlun cymysg ledled Cymru, gyda rhai enghreifftiau da iawn o ymgysylltu effeithiol â thrigolion, gweithwyr, partneriaid darparu a'r Trydydd Sector. Fodd bynnag, rwy'n argyhoeddedig na ddylai ymgysylltu â'r cyhoedd fod yn ymarfer 'ticio bocsys'. Ceir tystiolaeth o ganlyniadau ymgynghoriad yn cael eu hasesu a'u defnyddio'n briodol i lywio penderfyniadau mewnol, drwy gyfarfodydd Cabinet, gweithdai a Phwyllgorau Craffu. Roedd rhai awdurdodau yn cyhoeddi dadansoddiad cynhwysfawr o ganlyniadau ymgynghoriadau i ymatebwyr eu gweld.

17. Er nad wyf yn tanbrisiu tasg Awdurdodau o bennu cyllideb, mae yna lawer o ddulliau o gynnwys cymunedau mewn ystyriaethau cyllidebol. Mae'n amlwg y gallai rhai Awdurdodau wneud mwy i ymgysylltu â'u cymunedau. Rwy'n cydnabod rôl democratiaeth leol wrth gyflawni dyletswyddau allanol fel pennu cyllideb, ond mae'n bwysig cynnwys cymunedau yn y broses a gwneud iddynt deimlo eu bod yn cael eu cynnwys, a dylai trafodaethau dwyffordd fod yn ail natur.
18. Gan na fydd y cyfyngiadau ariannol yn gwella yn y dyfodol agos, mae angen i Awdurdodau ddechrau meddwl yn awr sut i fynd at i sicrhau bod penderfyniadau terfynol yn gadarn ac yn seiliedig ar wybodaeth gynhwysfawr, pryd i wneud hynny ac â phwy y dylid ymgynghori â nhw.

Cronfa Cydweithredu Rhanbarthol

19. Rwy'n cyflwyno cynlluniau i asesu gwelliannau a chanlyniadau o'r Gronfa Cydweithredu Rhanbarthol ar ffurf model tebyg i'r un a fabwysiadwyd ar gyfer prosiect Bwrdd Gwasanaeth Lleol Cronfa Gymdeithasol Ewrop (ESF-LSB).
20. Bydd gwerthusiad annibynnol cyffredinol yn cael ei gynnal o'r Gronfa Cydweithredu Rhanbarthol a fydd yn archwilio ei ganlyniadau ac yn nodi gwersi ac ystyriaethau ar gyfer polisi ac arferion y dyfodol ar sail cydweithredu. Mae'r gwerthusiad hwn yn cael ei gomisiynu ar hyn o bryd a dylid dyfarnu contract yn y ddau fis nesaf.

Trethi Lleol – Ardrethi Annomestig

21. Ardrethi annomestig yw'r dull o godi refeniw ar gyfer gwasanaethau awdurdodau lleol gan berchnogion a deiliaid eiddo annomestig. Er eu bod yn cael eu galw'n ardrethi busnes yn aml, maent yn berthnasol i bob math o eiddo annomestig nid busnesau'n unig. Mae hyn yn cynnwys elusennau, sefydliadau dielw ac eiddo'r sector cyhoeddus. Mae yna categorïau esempt a nifer o gynlluniau rhyddhad.
22. Caiff biliau ardrethi annomestig eu cyfrif trwy ddefnyddio dau newidyn:
- Gwerth Ardrethol eiddo, a bennir gan Asiantaeth y Swyddfa Brisio;
 - Lluosydd Ardrethi Annomestig sy'n cael ei bennu bob blwyddyn gan Lywodraeth Cymru ac sydd yr un fath i bob eiddo.
23. Ar gyfer 2014-15, mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi capio cynnydd y Lluosydd ar 2%.
24. Yn dilyn argymhelliad adroddiad cyntaf y Comisiwn ar Ddatganoli yng Nghymru, mae gwaith ar droed i ddatganoli ardrethi annomestig yn llawn i Gymru fel rhan o'r Rhaglen Ddiwygio Ariannol. Mae'r Gronfa Ardrethi Annomestig yn cynhyrchu tua £1 biliwn i ariannu gwasanaethau llywodraeth leol yng Nghymru. Mae hwn yn gam mawr ymlaen i ddarparu'r adnoddau sydd eu hangen ar Gymru i ddatblygu datganoli ymhellach.
25. Mae'r Cynllun Rhyddhad Ardrethi Busnesau Bach wedi bod yn weithredol ers nifer o flynyddoedd ac wedi'i ymestyn i barhau gydol 2014-15. Rydym hefyd yn

gweithredu nifer o gynlluniau rhyddhad eraill i helpu busnesau ledled Cymru fel y Cynllun Rhyddhad Manwerthu.

Trethi Lleol – y Dreth Gyngor

26. Dull o godi refeniw ar gyfer gwasanaethau llywodraeth leol gan eiddo domestig yw'r Dreth Gyngor.
27. Cynyddodd y Dreth Gyngor yng Nghymru **4.1%** yn 2014-15, o gymharu â chynnydd o 3.2% yn 2013-14. Mae hyn yn cynnwys praeseptau yr Heddlu a Chynghorau Cymuned. Er y cynnydd hwn, mae bil Band D ar gyfartaledd yn dal i fod tua **£190** yn is na Lloegr.
28. Yn gynnar iawn yn y broses bennu cyllideb bûm yn siarad gydag Arweinwyr Cynghorau a'r Comisiynwyr Heddlu a Throseddau i ddatgan fy nisgwyliadau yn glir mewn perthynas â'r Dreth Gyngor. Bûm yn gweithio'n agos â'm swyddogion i asesu'r cynnydd ledled Cymru. Mae pennu'r Dreth Gyngor yn un o ddyletswyddau allweddol Awdurdodau Lleol a'r Comisiynwyr Heddlu a Throseddau. Mae angen iddynt weithredu'n gyfrifol i gynnal gwasanaethau hanfodol gan gyfyngu'r baich ariannol ar drigolion yr un pryd. Maent yn uniongyrchol atebol i'w hetholwyr lleol ac rwyf wedi rhoi rhyddid iddynt wneud penderfyniadau da.
29. Mae pob Awdurdod Lleol wedi wynebu cyfyngiadau ariannol yn 2014-15 ac wedi gorfod gwneud penderfyniadau anodd gydol y broses o bennu cyllideb. Cynyddu'r Dreth Gyngor yw un o'r dewisiadau amrywiol sydd ar gael i Awdurdodau ar gyfer pennu cyllideb gytbwys. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn cyfeirio cymaint â phosibl o'r cyllid sydd ar gael i'r setliad cyllid craidd. Nid ydym yn gosod cyfyngiadau un ateb sy'n addas i bawb nac yn gofyn am refferenda lleol costus i gyfiawnhau cynnydd yn y Dreth Gyngor. Mae tystiolaeth yn dangos bod mwy o Awdurdodau yn Lloegr yn gwrthod cynnig Llywodraeth y DU o grant rhewi'r Dreth Gyngor bob blwyddyn ac yn dewis y gallu i bennu eu treth gyngor eu hunain yn lle hynny, ac mae lefelau'r Dreth Gyngor yn Lloegr yn parhau i godi flwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn.
30. Mae'r Bil Tai yn cynnwys darpariaeth ar gyfer y Dreth Gyngor a fydd yn rhoi pwerau dewisol i Awdurdodau Lleol godi hyd at, ond nid mwy na, 100% yn ychwanegol o dâl safonol y Dreth Gyngor (hy premiwm 100%) ar:
- Eiddo sydd wedi bod yn wag (heb ei feddiannu a heb fawr o ddodrefn) am o leiaf flwyddyn:
 - Ail gartrefi (cartrefi nad ydynt yn unig gartref neu'n brif gartref i unigolyn ac sydd heb fawr o ddodrefn).
31. Bwriad y darpariaethau hyn yw rhoi adnoddau ychwanegol i Awdurdodau Lleol fel y gallant fynd i'r afael â'r pwysau tai yn lleol a gwrthsefyll effeithiau ffactorau sy'n effeithio ar gyflenwad tai yn lleol. Bydd Awdurdodau Lleol sy'n defnyddio tâl y Dreth Gyngor ychwanegol ar eiddo gwag a/neu ail gartrefi'n cael eu hannog i

ddefnyddio unrhyw refeniw ychwanegol a godir i wella a chynyddu'r cyflenwad tai a'r gwasanaethau sydd ar gael yn lleol.

32. Os yw'r Bil yn cael Cydsyniad Brenhinol byddaf yn ymgynghori ar esemptiadau posibl i daliadau'r Dreth Gyngor ychwanegol hyn. Bydd hyn yn llywio Rheoliadau y byddaf yn eu cyflwyno i ragnodi categorïau o anheddau na ellir codi Treth Gyngor ychwanegol arnynt. Gall y categorïau hyn ymwneud â nodweddion yr adeilad neu amgylchiadau'r unigolyn fyddai'n gorfod talu'r dreth. Byddaf yn cyhoeddi canllawiau hefyd sy'n rhaid i Awdurdodau Lleol eu hystyried wrth godi tâl Treth Gyngor ychwanegol. Mae hyn yn debygol o gynnwys gofynion adrodd gwybodaeth.

Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor

33. Yn dilyn penderfyniad Llywodraeth y DU i ddiddymu Budd-dal y Dreth Gyngor, cyflwynodd Llywodraeth Cymru Gynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor ar gyfer 2013-14 a oedd yn cynnal hawliadau i aelwydydd cymwys. Cefnogwyd hyn gan £22 miliwn ychwanegol i ategu'r £222 miliwn a drosglwyddwyd gan Lywodraeth y DU, gan roi cyfanswm o £244 miliwn. Mae'r dull hwn yn parhau yn 2014-15, ac mae angen i lywodraeth leol ystyried goblygiadau ariannol unrhyw ddiffyg ychwanegol sy'n codi o benderfyniadau lleol ar lefelau'r Dreth Gyngor. O ganlyniad, darparwyd cymorth i bron 320,000 o aelwydydd i allu talu'r Dreth Gyngor, a bydd 70% o'r rhain yn parhau i beidio gorfod talu unrhyw Dreth Gyngor o gwbl.
34. Fodd bynnag, o ystyried y cynnydd a ragwelir yng nghost cynnal yr amddiffyniad hwn, ym mis Mehefin 2013 cytunodd Gweinidogion i gynnal adolygiad i ddatblygu opsiynau a gwneud argymhellion ar gyfer cynllun teg a chynaliadwy, sy'n darparu cymaint o amddiffyniad â phosibl i aelwydydd incwm isel. Mae trosolwg manwl o'r adolygiad yn yr Atodiad i'r papur hwn.
35. Yn ddiweddar, cyhoeddais Ddatganiad Ysgrifenedig yn cadarnhau bod Gweinidogion Cymru wedi penderfynu y dylid parhau i gynnal hawliadau i Gynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor am ddwy flynedd arall yn dilyn yr adolygiad.

Perfformiad a Chraffu Awdurdodau Lleol

36. Wrth bennu cyllidebau, mae Awdurdodau Lleol yng Nghymru yn y gorffennol wedi bod yn cyflawni yn erbyn Cytundebau Canlyniadau. Dros oes y Cytundebau Canlyniadau llwyddodd pob Awdurdod Lleol i wella eu dull o gyflawni canlyniadau a nodwyd. Datblygwyd dull newydd ar gyfer y cylch nesaf sy'n cysylltu'r canlyniadau ag ymrwymadau'r Rhaglen Lywodraethu. Cyflwynodd pob Awdurdod Lleol yng Nghymru eu Cytundebau Canlyniadau Olynol erbyn 31 Mai a bydd asesiadau o berfformiad yn erbyn canlyniadau'n cael eu cynnal.
37. Yn ogystal â hybu perfformiad Awdurdodau Lleol rwyf hefyd yn gweithio i wella gwaith craffu Awdurdodau Lleol ar lefel leol a chenedlaethol. Mae craffu effeithiol yn gysylltiedig â phenderfyniadau cyllideb o safon. Darparwyd mwy o gymorth i

Gynghorwyr Awdurdodau Lleol i'w helpu i gyflawni eu gwaith fel rhan o'r broses o weithredu Mesur Llywodraeth Leol 2011.

38. Y Rhaglen Datblygu Gwaith Craffu yw'r ffocws ar gyfer cryfhau trefniadau craffu mewn llywodraeth leol. Dechreuodd cam cyntaf y rhaglen ym mis Medi 2012 ac fe ddaw i ben ym mis Mawrth 2015. Bydd tystiolaeth o'r gwaith hwn, astudiaeth Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru ar graffu lleol, Adroddiad y Comisiwn ar Lywodraethu a Darparu Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus a gwerthusiadau system y cabinet a Mesur Llywodraeth Leol 2011, yn llywio cam nesaf y gwaith hwn.
39. Mae'r Ganolfan Craffu Cyhoeddus, sy'n derbyn adnoddau gan Lywodraeth Cymru, yn darparu rhaglen waith bwrpasol i gefnogi gwaith craffu yng Nghymru. Mewn cyfnod byr o amser mae wedi sefydlu'i hun fel llygad y ffynnon ar gyfer pob math o gymorth craffu, ac wedi bod yn allweddol yn y gwaith o ddatblygu Nodweddion Craffu Effeithiol, ac o ran cefnogi rhaglen hyfforddiant ag achrediad academiaidd ar gyfer swyddogion craffu ledled Cymru.
40. Ar 26 Mehefin byddaf yn siarad mewn digwyddiad i lansio canllaw ar graffu cyllideb yn effeithiol, a ddatblygwyd gan y Ganolfan Graffu Gyhoeddus a Grant Thornton. Bydd y canllaw hwn yn cynnig cyngor ymarferol i Awdurdodau Lleol ar y ffordd orau o gynnwys defnyddwyr gwasanaethau mewn penderfyniadau cyllideb anodd.

Democratiaeth

41. Mae Deddf Llywodraeth Leol (Democratiaeth) Cymru 2013 yn cael ei rhoi ar waith a'r nod yw gorffen y broses yng ngwanwyn 2015 pan fydd darpariaethau terfynol Gwefannau y Cynghorau Cymuned a Thref yn cael eu gweithredu. Mae hyn yn rhoi digon o amser paratoi i'r Cynghorau hyn. Rwy'n ymgynghori ar ganllawiau yn y maes hwn ar hyn o bryd:

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/access-to-information-town-councils/?skip=1&lang=cy>

42. Rwyf hefyd yn gweithio tuag at weithredu darpariaethau'r Ddeddf mewn perthynas â chyhoeddi cofrestru buddiannau aelodau yn electronig ar gyfer pob Awdurdod Lleol sydd wedi'u cynnwys yn y Ddeddf.
43. O ran Mesur Llywodraeth Leol (Cymru) 2011, cyhoeddwyd cyfran gyntaf yr adroddiadau blynyddol a baratowyd gan Gynghorwyr i'w hetholwyr ym mis Medi 2013, yn dilyn Etholiadau Llywodraeth Leol ym mis Mai 2012. Rwyf wedi cyhoeddi y bydd y gyfres nesaf o etholiadau Llywodraeth Leol yn cael eu cynnal ym mis Medi 2017 ar gyfer y Prif Gynghorau a'r Cynghorau Cymuned a Thref.
44. Hydref diwethaf, sefydlais Grŵp Arbenigol ar Amrywiaeth Llywodraeth Leol, dan gadeiryddiaeth yr Athro Laura McAllister. Yr aelodau oedd Joy Kent, Dr Declan Hall a Naomi Alleyne. Sefydlwyd y Grŵp i adolygu canlyniadau arolwg Ymgeiswyr Etholiadau Llywodraeth Leol 2012.

45. Argymhellion allweddol o adroddiad y Grŵp Arbenigol, “*Ar ôl pwysu a mesur: Sicrhau Democratiaeth Amrywiol mewn Llywodraeth Leol*” yw:

- Gwella arolygon y dyfodol drwy wahanu'r data ar gyfer Cynghorau Sir a Chymuned;
- Dylai pleidiau gwleidyddol ddefnyddio cynlluniau mentora ar gyfer darpar ymgeiswyr posibl;
- Dylai Llywodraeth Cymru gydlynu ymgyrch, ar y cyd â rhanddeiliaid, cyn yr etholiadau lleol i ddarparu gwybodaeth am Lywodraeth Leol a sut i ddod yn Gynghorydd;
- Dylai Llywodraeth Cymru gydweithio â CLILC i sefydlu cynllun cysgodi/mentora.

46. Yn ogystal, rwy'n sefydlu rhwydwaith o hyrwyddwyr amrywiaeth. Ysgrifennais at bob Awdurdod Lleol i'w hannog i enwebu cynrychiolydd i fod yn hyrwyddwr amrywiaeth. Hyd yn hyn, mae 17 Awdurdod Lleol wedi enwebu Cynghorwyr i fod yn hyrwyddwyr amrywiaeth.

47. Rôl yr hyrwyddwyr lleol fydd:

- cymryd rhan yn ymgyrchoedd y cyfryngau – cyfweiliadau / erthyglau newyddion ar beth wnaeth eu hysgogi i fod yn Gynghorwyr; yr anawsterau a gawsant; pa welliannau fyddai'n gwneud y swydd yn haws;
- defnyddio eu profiad fel Cynghorwyr i hyrwyddo'r rôl;
- defnyddio'r cyfryngau cymdeithasol – rhoi negeseuon ar twitter i hyrwyddo diddordeb yn yr adroddiad a'r drafodaeth lawn a thu hwnt;
- sicrhau bod Awdurdodau Lleol yn hyrwyddo argymhellion y Grŵp Arbenigol mewn perthynas â Llywodraeth Leol – pob Cynghorydd i ymweld ag Ysgolion Uwchradd; Awdurdodau Lleol i gael mentoriaid a hyrwyddwyr aelodau; ymgysylltu â grwpiau heb gynrychiolaeth ddigonol;
- bod yn gyfrwng i sicrhau democratiaeth amrywiol mewn Llywodraeth Leol yn yr etholiadau nesaf;
- trwy ddefnyddio pethau fel cyfryngau cymdeithasol, gallai'r grŵp greu diddordeb yn yr adroddiad cyn iddo gael ei lansio, cyn y drafodaeth lawn ar 18 Mawrth a thu hwnt.

48. Mae Grŵp Llywio, yn cynnwys cynrychiolwyr y pleidiau gwleidyddol, nawr yn bwrw ymlaen â'r Cynllun Gweithredu a gyhoeddais mewn ymateb i'r Adroddiad.

Byrddau Gwasanaeth Lleol a Chynlluniau Integredig Sengl

49. Mae gan bob Bwrdd Gwasanaeth Lleol gynlluniau integredig sengl erbyn hyn ac maent yn gweithio i symleiddio eu strwythurau partneriaeth lleol. Bydd Bil Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol (Cymru), a fydd yn cael ei gyflwyno i'r Cynulliad Cenedlaethol fis nesaf, yn rhoi Byrddau Gwasanaeth Lleol a Chynlluniau Integredig Sengl ar un sail statudol ac yn cysoni cynlluniau strategol lleol a chenedlaethol yn well drwy'r Targedau Cenedlaethol a nodir yn y Bil.

50. Hyd nes y bydd y Bil hwn yn cael ei weithredu, mae cynlluniau integredig sengl yn seiliedig ar ddarpariaethau cynllunio cymunedol a gyflwynwyd ym Mesur

Llywodraeth Leol (Cymru) 2009. Er mwyn sicrhau bod y trefniadau cyfredol yn parhau, yn dilyn ymgynghoriad, byddaf yn cyflwyno Gorchymyn i gynnwys y Comisiynwyr Heddlu a Throsedd fel partneriaid cynllunio cymunedol.

Diogelwch Cymunedol

51. Mae'r Rhaglen Lywodraethu'n nodi ein hymrwymiad i roi terfyn ar drais yn erbyn menywod, cam-drin domestig a thrais rhywiol yng Nghymru. Y mis hwn, byddaf yn cyflwyno deddfwriaeth i gyflawni'r nod hwn drwy wella ymateb y sector cyhoeddus yng Nghymru i drais a cham-drin o'r fath. Bydd y Bil yn darparu ffoecs strategol ar y materion hyn ac yn sicrhau ystyriaeth gyson o ddulliau ataliol, amddiffynnol a chefnogol i ddarparu gwasanaethau.
52. Drwy ein menter 10,000 o Fywydau Diogelach, mae dros 7,000 o ddiodefwr yn ystyried eu bod yn ddiogelach, neu'n teimlo'n ddiogelach, yn 2013-14 o gymharu â 2011-2012; cyflawniad sylweddol yn unol â chyfeiriad ein polisiau a'n strategaethau. Yn ogystal â hyn, mae pob sefydliad darparu gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yng Nghymru bellach wedi gweithredu neu adolygu polisiau eu gweithle ar drais yn erbyn menywod, cam-drin domestig a thrais rhywiol.
53. Rwyf hefyd yn gweithio i godi ymwybyddiaeth o'r materion sy'n gysylltiedig ag anffurfio organau cenhedlu benywod. Rydym yn arwain y ffordd yng Nghymru o ran mynd i'r afael â chaethwasiaeth, sy'n parhau i fod yn broblem yn ein cymdeithas fodern. Yn y cyd-destun hwn, rwy'n parhau i weithio gyda Llywodraeth y DU ar ei Bil Caethwasiaeth Fodern.
54. Cymru yw'r wlad gyntaf yn y DU i benodi Cydgysylltydd Atal Caethwasiaeth sy'n gweithio'n agos ag ystod o sefydliadau gwahanol i godi ymwybyddiaeth a chydgylltu gweithgareddau ar y cyd i fynd i'r afael â chaethwasiaeth. Nid oes unrhyw Weinyddiaeth arall yn y DU wedi cymryd camau o'r fath hyd nawr gyda Llywodraeth y DU yn bwriadu penodi Comisiynydd Atal Caethwasiaeth.
55. Rydym wedi cymryd camau breision yma yng Nghymru, gan ddarparu arweiniad strategol i'r cyrff datganoledig a heb eu datganoli sy'n gweithio yma. Mae ein Grŵp Arwain Atal Caethwasiaeth yn darparu trosolwg a chyfeiriad i'r gwaith hwn ac mae ein llwyddiannau sylweddol hyd yn hyn yn cynnwys datblygu Llwybr Gofal Goroewyr i sicrhau cymorth cyson i oroeswyr ledled Cymru, gan gyflwyno rhaglenni hyfforddiant ymwybyddiaeth cymeradwy yn raddol a sicrhau bod ein Fforymau Atal Caethwasiaeth Rhanbarthol yn cwmpasu Cymru gyfan.
56. Ym mis Hydref 2013, cyflawnais yr ymrwymiad i ariannu 500 o Swyddogion Cymorth Cymunedol ychwanegol ledled Cymru. Mae'r swyddogion hyn yn gweithio gydag ysgolion cynradd lleol, yn rhoi sicrwydd i grwpiau dros 60 oed, yn helpu busnesau lleol i fynd i'r afael ag achosion o ddwyn, atafaelu alcohol a thybaco, a chynnal ymholiadau o ddrws i ddrws ar gyfer ymchwiliadau troseddol. Ym mis Mawrth 2013 dyfarnwyd contract i werthuso effaith ein buddsoddiad yn y swyddogion ychwanegol hyn. Bydd y gwaith yn dod i ben ym mis Medi 2014.
57. Rwyf wedi darparu £69,000 ar gyfer 2013-14 i gefnogi Parthau Dim Galw Diwahoddiad ychwanegol ledled Cymru. Dylai hyn greu parthau ychwanegol a

fydd yn cwmpasu 10,000 o gartrefi, yn ogystal â'r 38,500 o gartrefi sydd eisoes yn cael eu gwarchod gan y parthau hyn.

58. Mae Cronfa Atal Troseddau Ieuencid (a arferai gael ei galw'n Gronfa Cymunedau Diogelach) yn parhau i ddarparu cyllid i gefnogi cynlluniau sydd â'r nod o gyfeirio pobl ifanc i ffwrdd o droseddu ac ymddygiad gwrthgymdeithasol. Symudodd y gronfa hon at fodel ôl-troed rhanbarthol o fis Ebrill 2013 ac mae'r dull hwn wedi parhau i 2014-2015.
59. Rwy'n parhau i ystyried anghenion Cymuned y Lluoedd Arfog yng Nghymru drwy Grŵp Arbenigol penodol i Gymru. Ym mis Mehefin 2013, cyhoeddodd Llywodraeth Cymru Becyn Cymorth diwygiedig ar gyfer y Grŵp hwn. Roedd hwn yn nodi ac yn cyfeirio at ddarpariaeth gwasanaethau cyhoeddus perthnasol a phenodol i aelodau Cymuned y Lluoedd Arfog yng Nghymru, yn cynnwys eu teuluoedd. Fel partneriaid allweddol yn hyn, mae 22 o Awdurdodau Lleol Cymru wedi llofnodi Cyfamod Cymuned y Lluoedd Arfog. Cynhaliwyd dau ddigwyddiad Hyrwyddwyr Lluoedd Arfog amlsector ers mis Tachwedd 2013, i annog gwaith partneriaeth, a dull cydgysylltiedig o ddiwallu anghenion penodol y gymuned hon.
60. Ym mis Ebrill 2012, cyhoeddodd Llywodraeth Cymru Fframwaith Cenedlaethol Tân ac Achub Cymru ar gyfer 2012 ymlaen. Mae hwn yn nodi'r disgwyliadau ar Awdurdodau Tân ac Achub yng Nghymru. Cyhoeddwyd adroddiad cynnydd ar weithredu'r Fframwaith ym mis Gorffennaf 2013. Cynhelir adolygiad i weld a yw'r Fframwaith yn dal yn gyfredol yn ystod 2014-15.
61. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn darparu grant i Awdurdodau Tân ac Achub i gefnogi gwaith diogelwch cymunedol, yn cynnwys lleihau tanau bwriadol a darparu Gwiriadau Diogelwch Tân yn y Cartref. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi darparu £3.447 miliwn i'r tri Awdurdod Tân ac Achub yng Nghymru ar gyfer mentrau diogelwch tân cymunedol yn 2014-15. Mae gan yr Awdurdodau darged i gynnal 72,000 o wiriadau diogelwch tân yn y cartref yn 2014-15. Y llynedd, cwblhawyd 70,832 o wiriadau targed.
62. Mae'r gallu i wrthsefyll argyfwng ac ymateb yn effeithiol iddynt yn dibynnu ar bartneriaid yn gweithio'n effeithiol gyda'i gilydd, yn cynnwys gwasanaethau nad ydynt wedi'u datganoli, fel yr heddlu. Mae Prif Weinidog Cymru'n parhau i gadeirio cyfarfodydd rheolaidd o Fforwm Cymru Gydnerth sy'n dod â phartneriaid at ei gilydd.
63. Cydgysylltodd y strwythur cynllunio at argyfwng yng Nghymru ymateb effeithiol i'r tonnau enbyd a'r stormydd a welwyd yn ystod y gaeaf y llynedd yn ogystal â sicrhau diogelwch y cyhoedd yn ystod y cyfnodau o weithredu diwydiannol a gynhaliwyd gan Undeb y Brigadau Tân. Rydym yn gweithio gydag Awdurdodau Lleol a phartneriaid eraill i ranbartholi darpariaeth gwasanaethau cynllunio at argyfwng yng Nghymru er mwyn sefydlu a chefnogi trefniadau cydweithio effeithiol ymhellach. Mae gwaith sylweddol yn cael ei wneud hefyd i gyflwyno trefniadau diogelwch a chydnerthedd ar gyfer Uwchgynhadledd NATO. Bydd y profiad a gawn yn sgil hyn nid yn unig yn gwella ein gallu i gynnal digwyddiadau mawr o'r fath yn y dyfodol, ond bydd hefyd yn cryfhau ein cydnerthedd yn gyffredinol.

64. Ar 15 Ebrill 2014 cyhoeddodd y Gweinidog Cyllid bod £3 miliwn o gyllid 'Buddsoddi i Arbed' yn cael ei ddarparu i gynorthwyo'r gwaith o ddatblygu Canolfan Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus newydd, a fydd yn uno a chyd-leoli ystafelloedd rheoli Awdurdodau Tân ac Achub De a Chanolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru gyda Heddlu De Cymru yn eu Pencadlys ym Mhen-y-bont ar Ogwr. Bydd y ganolfan newydd yn sicrhau cydweithio effeithiol rhwng yr Heddlu a'r Awdurdodau Tân ac Achub a'i nod yw credu cymunedau mwy diogel a sicrhau arbedion drwy:

- gydgysylltu ceisiadau am gymorth brys gan y cyhoedd yn effeithiol
- gwella gallu a chydnerthedd y Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub a'r Heddlu
- gwella darpariaeth gwasanaethau drwy ganolbwyntio ar weithgareddau gwella parhaus
- datblygu a chyflawni protocolau gorchymyn a rheoli i reoli risg i ymatebwyr golau glas
- darparu llwyfan i ddatblygu atebion cyfathrebu a data symudol yn y dyfodol i wella gallu gwasanaethau golau glas i ryngweithredu.

65. Bydd y prosiect yn sicrhau bod cymorth brys yn cael ei gydgysylltu'n effeithiol a rhagwelir y bydd yn arwain at £1 filiwn o arbedion effeithlonrwydd blynyddol net o 2016.

66. Mae pensiynau diffoddwyr tân wedi'u datganoli i Weinidogion Cymru o dan Ddeddf y Gwasanaethau Tân ac Achub 2004. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru'n ymrwymedig i drefniadau pensiwn ar y cyd sy'n dilyn dulliau tebyg i'r rhai a fabwysiadwyd mewn manau eraill yn y DU. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi bod yn ystyriol o'r angen i sicrhau bod Cynlluniau'r DU yn gydradd â'i gilydd ac mae prif fuddion aelodaeth Cynllun Pensiwn Diffoddwyr Tân 2015, yn seiliedig ar gynigion cynllunio'r cynllun yn Lloegr yn destun ymgynghoriad ar hyn o bryd, a ddaw i ben ar 4 Gorffennaf. Gallai unrhyw newidiadau sylweddol i bolisi pensiwn ddiddymu'r cymorth cyllido Gwariant a Reolir yn Flynyddol a roddir gan Drysorlys EM i Bensiynau Diffoddwyr Tân Cymru. Byddai hyn yn gadael Llywodraeth Cymru yn atebol i dalu am unrhyw gostau ychwanegol yn y dyfodol.

67. Mae Undeb y Brigadau Tân wedi datgan gwrthwynebiad cyson i sawl agwedd ar drefniadau'r cynllun pensiynau newydd arfaethedig. Ar 16 Mai 2013, anfonodd yr Undeb Lythyr Anghydfod Masnach yn nodi eu pryderon at bob Gweinidog yn y DU, yn cynnwys Gweinidogion Cymru. Yn anffodus, mae hyn wedi arwain at 14 cyfnod gwahanol o weithredu diwydiannol gan aelodau'r Undeb dros y 13 mis diwethaf. Rwyf wedi cyfarfod â'r Undeb nifer o weithiau ac mae'r holl drafodaethau wedi bod yn gadarnhaol ac adeiladol. Yn ogystal, bûm yn gohebu ac yn cyfarfod â Brandon Lewis AS, Is-ysgrifennydd Gwladol Seneddol, yr Adran Cymunedau a Llywodraeth Leol i'w annog i barhau i drafod â'r Undeb gyda'r nod o gyrraedd setliad drwy gytundeb y ddwy ochr cyn gynted â phosibl.

Diwygio Gwasanaethau Datganoledig

68. Cafodd y Comisiwn ar Lywodraethu a Darparu Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus ei gyhoeddi ym mis Ebrill 2013 a chyflwynodd adroddiad i'r Prif Weinidog ym mis

Ionawr 2014. Roedd yr adroddiad yn cynnwys 62 o argymhellion yn cwmpasu ystod eang o faterion ar draws pob math o wasanaethau cyhoeddus. Hyd yn hyn, mae llawer o'r ffocws wedi bod ar yr argymhellion ynghylch strwythurau Awdurdodau Lleol. Mae'r rhain wedi'u cyflwyno mewn pedwar o'r argymhellion yn unig, gan ddangos hyd a lled y materion i'w hystyried.

69. Sefydlwyd Grŵp Gorchwyl a Gorffen y Gweinidog, dan arweid y Prif Weinidog, i weithredu ein rhaglen ddiwygio gwasanaethau datganoledig, gan dynnu ar ganfyddiadau y Comisiwn ar Lywodraethu a Darparu Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus yng Nghymru a'r Comisiwn ar Ddatganoli yng Nghymru. Bydd cyflawni'r ymrwymadau a wnaeth o dan Gompact Simpson gydag Awdurdodau Lleol nawr yn parhau fel rhan o'r rhaglen ehangach o ddiwygio gwasanaethau datganoledig.

70. Bydd Llywodraeth Cymru'n gwneud cyfres o gyhoeddiadau am Adroddiad y Comisiwn cyn toriad yr haf. I baratoi ar gyfer hyn, yng Nghynhadledd ddiweddar CLILC cyhoeddais fy ngweledigaeth ar gyfer Llywodraeth Leol yng Nghymru yn yr 21ain ganrif. Mae'r weledigaeth yn cynnwys pedwar conglfaen:

- Awdurdodau sydd â chysylltiadau cryf ac effeithiol gyda'u cymunedau;
- Democratiaeth leol sy'n adlewyrchu amrywiaeth ein cymunedau;
- Awdurdodau sy'n gwella lles pobl a lleoedd;
- Llywodraethu da.

71. Cyhoeddais hefyd y bydd yr etholiadau Llywodraeth Leol nesaf yn cael eu cynnal ym mis Mai 2017 ar sail ein prif gynghorau cyfredol. Bydd etholiadau Cynghorau Cymuned a Thref hefyd yn cael eu cynnal ar y diwrnod hwn.

72. Mae hyn yn golygu y gall arweinwyr gwleidyddol lleol presennol fod yn sicr na fydd unrhyw raglenni uno yn cael eu cyflwyno yn ystod tymor y Cynulliad hwn ac, fel arweinwyr, mae'n rhaid iddynt gynllunio ar gyfer y senario ariannol a amlinellir ym mharagraff 13 fel sail ar gyfer y flwyddyn nesaf a thu hwnt.

Lesley Griffiths AC
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth

Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a Llywodraeth Leol

25 Mehefin 2014

Papur Tystiolaeth – Cymorth y Dreth Gyngor

Cefndir

1. Fel rhan o Adolygiad Gwariant Hydref 2010, cyhoeddodd Llywodraeth y DU ei bwriad i ddiddymu Budd-dal y Dreth Gyngor a lleihau gwariant ar gynlluniau i gymryd ei lle, gan 10% i ddechrau. Diddymwyd Budd-dal y Dreth Gyngor ar 31 Mawrth 2013 a throsglwyddwyd y cyfrifoldeb am ddatblygu cynlluniau i gymryd ei lle i Awdurdodau Lleol yn Lloegr a'i fabwysiadu gan Lywodraethau Cymru a'r Alban.
2. Ni ddatganolwyd y swyddogaethau i Lywodraethau Cymru a'r Alban. Mae budd-daliadau nawdd cymdeithasol yn parhau heb eu datganoli ac ni throsglwyddwyd pwerau mewn perthynas â'r rhain. Cyhoeddodd Llywodraeth y DU y byddai'n trosglwyddo cyllid ar gyfer Cymorth y Dreth Gyngor, llai y toriad cychwynnol o 10 y cant, i'r gweinyddiaethau datganoledig gan ddisgwyl y byddent yn datblygu cynlluniau cymorth sy'n gweithredu o fewn system y Dreth Gyngor sylfaenol. Symudwyd y cyllid o Wariant a Reolir yn Flynyddol i Derfyn Gwariant Ariannol hefyd, sy'n golygu bod rhaid darparu cynlluniau'r dyfodol o fewn cyllidebau penodol Llywodraeth Cymru.
3. Yn dilyn penderfyniad Llywodraeth y DU i ddiddymu Budd-dal y Dreth Gyngor, cyflwynodd Llywodraeth Cymru Gynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor ar gyfer 2013-14 sy'n cynnal hawliadau i aelwydydd cymwys. Cefnogwyd hyn gan £22 miliwn ychwanegol i ategu'r £222 miliwn a drosglwyddwyd gan Lywodraeth y DU, gan wneud cyfanswm o £244 miliwn. Mae'r dull hwn yn parhau yn 2014-15, ac mae angen i lywodraeth leol ystyried goblygiadau ariannol unrhyw ddiffyg ychwanegol sy'n codi o benderfyniadau lleol ar lefelau'r Dreth Gyngor.

Adolygiad o Gynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor

4. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru, felly, wedi, amddiffyn aelwydydd incwm isel ac agored i niwed rhag effeithiau posibl penderfyniad Llywodraeth y DU i ddiddymu budd-dal y Dreth Gyngor a lleihau'r cyllid ar gyfer cynlluniau i gymryd ei lle. Fodd bynnag, o ystyried y cynnydd a ragwelir yng nghost cynnal yr amddiffyniad hwn, ym mis Mehefin 2013 cytunodd Gweinidogion i gynnal adolygiad i ddatblygu opsiynau a gwneud argymhellion ar gyfer cynllun teg a chynaliadwy, sy'n darparu cymaint o amddiffyniad â phosibl i aelwydydd incwm isel. Bydd yr ateb a ffefrir yn cael ei roi ar waith o 2015-16.

Cyd-destun ariannol

5. Trosglwyddodd Llywodraeth y DU £222 miliwn i Gyllideb Cymru ar gyfer Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor yn 2013-14 a 2014-15. O 2015-16, ni fydd Llywodraeth y DU yn dyrannu swm penodol ar gyfer y cynlluniau hyn gan y bydd yr arian wedi'i gynnwys yng nghyllideb Cymru. Mae cyllideb Llywodraeth Cymru'n adlewyrchu addasiad llinell sylfaen i Brif Grŵp Gwariant Llywodraeth Leol sef £222 miliwn ar gyfer Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor yn 2014-15 a 2015-16. Ar gyfer 2014-15, mae £244 miliwn (trosglwyddiad o £222 miliwn a £22 miliwn gan Lywodraeth Cymru) yn cael ei ddosbarthu fel rhan o'r Grant Cymorth Refeniw i gefnogi'r gwaith o ddarparu cynlluniau sy'n cynnal hawliadau, gydag Awdurdodau Lleol i ystyried unrhyw oblygiadau ariannol ychwanegol.
6. Mae'r £244 miliwn yn cael ei roi i Awdurdodau Lleol i gymryd lle'r Dreth Gyngor na allant ei chasglu o aelwydydd sy'n gymwys i dderbyn gostyngiadau. Mae'n rhan o'r incwm y caiff Awdurdodau Lleol ei wario ar wasanaethau lleol, hy nid yw'n cael ei 'wario' ar y cynlluniau eu hunain. Bydd Awdurdod Lleol yn profi diffyg ariannol os oes bwlch rhwng y cyllid a ddarparwyd a faint o Dreth Gyngor y gellid fod wedi'i chasglu o aelwydydd sy'n derbyn gostyngiad. Gan fod llwythi achosion yn lleihau'n gymedrol, a'r ddarpariaeth gyllido yn adlewyrchu'r swm yr oedd ei angen adeg sefydlu'r cynlluniau, mae bron i bob bwlch o'r fath yn deillio o benderfyniadau lleol am gynyddu'r Dreth Gyngor.

Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor yn 2013-14

7. Ym mis Rhagfyr 2013, cyhoeddais Adroddiad Interim ar Gynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor yng Nghymru, rhwng mis Mai a mis Hydref 2013:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/finandfunding/counciltax/council-tax-support/council-tax-reduction-schemes-in-wales-interim-report/?skip=1&lang=cy>
8. Rhoddodd yr adroddiad y wybodaeth ddiweddaraf am weithredu Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor yng Nghymru, gan fod o gymorth i sicrhau tryloywder mewn maes lle mae llawer o gyllid yn cael ei reoli gan Lywodraeth Cymru. Yn benodol, mae'n darparu data ar lefel Awdurdodau Lleol ar lwyth achosion y cynlluniau a goblygiadau ariannu am y cyfnod o chwe mis o fis Mai i fis Hydref 2013.
9. Mae'r adroddiad yn dangos bod y llwyth achosion ledled Cymru ym mis Hydref 2013 tua 318,000 ac yn cyfrif am £246 miliwn o'r Dreth Gyngor. Gostyngodd y llwyth achosion 1.6% fesul mis dros y cyfnod rhwng mis Mai a mis Hydref. Mae'r ffigurau hyn yn rhoi cipolwg o'r holl lwyth achosion a chostau mewn perthynas ag achosion agored (byw) ar adeg benodol mewn amser, ac nid ydynt yn ystyried achosion sydd wedi cau.
10. Ym mis Mawrth 2014, roedd y llwyth achosion tua 316,500 ac i gyfrif am £244 miliwn. Fodd bynnag, nid yw'r ffigur hwn yn cynrychioli'r cyfanswm am y flwyddyn gan nad yw'n ystyried achosion sydd wedi cau yn ystod y flwyddyn, y disgwyliwn iddynt fod yn fwy na £2 filiwn.
11. Mae gan tua 70% o ymgeiswyr hawl i gael y gostyngiad uchaf yn eu hatebolrwydd i dalu'r Dreth Gyngor yn seiliedig ar y ffaith eu bod yn derbyn budd-

daliadau cymhwyso eraill (er enghraifft, Lwfans Ceiswyr Gwaith neu Lwfans Cyflogaeth a Chymorth).

12. Bydd Adroddiad Blynyddol ar Gynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor yn cael ei gyhoeddi yn yr haf. Bydd hwn yn rhoi manylion am gyfanswm gwariant y cynlluniau ar achosion agored a chaeedig am y flwyddyn 2013-14. Bydd hefyd yn archwilio tueddiadau mewn llwyth achosion a goblygiadau ariannu yn ystod blwyddyn gyntaf gweithredu Cynllun Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor.

Dull o Adolygu

13. Pwrpas yr Adolygiad oedd ystyried yr opsiynau a darparu a/neu gomisiynu dadansoddiad o'r effaith ar ddinasyddion ac awdurdodau lleol, a gwneud argymhellion ar gyfer cynllunio cynllun teg a chynaliadwy o fewn y cyfyngiadau ariannol. Roedd yr adolygiad yn cynnwys nifer o ffrydiau gwaith a thasgau:

- Modelu cost debygol Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor yn y dyfodol, yn seiliedig ar ragdybiaethau am gyllidebau'r dyfodol a chynnydd yn y Dreth Gyngor
- Dadansoddiad o natur ac effaith y Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor a gyflwynwyd gan Awdurdodau Lleol Lloegr, gan ddefnyddio gwybodaeth a gafwyd gan y Sefydliad Astudiaethau Cyllid, y Swyddfa Archwilio Genedlaethol, y Fforwm Polisi Newydd, Sefydliad Joseph Rowntree ac eraill
- Caffael dull cywir o fodelu effeithiau tebygol gwahanol opsiynau ar gartrefi ar lefel Awdurdodau Lleol a Chymru gyfan
- Aseiad llawn o effeithiau Cydraddoldeb a Chonfensiwn y Cenhedloedd Unedig ar Hawliau'r Plentyn
- Ymgynghori â rhanddeiliaid, drwy Grwpiau Gorchwyl a Gorffen a Grwpiau Cyfeirio (gweler isod), drwy fynychu grwpiau perthnasol Awdurdodau Lleol a Chymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru, a thrwy ymgynghoriad ffurfiol â rhanddeiliaid o fis Rhagfyr 2013 i fis Mawrth 2014

14. Sefydlwyd dau grŵp i gefnogi gwaith yr Adolygiad:

- Grŵp Gorchwyl a Gorffen dan gadeiryddiaeth Cyfarwyddwr Llywodraeth Leol, i oruchwylio'r gwaith o gyflawni'r adolygiad ac argymhellion ar gyfer dyfodol Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor. Roedd yr aelodau'n cynnwys cynrychiolwyr o CLILC, SoLACE, Cyngor ar Bopeth, ymarferwyr budd-daliadau Awdurdodau Lleol a swyddogion Llywodraeth Cymru;
- Grŵp Cyfeirio, dan gadeiryddiaeth Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr Cyllid a Pherfformiad Llywodraeth Leol, i ddarparu cyngor a chymorth arbenigol i'r Grŵp Gorchwyl a Gorffen.

Canlyniad yr adolygiad

15. Wrth gynnal yr adolygiad hwn fe wnaethom ystyried y cyd-destun ariannol yn ofalus, ynghyd â'r dystiolaeth a ddaw i'r amlwg am yr effaith yn Lloegr mewn ardaloedd Awdurdodau Lleol lle y gwelwyd gostyngiad mewn hawliadau. Crëwyd model o effaith y gwahanol opsiynau, yn enwedig y goblygiadau i grwpiau â nodweddion gwarchodedig o dan y Ddeddf Cydraddoldeb. Roedd y dadansoddiad hwn yn llywio Aseiad manwl o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb ac aseiad Comisiwn y Cenhedloedd Unedig ar Hawliau'r Plentyn. Buom hefyd yn

ymgyngori ag ystod eang o randdeiliaid, gan ofyn am sylwadau ar a ddylid cadw hawliadau ai peidio ac effeithiau tebygol hynny, yn seiliedig ar y gwahanol opsiynau ar gyfer lleihau hawliadau. Gofynnwyd am sylwadau ar oblygiadau cydraddoldeb yn arbennig, Mae'r Grŵp Gorchwyl a Gorffen yn darparu cymorth, cyngor a her gydol yr adolygiad.

16. Y canlyniad yw bod Llywodraeth Cymru wedi penderfynu parhau gyda'r trefniadau sydd ar waith ar hyn o bryd i ddarparu Cymorth y Dreth Gyngor drwy ein Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor. Bydd hawl llawn i gymorth yn cael ei gynnal drwy gynllun fframwaith cenedlaethol sengl am o leiaf ddwy flynedd o 2015-16. Cyhoeddais Ddatganiad Ysgrifenedig ar hyn ar 5 Mehefin, ynghyd â chrynodeb o'r ymatebion i'r ymgynghoriad, yr Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb ac asesiad Comisiwn y Cenhedloedd Unedig ar Hawliau'r Plentyn.
17. Mae'r penderfyniad hwn yn golygu bod Llywodraeth Cymru'n parhau i amddiffyn aelwydydd incwm isel ac agored i niwed, drwy sicrhau bod pob ymgeisydd cymwys yn derbyn eu hawl llawn i Gymorth y Dreth Gyngor. Mae'r grwpiau hyn eisoes yn cael trafferth i ymdopi ag effeithiau diwygio'r system les. Bydd hyn yn osgoi'r effeithiau a welir yn Lloegr, lle mae dros ddwy filiwn o aelwydydd incwm isel yn wynebu talu mwy am eu Treth Gyngor. Yn Lloegr, mae atebolrwydd y Dreth Gyngor yn amrywio yn ôl Awdurdodau Lleol ac mae nifer o gynlluniau gwahanol ar waith. Fodd bynnag, ar gyfartaledd, mae aelwydydd sydd wedi'u heffeithio nawr yn talu £154 y flwyddyn o Dreth Gyngor. Mae ymholiadau am ddyledion y Dreth Gyngor i Cyngor ar Bopeth wedi cynyddu 40% mewn rhai ardaloedd o Loegr ers cyflwyno taliadau isaf y Dreth Gyngor. Mae gwaith ymchwil hefyd yn dangos bod Awdurdodau Lleol yn Lloegr sydd wedi lleihau hawliadau wedi gweld cynnydd o 30% yn nifer y gorchmynion atebolrwydd a gyhoeddir gan Lysoedd Ynadon am beidio â thalu'r Dreth Gyngor. Byddai darlun tebyg wedi'i weld yng Nghymru pe bai hawliadau wedi'u lleihau.
18. Rydym yn bwriadu parhau i ariannu Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor ar y lefelau cyfredol, a bydd angen i lywodraeth leol gynllunio ar gyfer unrhyw oblygiadau ariannol ychwanegol sy'n codi o gynnydd lleol yn y Dreth Gyngor. Mae'r trefniant hwn yn adlewyrchu bod y cyfrifoldeb am y cynlluniau'n cael ei rannu a'r ffaith bod llwyth achosion yn lleihau'n raddol. Mae cyllid Llywodraeth Cymru'n disodli incwm y Dreth Gyngor na all Awdurdodau Lleol ei gasglu o'r aelwydydd sy'n gymwys am ostyngiad.

Yr hirdymor

19. Mae'r penderfyniad i gynnal hawliadau am o leiaf ddwy flynedd arall yn darparu sefydlogrwydd a sicrwydd i'r rhai sy'n derbyn gostyngiad yn sgil Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor ac Awdurdodau Lleol. I Awdurdodau Lleol, mae hefyd yn osgoi goblygiadau gweinyddol o orfod casglu biliau bach a mynd ar ôl dyledion aelwydydd nad oedd yn gymwys i dalu'r Dreth Gyngor o'r blaen, ac felly, nad oedd wedi arfer ei thalu. Yn yr hirdymor, bydd angen i ni ystyried goblygiadau unrhyw ostyngiad yn nifer yr Awdurdodau yn sgil uno, ac effeithiau cyflwyno'r Credyd Cynhwysol yn llawn.

Lesley Griffiths AC
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth

Papur rhif:	Mater	Oddi wrth	Cam Gweithredu
3	Y Bil Safleoedd Carafannau Gwyliau (Cymru), 5 Mehefin 2014	Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru	<p>Yn dilyn y sesiwn dystiolaeth gyda'r Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru a chynrychiolwyr awdurdodau lleol, cytunodd y Pwyllgor i ofyn am y wybodaeth ganlynol gan Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Beth yw barn Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru ar y gofyniad ar awdurdodau lleol i ymgynghori ag adnoddau naturiol Cymru wrth ystyried pa amodau i'w gosod mewn carafán wyliau safle drwydded (adran 15 o'r Bil); –Beth yw goblygiadau'r feddiannaeth breswyl carafannau gwyliau ar safleoedd wedi'u lleoli yn ardaloedd perygl llifogydd, a pa gamau gellir eu cymryd i liniaru yn erbyn y risg hon; –Beth sy'n cael ei wneud gan Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru i wella ymwybyddiaeth o lifogydd a diogelwch ar safleoedd carafannau yng Nghymru?
4	Y Bil Safleoedd Carafannau Gwyliau (Cymru), 11 Mehefin 2014	Cymdeithas Parciau Gwyliau a Pharciau Cartrefi Prydain	Yn ystod y sesiwn dystiolaeth, cytunodd y Cymdeithas Parciau Gwyliau a Pharciau Cartrefi Prydain i ddarparu nodyn ar yr ardrethi busnes a dalwyd gan barciau garafannau i awdurdodau lleol yng Nghymru, cafodd ei gynnwys yn ei astudiaeth gyda Croeso Cymru yn 2011.
5	Sesiwn graffu gyffredinol gyda'r Gweinidog	Llywodraeth Cymru	Yn dilyn y sesiwn craffu, gofynnodd y Pwyllgor i weld Cynllun Gweithredu Trechu Tlodi

	Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi, 19 Mehfin 2014		Llywodraeth Cymru.
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Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee
CELG(4)-20-14 Paper 3

National Assembly for Wales - Holiday Caravan Sites (Wales) Bill

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) response to questions from the
Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee via
email, 6 June 2014.

“The Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee had an oral evidence session with the Welsh Local Government Association and local authority representatives on 5 June, and it would like to enquire about the following issues that were raised in relation to the Bill:

- 1. What are Natural Resources Wales’ views on the requirement for local authorities to consult with Natural Resource Wales when considering what conditions to impose in a holiday caravan site licence (section 15 of the Bill);*
- 2. What are the implications of allowing residential occupation of holiday caravan sites that are situated in areas of flood risk, and what steps can be taken to mitigate against this risk;*
- 3. What work is being undertaken by Natural Resources Wales to improve flood awareness and safety at caravan sites in Wales?”*

Question 1 – What are Natural Resources Wales' views on the requirement for local authorities to consult with Natural Resources Wales when considering what conditions to impose in a holiday caravan site licence? (Section 15 of the bill)

Response:

We would support a requirement for caravan sites located in flood risk areas to produce and implement a flood management/evacuation plan as well as associated warning notices and agree this should be secured as a condition on their licence (in line with the advice set out in TAN15 (Section 11.22 & appendix 6).

This should be the case for all sites applying for an initial licence and those that require a renewal of their licence. In the cases of renewal, a caveat to re-visit any flood management plans/ site notices might be useful to ensure they are up to date.

Following recent examples of cliff collapses during which caravans have been lost, it may be useful to consider a condition on the licence for a 'buffer' zone between the cliff edge and the site itself. This would be for the Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to consider.

Consultation with NRW would help us secure appropriate licence condition/s, although we should be clear in that we are unable to help develop the flood management procedures. This should be done in conjunction with the Local Resilience Forum and /or the local authority emergency planners / emergency services.

In terms of new planning applications for a caravan site, if they are located in Zone C2, then as 'highly vulnerable' developments, we would recommend that in line with TAN15, the LPA should refuse the application.

The very nature of the caravans (instability etc.) makes them very vulnerable during a flood event and places both the caravan and its occupants at risk. It may also be difficult depending on location etc. to operate an effective warning service.

However, if the LPA confirm the site is justified and are minded to grant permission then we should support the inclusion of a suitable planning condition which requires the erection of suitable flood warning notices and the preparation of an effective warning /evacuation plan.

For sites that sit within lower flood risk areas we would advise the erection of suitable flood warning notices and the preparation of an effective warning /evacuation plan.

Question 2 – What are the implications of allowing residential occupation of holiday caravan sites that are situated in areas of flood risk, and what steps can be taken to mitigate against this risk?

Response:

The implications of allowing residential occupation of holiday caravan sites that are situated in areas of flood risk are;

- Introduction of people into flood risk for a longer period of time, i.e. permanent occupation as opposed to time limited occupation. In general terms this will increase the risks to people.
- As noted above the very nature of the caravans (instability etc.) makes them very vulnerable during a flood event and places both the caravan and its occupants at risk
- Permanent occupation by a 'stable' population could present the positive opportunity for improved and sustained local awareness and planning. So the choice becomes more of an informed and prepared local population at risk all of the time, compared with a less informed more transient, holiday population at risk less of the time.

In terms of mitigation (see also Q1 above);

- The local flood risk must be assessed and understood both in terms of the likelihood of flooding and the consequences of flooding.
- Appropriate risk management measures (e.g. informing, warning and evacuation measures) would be required to manage the risks to acceptable levels.
- Where the risks cannot be managed to acceptable levels residential occupation of the holiday sites should be avoided.

Question 3 – What work is being undertaken by Natural Resources Wales to improve flood awareness and safety at caravan sites in Wales?

Since January 2011, Natural Resources Wales' Flood Awareness Wales staff have worked with 80 high risk camping and caravan sites across Wales. Officers worked collaboratively with site owners, managers and staff to raise awareness of their local risk, encourage take up of flood warning service (where available), discuss business disruption implications and complete business flood plans. These plans were tailored to be specific to the needs of each site.

As camping and caravan sites are businesses, flood plans were developed and promoted as an appendix to their existing emergency evacuation plans, rather than something separate. This approach increased take up and willingness to engage. To date there are **64** completed flood plans and four are in development. 12 sites declined to take it further.

We developed and made available a range of supporting materials for use by the sites. This includes staff training presentation templates, evacuation point signs and staff information signage.

In addition, a guidance booklet for camping and caravan sites was produced and published on our website in November 2013.

<http://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/alerts/whats-my-flood-risk/caravan-and-campsites-owners/?lang=en>

Called 'Flooding – minimising the risk in Wales', this is the output from the Camping and Caravan Emergency Flood Planning Group – a national project between Welsh Government and Defra and a range of umbrella organisations and partners.

These resources are promoted through our website and through partners organisations such as Welsh Government, the Wales Flood Group and Local Resilience Fora. This work on caravan and campsites is part of the wider resilience and preparedness work, which is led by Local Resilience Fora.

19 June 2014

Christine Chapman AM
Chair, Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee,
National Assembly for Wales

18 June 2014

Dear Ms Chapman,

During our oral evidence to the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee on 11 June, we undertook to provide detail on Wales' holiday and touring parks contribution to local authorities through Business Rates. I was mistaken in my hope that this had been detailed in the economic study we undertook with VisitWales in 2011, therefore we have undertaken desk research to provide an estimate for the Committee's consideration.

In this we reviewed a sample of parks' Rating Valuations and annual Business Rates paid on the Valuation Office Agency website, comparing this with BH&HPA's data for pitch numbers on the selected parks. From this it was possible to calculate an average Business Rates payment per pitch for 2013/14 (which differs according to the type of pitch - whether static caravan or for touring caravans/tents).

With an average per-pitch figure, we then multiplied this up to give an estimate for the contribution across all parks in Wales. The challenge here is that the estimate of the total size of the industry in Wales differs considerably between that reported in the Bill's Explanatory Memorandum and the figures reported by the Welsh Government's 'Summary of Wales Bedstock Data : Situation as at March 2013'¹.

The Welsh Government Statistical Article indicates that the 2013/14 Business Rate contribution to the public purse from Wales' holiday and touring parks would be in the order of **£24 million**.

The Bill's Explanatory Memorandum's estimate of the scale of the industry indicates a contribution in the order of **£17 million**.

I hope that the above is helpful and please let me know if further detail would be of assistance.

Ros Pritchard
Director General
E: r.pritchard@bhpha.org.uk

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/caecd/research/131011-accommodation-bedstock-march-2013-en.pdf>



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

www.cymru.gov.uk



Tackling Poverty Action Plan 2012-2016

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Tudalen y pecyn 74

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Our Tackling Poverty Action Plan

Foreword

Our Commitment to social justice and equality of opportunity makes it essential in the current climate that we continue to drive forward tackling poverty by prioritising the needs of the poorest and protecting those most at risk of poverty and exclusion.

We do so against a challenging economic environment where prospects remain very uncertain and with a severe risk of weakening prospects for jobs across the UK and internationally. There are also clear challenges to the Welsh and UK labour markets associated with the UK Government's programme of fiscal austerity. In this context the welfare and benefits reforms introduced by the UK Government threaten to drive many of the most vulnerable members of our society into severe poverty and to undermine our efforts to reduce poverty overall. Rural areas can also experience higher rates of poverty. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates that it costs 10-20 per cent more to achieve a basic adequate standard of living in rural areas than urban areas mostly because of increased transport and heating costs.

We cannot do everything that needs to be done but we will do all we can and we will do it well. We will do it not just because it is right, though a life free from poverty is indeed a civil right, but because it makes financial and economic sense. Poverty results in poorer educational, health and behavioural outcomes for individuals. Poverty imposes enormous costs on society from lower economic productivity, reduced social cohesion and increased demands on public services such as health care and children's services. The lower level of skills; poor health and poverty of ambition that deprivation brings with it are a brake on the potential of the Welsh economy.

Sustainable development lies at the heart of the Welsh Government's agenda for Wales. This means that when faced with hard choices we choose the option that works best for the long term, such as investing in better early education and support for families now to prevent social hardship later; or helping Welsh citizens and businesses to use energy more efficiently to prepare for future price rises. We need to make sure that we design and build organisations, infrastructure and public services which will serve us for the long term, which are accessible to everyone, and are affordable to run and maintain. This plan sets out how we are balancing the need to tackle the impacts of poverty now, with the need to tackle the issues which will cause people to be in poverty in the future.

Our Tackling Poverty Plan and our Strategic Equality Plan will work together to achieve better outcomes for everyone in Wales. Our Tackling Poverty actions will supplement the delivery of our statutory Child Poverty Strategy and build on complementary strategies such as the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Given that many of the factors that influence poverty directly and immediately are outside our control, it is even more important that we optimise what we can do and that we can measure the outcomes of those actions. The effectiveness of our actions will depend on our capacity to do things differently and to maximise the impact of what we do by being more focused and joined up across departments and with our partners.

The challenges are not ones that Government can meet on its own. We will now engage even more closely across all sectors to take forward and develop the actions in this plan. We will refresh and report progress on the plan in 12 months.

We do not accept that a general increase in the wealth of society will inevitably “trickle down” to individuals and communities in poverty. There are multiple barriers that prevent people from fulfilling their potential and we must tackle these across our portfolios. We must demonstrate that we direct our efforts to the people and places where they will have the greatest impact.

This is not about putting a sticking plaster of additional actions on top of existing programmes. It is about tackling poverty through everything we do.



Carl Sargeant AM
Minister for Local Government and
Communities



Gwenda Thomas AM
Deputy Minister for Children
and Social Services

Introduction

In keeping with our commitment to long-term well being the key objectives of our Tackling Poverty actions are:

- to **prevent poverty**, especially through investment in giving children the best possible start in life. From conception through to early adulthood, our aim will be to reduce inequality at the earliest possible stage and break the link between socio-economic disadvantage, educational under achievement and the impaired life chances that flow from these;
- recognising that the best route out of poverty is through employment, we will continue **to help people to improve their skills and enhance the relevance of their qualifications**. We will also remove other barriers to employment – from practical barriers such as the accessibility of transport and buildings to less tangible barriers such as poverty of aspiration - helping people to move on to and up the employment ladder;
- at the same time, we will increase action to **mitigate the impact of poverty** here and now. We recognise that for more and more people, even being in work will not guarantee that they can escape poverty. We can act to improve the quality of life of these communities, families and individuals.

Action in these areas must be taken forward in ways which are **mutually reinforcing**. Good quality, affordable childcare should help children to reach important developmental milestones: at the same time it will create employment for some and remove a barrier to employment for others. Early, targeted action to prevent young people from falling out of education, training or employment should benefit them directly but should also benefit the next generation. Advice which helps people deal with debt, or get on-line, should be a basis for enabling them to manage their finances sustainably and use new skills to increase their engagement in work and society.

For each of these three objectives, this plan gives examples of what the Welsh Government has put in place previously, illustrating a long standing “track record” of commitment to social justice and equality; what this Government is already doing to tackle poverty; and what we will now do in addition, to place an even greater priority on action that will have a positive impact for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Section 1: Preventing poverty and making it less likely over the longer-term

The early years are a critical time for children's physical, cognitive, language and social and emotional development. Research is also beginning to show that what happens to children in the early years can have physiological effects that are lasting. Poverty begins to exert its effects from a young age; by age 5 children from the most economically advantaged groups have been found to be more than a year ahead in vocabulary tests compared to those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

If we are to make a difference in the longer term outcomes for children and families in poverty, we must offer support earlier and sustain that support until families become resilient and self-sufficient. Low income and debt makes family life more difficult and it becomes harder to manage stressful events. Families in poverty require different levels of support. Families with complex problems, for example substance misuse, need more intensive and acute services.

Education has a fundamental role in helping to lift people out of poverty and in protecting those at risk of poverty and disadvantage. There is a strong link between poor educational attainment, low skills and poor health and wellbeing. As a Government we are committed to tackling poverty by raising aspirations; improving standards in education; increasing skill levels and reducing inequalities in health and wellbeing.

In addition to specific funding programmes and grants, such as those mentioned below, approaches that combine whole school improvement with specific pupil-level interventions will be necessary to ensure that schools improve overall and that attainment gaps narrow.

Our track record

- The Welsh Government has based its approach to child poverty on the rights of children and young people in accordance with the Rights of Children and Young Person's (Wales) Measure 2011, recognising that tackling poverty is as much about improving children's wellbeing as it is addressing income poverty. The Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 placed duties on public bodies to ensure the right to play and the right to participate for children and young people.
- The Welsh Government is committed to providing Free Breakfasts to all primary school age children in maintained schools in Wales. This is to help improve the health and concentration of pupils, and to assist in the raising of standards of learning and attainment. This provision is of particular importance to children in poverty who are at particular risk of their ability to learn being adversely affected by inadequate nutrition.

- Most of the funding for schools goes through the Revenue Support Grant to local authorities, which is calculated using a formula that includes a deprivation measure - that means more funding for local authorities and schools in poorer areas. Last year, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, who already have demanding targets to widen access to higher education amongst deprived communities, rejected Welsh universities' initial tuition (student) fees plans because they were insufficiently ambitious in meeting our widening access ambitions. Tackling disadvantage is deeply ingrained throughout our spending patterns and interventions.
- The Educational Maintenance Allowance Scheme has been continued. The aim of the Allowance is to address the link between low income and low participation by providing a financial incentive to young people aged 16 - 18 years from low-income households to remain in full-time education beyond compulsory education.

What we are doing now

Early years

- We know that interventions to support children in the early years are highly effective in tackling the effects of deprivation on educational attainment. That is why we are investing significantly in the **Foundation Phase** – a developmental curriculum for 3-7 year olds, which is now fully implemented throughout Wales. The Foundation Phase encourages children to be creative, imaginative and to have fun, and makes learning more enjoyable and more effective. The Foundation Phase is based on the principle that early years' provision should offer a sound foundation for future learning through a developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- The *Foundation Phase* is a universal entitlement; by engaging young children in learning, whatever their background, circumstances and particular needs, we aim to ensure all children are given the best possible start and the confidence to develop their full potential.
- The *Foundation Phase* builds on the **Flying Start Programme**, which is targeted on children in the most deprived areas. Flying Start provides free quality part-time childcare for 2-3 year olds; an enhanced Health Visiting service (where the Health Visitor caseload is capped at 110 children); access to Parenting Programmes; and access to Language and Play sessions. These are universally available to all children aged 0-3 and their families in the areas in which it runs.

Early support for children and families

- **Families First** aims to spur improvement in local systems of support for families, particularly those living in poverty. It requires local authorities to improve and innovate in relation to support for children and families and more appropriately tailor services to local need. To underpin its delivery more effective multi-agency working and integrated services are needed to provide holistic support to children and families across the levels of need, but with a strong emphasis on early support and prevention. All local authorities have received additional funding in this financial year, and will in 2013/14, to deliver at a local level the Families First programme, including its focus on families with disabled children and/or young people. Up to £87m has been allocated to Families First from 2012-2014.
- Families with complex problems such as substance misuse will need more intensive and acute services. The **Integrated Family Support Service** will target such families and multidisciplinary teams will work earlier and intensely with children and families to affect change. The support includes debt management; housing (to minimise eviction and homelessness) and return to work training and better engagement with key health and education services. From Spring 2012, Integrated Family Support Services will be available in 10 local authority areas and the programme will be available across all of Wales by 2013. The services will support over 5,500 looked after children and care leavers to improve life chances and maximise wellbeing. They will aim to do this by providing stability, building resilience and will promote and encourage them to achieve through education, training and employment towards independent living. These services will be supported by early intervention programmes such as Flying Start and Families First.
- We placed a duty on local authorities to work with local statutory, voluntary and community bodies to ensure that, as far as is practicable, there is flexible, and sufficient childcare available locally to support parents. Funding is provided via the Local Authority Revenue Support Grant to support this, and in addition, we provide a grant of £2.3m per annum to local authorities to help in developing out of school childcare, and in particular after school provision.
- Play is central to the physical and social development of children and can help to contribute to longer term improvements in both health and educational outcomes. This year we will commence the duty on Local Authorities to assess and secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas, and support them in doing so.
- The Welsh Government has developed and adopted National Standards for Participation, for all providers of services to children and young people. Local authorities and key delivery partners are required to produce a Local Participation Strategy, so that children and young

people have opportunities to have their views heard and to be involved in decisions that affect their lives at the local level.

- ***Fairer Outcomes for All*** is the Welsh Government's strategic action plan for reducing inequities in health. In response to this, all Local Health Boards are required to identify, and take action to address, inequities within their areas. By 2020, we aim to improve healthy life expectancy for everyone and to close the gaps in health inequities between social groups from the most to the least deprived.
- We will make extra effort to bring families into contact with GPs and extend GP hours linking them to a range of services. The process of developing 'localities' will strengthen the population focus of general practice, better interpreting the needs of those communities and matching resources to need. A new annual reporting system will help Local Health Boards to identify and act upon variation in service provision and performance.
- The ***Designed to Smile***, service specifically targets inequalities in oral health. The scheme aims to prevent children's teeth decaying and leading to dental loss and disfiguration that in adulthood can have a detrimental effect on employment prospects. The Welsh Government will shortly be issuing for consultation our national oral health plan which strengthens our practical actions to combat tooth decay.
- We will also use school nurses to reduce inequality in the uptake of certain sorts of immunisation by teenagers. We are taking action to more rapidly reduce road traffic accident-related child death and injury in lower socioeconomic groups. We also provide parents with resources through Flying Start to enable them to reduce accidents and injuries in the home.
- Teenage pregnancy is often associated with poor health and social outcomes for both the mother and the child. Young mothers are more likely to suffer postnatal depression and less likely to complete their education. Children born to teenage parents are less likely to be breastfed, more likely to live in poverty and more likely to become a teenage parent themselves. Public Health Wales working with Local Health Boards are taking action to reduce teenage conception rates. This includes offering long acting removable contraception to specific teenagers.
- We will report on teenage conception rates, low birth weight and dental caries at age 5 and 12.
- Early support is important for individuals at all ages. The implementation of the Mental Health Measure will play a key role in strengthening services in the community and improving links with specialist services. This will be particularly relevant in providing support

for patients with mental health issues related to financial or redundancy issues.

- The new mental health strategy, ***Together for Mental Health***, aims to eliminate inequalities in access and to ensure those most vulnerable service users themselves are heard and acknowledged. Outcome measures and indicators are currently being developed for the strategy.

Narrowing education attainment gaps

The Welsh Government's overall reforms to raise school standards play a key role in reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment. By raising the performance of all schools, and by reducing the variations found between and within schools, standards of learning will increase for all learners, and those from deprived backgrounds will benefit most. This, in turn, will equip young people and adults to reach their potential and secure sustainable employment. Secondary school banding has helped us identify which schools need support, and enabled the consortia to differentiate the support available for schools in specific circumstances.

- All four regional education consortia have action plans in place for all schools in bands four and five. These action plans include a practical focus on steps towards improvement, with financial support from the Welsh Government of £10,000 to support individual action plans.
- Good literacy and numeracy skills are essential to improving standards in education. The National Literacy Programme for Wales sets out the actions that will be taken by the Welsh Government and our partners to achieve a step-change in standards of literacy over the next five years.
- Amongst the key initiatives in the Literacy Programme are targeted support for pupils; support for teachers' professional development; the sharing and consistent use of best practice; a statutory National Literacy and Numeracy framework; and development of national reading tests. Our National Numeracy Programme will be published in the Autumn.
- We also recognise that as children and young people move through the school system, they will have a variety of needs and preferences. Our 14-19 Learning Pathways policy has been developed to ensure that all learners have access to a wider choice of general and vocational courses at both Key Stage 4 and Post-16. It also secures an entitlement to support learners to overcome any barriers to their learning or to remaining engaged in learning.
- In the short term, the Pupil Deprivation Grant is a key opportunity for schools to invest in effective approaches for tackling the impact of deprivation. Under the Pupil Deprivation Grant and the School Effectiveness Grant, there is an additional investment of some £58 million going to schools and local authorities in 2012-13 and a further

£68million in 2013-14 and 2014-15 respectively. Our guidance for schools strongly encourages schools in areas of high socio-economic disadvantage to link and work closely with the Communities First Programme, to maximise the resources available for initiatives to raise school standards and narrow the educational attainment gap.

- For those choosing to continue their studies at a higher level, the Welsh Government believes that access to Higher Education should be based on the ability to learn rather than the ability to pay. Our student support package and requirements for tuition fee plans are designed to remove financial barriers and to encourage applications to Higher Education from disadvantaged groups. Widening access to Higher Education is a fundamental aim of ***For Our Future*** and a core aspect of the Welsh Government's drive for social justice.
- The ***Assembly Learning Grant for Further Education*** is a means tested grant aimed at adults aged 19 years and over to help with the cost of continuing with, or returning to, further education. There are levels of support based on a household income threshold of £18,370. Eligible students can receive payments of up to £1,500 if they are studying full-time and up to £750 if they are studying part-time.

We know that very often it will be the same young people we need to target in order to narrow the attainment gap between pupils from deprived backgrounds and their peers who will require support because they are at risk of disengaging from education, employment and training. Our approach to reducing the number of 16-24 year old disengaged young people in Wales is set out in pages 14—17 below.

What we will do in addition

- An extra £55 million has been allocated to support the expansion of ***Flying Start*** over the three financial years 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15, to double the number of children benefitting during this term of Government.
- We will target the expansion of ***Flying Start*** on concentrations of families with children aged 0-3 living in Income Benefit households across Wales. As detailed in the Strategic Equality Plan, the Flying Start Team will work with stakeholders to implement new systems to report on take-up of elements of the programme by some of the “hardest to reach” groups including ethnic minority families. This guidance will also include a requirement on local authorities to identify how they will address those needs.
- We will forge stronger links between programmes, for example between Flying Start and the Foundation Phase and between Families First and ***Communities First***. We will work to ensure that Communities First links effectively with education and health bodies to

increase the reach and impact of mainstream education and health funding in our most deprived communities. Following consultation in 2011, Communities First has been relaunched (from April 2012) as a Community Focused Tackling Poverty Programme which will continue to support and encourage local action to address the long-term causes and effects of poverty in the most deprived areas in Wales. There will be fewer, larger Communities First areas (known as Clusters) so that effective partnership working with key service providers and other strategic stakeholders will be simplified. A new monitoring framework, based on Results Based Accountability, will demonstrate the contribution made by the programme to three key outcomes: Prosperous Communities, Learning Communities and Healthier Communities.

Team around the family

We are already committed to delivering multi-agency support for families who need it, tailored to the particular issues they face and putting families, and not the services involved, at the very centre of Teams Around the Family. We will do this through our Families First and Integrated Family Support Teams, ensuring the support of the social services, health services, education, justice and the Third Sector. The indications are that a whole family approach, with a strong emphasis on preventative and early support, will be both more effective and more cost effective in achieving better outcomes; but it involves a step change in the approach of the Welsh Government and other service providers. A cross-Government group supporting the Deputy Minister for Social Services and Children will take this forward. Actions will include:

- A three-year evaluation contract of Families First will be awarded this summer. The independent evaluation team will report annually on the progress of Team Around the Family approaches being developed and implemented at local level as a key component of the Families First programme. (The approaches to Team around the Family are underpinned by the five-year Families First plans submitted this year by Local Authorities.) The Families First team is also establishing national 'Learning Sets', including one for Team around the Family approaches, with Local Authorities and partners in July this year. Learning Sets will provide structured opportunities to share learning around the development and implementation of key elements of Families First. These will be supplemented by case studies and reports on the Families First website.
- We will work with the Public Service Leadership Group to provide leadership at local and regional level for the development of approaches which join up services around the needs of the individual and the family. We will also support more organisations to make the financial case for adopting integrated "team around the family" approaches. We will establish by mid-2013 outline characteristics for the various Families First Team around the

Family interventions. By mid-2014, we will develop a set of national standards based on the evaluation evidence.

- The actions identified in ***Sustainable Social Services*** will remove unhelpful boundaries between adult and children's social services. This will deliver a programme of transformation in the delivery of social services, to meet the needs of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

Educational attainment

- The School Standards and Organisation Bill will ensure that primary school free breakfasts are available in all maintained schools unless the Local Authority cannot reasonably achieve this.
- There is strong evidence that particular groups are under-achieving and this includes disabled children, boys and certain ethnic minority groups including Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African Caribbean and Gypsy Traveller children and young people. Within the Strategic Equality Plan there are detailed actions to address this:
 - We will improve the outcomes for disabled children and young people and those with Special Educational Needs through the reform of the Additional Learning Needs statutory framework.
 - We will analyse information and identify issues where interventions are needed to drive up attainment amongst those ethnic minority groups who are underachieving including patterns of school exclusions.

Childcare

Access to affordable childcare that is of a quality that ensures that the developmental outcomes for the child are improved is also central to supporting parents back to work. Successive reports have highlighted that this is still one of the biggest barriers to people in poverty who are looking to enter the workplace. Access to high quality affordable childcare has therefore been identified by Ministers as a key priority for tackling poverty.

We will examine ways of increasing the availability of affordable, quality childcare, building on statutory local authority assessments of need and engaging with the private sector, social enterprises, professional bodies and others. A cross - Welsh Government group has already begun looking at how we can integrate childcare provision across Early Years from pre-birth to 7 years, including Flying Start and Foundation Phase. This work will be extended to further cooperation to develop an integrated approach to services and 'wrap-around' care outside of core school hours for children from 8-16, including Out of School Childcare Grant and free school breakfasts. We will:

- undertake a more detailed analysis of the most recent Childcare Sufficiency Assessments and further develop the cross departmental work around early years to encompass the priority of affordable childcare, in the context of reducing levels of poverty;
- undertake an analysis of the financial assistance currently available to parents through local and Jobcentre plus programmes;
- establish where there are gaps in childcare provision and make early recommendations on how the supply of childcare can be stimulated and supported;
- explore where key programmes can be used to maximise the ability for parents to access childcare support, including the role of local Family Information Services;
- make initial recommendations on the type of support that we could provide parents; indicative costs and potential models for delivery.

Section 2: Helping people to take up job opportunities and earn an income

Growth and sustainable jobs are at the heart of the Programme for Government and jobs and the economy are the Welsh Government's over-riding priorities. Employment offers a high level of protection against poverty for individuals and families. There is a strong correlation between qualifications and skills, employment and earnings. One of our objectives in the Strategic Equality Plan will be to work with partners to identify and address the causes of the gender, ethnicity and disability pay and employment differences.

Our track record

- Over the six years to 2010, Wales made great strides in improving qualification levels in Wales and the overall skills mix. The proportion of the working-age population with a degree or higher qualification rose by 5.2 percentage points, whilst the proportion with no qualifications fell by 4.9 percentage points.
- There have been improvements in apprenticeship completion rates (from 54% in 2006/07 to 80% in 2009/10).
- Over the last decade the ReAct programme has established a strong track record for helping people back into employment. An internal evaluation of delivery for the period from 1 October 2008 to 31 November 2011 shows that the proportion of participants who found new employment as a result of ReAct was 76%.
- GO Wales is a graduate employability and skills programme, sponsored and managed by the Higher Education Funding Council For Wales and delivered by Higher Education institutions across Wales. The programme has established credibility with employers with more than 3,500 people so far benefitting.
- Investing European Union funding, particularly the European Social Fund, in actions to increase employment and tackle economic inactivity (30 projects with a combined value of over £280m) and to raise skills levels. Our European programmes also support social enterprise, financial inclusion and locally-led approaches to development which help to tackle poverty and exclusion.

What we are doing now

- The risk of poverty for children in workless families remains high, at 58 per cent, which is considerably above the average of 22 per cent. Therefore, although the Welfare to Work agenda remains a matter for the DWP, we are determined to do what we can to boost skills, and create and safeguard jobs. We are working with our partners in local

government, the third sector, the Work Programme Providers, employer bodies and the Department of Work and Pensions through the Joint Employment Development Board to coordinate support for the unemployed.

- Traineeships for 16-18 year olds and Steps to Employment for 18 plus support young people and adults to gain confidence, motivation, improve their skills and gain work experience to enable them to enter sustained employment.
- Help for adults to gain basic skills has been remodelled with the launch of 'Essential Skills in the Workplace'.
- Jobs Growth Wales (helping young people into employment). Jobs Growth Wales is a key commitment within the Welsh Government's Programme for Government and will create 4,000 job opportunities across Wales for 16-18 year old who are not in education, employment or training as well as those unemployed young people, aged 18-24. The Programme will also provide a package of support for the individual from day 1 of unemployment (up until they become eligible for the Department of Work and Pension's Work Programme) with the focus on supporting the individual to progress into sustained employment or where appropriate an apprenticeship. The scheme will offer young people work experience for a 6-month period. This will be paid at or above the National Minimum Wage for a minimum of 25 hours per week.
- We have built upon the success of the acclaimed ProAct scheme through Skills Growth Wales, a £30m extension (including £17m European Social Fund of which has now been approved and will be open to new applicants until 2015. This will support 200 companies, contributing to the creation of up to 3000 new jobs.
- Apprenticeships in Wales are open to everyone and innovations for learners and employers are motivating engagement. Pathways to Apprenticeships and the highly successful Young Recruits Programme, together prepare the supply of highly skilled apprentices whilst stimulating demand for apprenticeships from employers. The Economic Stimulus Pack has provided additional investment £4.23m to the Young Recruits Programme, offering support to employers for additional apprenticeship opportunities where there is a need to maintain a highly-skilled workforce.
- We continue to invest in re-skilling for those facing redundancy through ReAct and Adapt – aligning skills of people leaving employment with those required by recruiting employers.
- We will deliver a £30m Economic Growth Fund to provide the catalyst for growth, enabling businesses to invest in projects that will support

the creation of up to 1,700 new jobs and the safeguarding of up to 1,600.

- Requiring contractors to provide local employment and training opportunities as well as seeking to use local supply chains – through helping Welsh Government and the public sector to fully adopt the Welsh Government ‘community benefits’ procurement policy to all appropriate contracts over £2m. This will meet one of the Local Government Compact commitments.
- We will make efforts to strengthen the economic benefits from routine expenditure. National Health Service (NHS) capital spending has been linked to developing apprenticeships and the impact of the NHS capital programme on job creation is monitored closely. The NHS has been closely involved with the efforts to squeeze greater benefits from procurement, and the NHS has trialled ways of using its recruitment to provide training for people with relatively low skills to gain new skills which are transferable elsewhere in the economy.
- We will maintain a focus on health at work to help people hold on to jobs and avoid becoming unemployed by providing a range of support and advice to individuals, employers and health professionals on improving health at work, reducing the impact of ill health at work; and encouraging early intervention to support people who become ill at work.
- Within our Strategic Equality Plan there is an objective to reduce the numbers of disengaged young people including actions tailored to reduce the over-representation of certain ethnic groups, care leavers and of disabled people among those who are disengaged. Other actions include monitoring traineeship / apprenticeship by ethnic minority and disabled young people as well as young men and young women.

What we will do in addition

Working with business

- We will review the evidence of success of recruitment and wages subsidies as ways to incentivise businesses to employ individuals disadvantaged by severe or persistent poverty and propose actions accordingly.
- We will assess our business support activities to see if more can be done to lift people out of poverty and consider, where appropriate, linkages to Community First areas.
- As part of our appraisal process for grant support to business, we will introduce positive weightings to allow for the impact of bringing harder

to reach groups back into work. We currently take into account the salary levels of jobs in assessing the quality of projects and allow enhanced cost per job limits in disadvantaged areas. We are also revising the appraisal process to better reflect the broader economic benefits of projects and to be sensitive to key factors of poverty. This will allow the investment process to better support individuals in severe or persistent poverty.

- We will review the model for supporting social enterprise; considering how this sector can provide social services and cultural activities to build capacity and skills, and actively boost the economy through improving the employment prospects of the economically inactive and workless.
- We will be expecting any business seeking support to sign up to our principles of Corporate Social Responsibility which includes a commitment to good employment practices, such as flexible working arrangements to encourage the creation of jobs that are accessible for parents and other carers.
- We will take integrated action under the next round of European programmes (2014-2020) to promote social inclusion and combat poverty. The Structural Funds and the Rural Development Programme will need to be flexible and adaptable, but with a single-minded focus on delivering sustainable growth and jobs for businesses and people across Wales and helping people into work while under the Rural Development Programme there will be a further focus on rural employment, Small and Medium Enterprises and community renewal.

Community benefit requirements

- We will strengthen the 'community benefits' procurement policy and ensure the expenditure covered by the Welsh Infrastructure Investment Plan incorporates this approach. We will track the outcomes from adoption of the 'community benefits' procurement policy.
- We will ensure that contracts for our significant investment in transport infrastructure and services include community benefit requirements that deliver local work and training opportunities for unemployed people.
- With a clearer focus on tackling poverty, the importance of removing barriers to employment is fully recognised within the new Communities First programme. The programme has a stronger focus on ensuring that local action will benefit those who are most vulnerable in deprived areas, including those who are furthest from the workplace.
- We will establish an internal Working Group on employment opportunities from across the Welsh Government's capital programmes chaired at Ministerial level.

- We will consider how particular community enterprise actions and social enterprise activity could work to alleviate poverty, including in the context of other initiatives to promote growth; specifically, how social enterprises could be targeted to provide support services and facilities in Enterprise Zones, such as catering facilities and quality, affordable childcare.

Young people not in employment, education or training

- Taking action on the evidence as to the actions which will substantively reduce the number of people who are not in education, training or employment, we will strengthen employability skills through the curriculum and work with employers to increase job opportunities. We will refocus resource as early as possible in identifying the young people who most need support, tracking them through the system until they reach university, Further Education or sustained employment.
- Schools and local authorities together can intervene to prevent disengagement. Recognition and support for their Free School Meal pupils and Looked After Children will reinforce the need for early intervention as well as tackling one of the root causes of poverty for the future.
- We will develop an identification and tracking system that monitors progress of young people at risk. We will:
 - ensure through a new brokerage function that young people receive properly co-ordinated support through a single point of contact;
 - track young people through the education and training system until they reach further or higher education or sustained employment;
 - ensure that provision aimed at supporting young people at risk of disengagement is effective in providing the support they need;
 - strengthen employability skills and opportunities for employment;
 - make schools, colleges and local authorities more accountable for the engagement and progression of their young people.
- We will also focus careers support on those individuals who face the greatest barriers and are working with partners including Value Wales to improve the quality and relevance of work experience, a key route to social mobility.
- We are developing smartcards for public transport and are piloting schemes in Newport and Mon a Menai. When it is fully developed, this technology will provide the opportunity to provide different fare offers to specific groups, for example, targeting additional support to young people who are not in employment education or training, so that they can access employment or training.

Section 3: Action to mitigate the impact of poverty here and now

The lives of people in poverty like all lives are complex. In this current climate people lose their jobs, or can find only part-time employment. Others work as unpaid carers for other family members while many face barriers to finding work because of long-term health conditions and disability. It is important as a civilised society that we help people maintain a basic standard of well-being that will enable people to survive and find a route out of poverty. This support to improve the lived experience of poverty includes access to financial advice services, benefit take-up advice, support for sources of affordable credit, support to prevent fuel poverty, transport, affordable access to the internet, and the provision of inexpensive leisure, sport, and play facilities. Many people living in deprivation bear an additional burden in the sense of shame that poverty brings. It is shame that stops many families taking up their entitlement to free school meals for their children. It is shame that prevents many elderly people claiming the benefits to which they are entitled. Understanding and countering that feeling of shame is another of the complex challenges that our interventions need to address.

Our track record

- With our support, over 6000 financially excluded adults have joined Credit Unions and gained access to financial products across Wales (figures covering fifteen months to December 2011).
- We have maintained universal entitlements to free prescriptions, free bus travel for older people, disabled people and veterans. We continue to fund free swimming in Wales for children and young people aged 16 and under during all school holidays and weekends and a similar scheme operates for the over 60s.
- We have maintained investment in our fuel poverty and energy efficiency programmes. Between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2012, Arbed phase 1 delivered energy efficiency measures to more than 7,500 homes throughout Wales. In 2011-12 our new fuel poverty programme, 'Nest', delivered energy improvement packages to over 3,500 householders likely to be vulnerable to fuel poverty, and provided advice on saving energy and maximising income to over 14,700 householders.
- We have increased the supply of housing. Between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2011, a total of 9,091 additional affordable housing units were delivered across Wales which exceeded the original target set of 6,500 for 2011. Over this period over £570 million in Social Housing Grant has been allocated to support affordable housing schemes in Wales.

- We placed a duty on public bodies in Wales to develop Child Poverty Strategies. As a result the National Museum for Wales developed a strategy for supporting participation in cultural activities for children, young people and families in poverty 2012-2015.

What we are doing now

Advice and support services

- We are providing Citizens Advice Cymru with £2.2m per annum for consolidated benefit take-up and advice provision, to help people access the support to which they are entitled. This includes the Better Advice: Better Health, Council Tax and Housing Benefit take-up and Benefit take-up for Children with Disabilities schemes along with generic advice provision through Adviceline Cymru.
- We are taking action to mitigate the impact of UK Government Welfare reforms through consultation and continued close work with our partners on Welsh successor arrangements to Council Tax Benefit and the discretionary Social Fund due to be devolved in April 2013.
- Through housing associations, many tenants in Wales are receiving support that specifically tackles poverty through helping them to increase their incomes or reduce their debt levels. Nearly £800,000 was spent on this in 2010-11 by registered social landlords.

Support with the costs of living

- The Blue Badge Scheme enables disabled people to park close to services without charge. In 2010-2011 nearly 230,000 badges were in circulation in Wales. We have recently set out our plan for modernising the Scheme, extending it to children under 3 with specific medical conditions and seriously injured service personnel. The administration of a Blue Badge will in future incur no cost to applicants in Wales (in England local authorities may charge up to £10, and in Scotland up to £20).
- We are maintaining our commitment to providing free bus travel to those over 60, the disabled and their companions and extended eligibility for the concessionary travel scheme to seriously injured war veterans and armed forces personnel living in Wales.
- We will measure the number of concessionary fare journeys (broken down by disability / age), Bus user satisfaction ratings from the Bus Users Survey and the number of new blue badges issued at no cost.
- Over 23,000 families with a low income receive weekly vouchers for fruit, vegetables and milk.

- The **Community Food Co-operative Programme** has a priority focus on areas of social, economic and rural deprivation, including Communities First areas. There are now over 300 Food Co-ops operating across the whole of Wales, serving approximately 4,500 customers with nearly 7,000 bags of produce per week.
- We are continuing to provide free milk for under 7s. The school milk scheme supports our whole school approach to improving nutrition in schools and encouraging children to develop good eating and drinking habits. The school census 2011 indicates that 109,617 pupils received free milk.
- Homecare and other non-residential social services are free to older people and people with disabilities if they have income below a pre-defined level. Even where their income is above this charges for these services are limited to £50 per week. The Social Services Fairer Charging -The First Steps Improvement Package, introduced in April 2011, has provided greater consistency to the charging by local authorities for the provision of non-residential social services. The Package introduced, amongst other initiatives, a maximum weekly charge of £50 across any local authority in Wales for key services provided to a person, regardless of the hours of care or complexity in each individual's circumstance. This Package has helped service users live as independently as possible in their own home and remain within their community, its financial safeguards ensured a significant proportion of users pay no charge at all. The Package therefore provides security for the most vulnerable members of society, often with limited disposable income.
- The Package is being monitored during its inaugural year of implementation with local authorities reporting the impact of the new policies on their charging regimes and its benefit to service users. The second and final set of Monitoring Reports from local authorities are being analysed to assess the overall impact the Package has had on charging by local authorities for provision of non-residential social services and an assessment of the appropriateness of existing regulations.
- We are committed to keeping water bills at an affordable level and for customers to have a choice of charging options that will reduce debt and protect vulnerable groups.

Community resilience

- Communities First will continue to help to ameliorate the effects of poverty by providing support and opportunities to help people address challenges and difficulties which affect individuals, families and particular groups. At the same time the programme will strengthen the communities as a whole, by building the confidence and skills of local

people and organisations and giving them a greater stake in strategic planning and service delivery in their own areas.

- Our Regeneration Programme currently invests in the infrastructure, renewal and regeneration of some of our most deprived communities, including a number of our seaside towns and town centres. Our regeneration work improves the physical environment of areas in partnership, through safer and better quality design, and by developing family friendly environments and mixed use developments. For example:
 - The Llwyddo'n Lleol project aims to stem the flow of young people's outward migration of rural areas through a series of innovative activities designed to develop a culture of enterprise amongst young people; simultaneously developing the skills and confidence of the individual, whilst restoring their confidence in the opportunities available to both work and live within their own communities.
 - NW Watersports Mor a Mynydd aims to effect a positive and evidence based transformational culture change towards the Marine Industry within the communities of North Wales, allowing that industry to fulfil its real potential to provide sustainable local employment, economic growth and social vibrancy within those communities. To date there is a total of 17 secondary, 22 primary schools and 12 primary school teachers involved with the programmes.
 - Enterprise in the Valleys strategic project was developed in partnership with Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, the Communities Directorate and all 17 local Communities First partnerships. Funding was drawn from the Communities First outcomes fund and Regeneration Area to develop Enterprise in the valleys. With the aim of strengthening and broadening enterprise skills by developing the entrepreneurship skills of young people aged 11-25 across the nine valleys within the Western Valleys programme area.
 - A one year pilot will target youth unemployment, the aim being to match job-seekers with employers, skills and training providers. Funding has been secured from the Swansea Regeneration Area via the Regional Learning Partnership to establish an e-Portal in Swansea.
- The Welsh Government has set an ambitious target of providing 12,500 homes during this term of Government. This is made up of 7,500 affordable homes - 1,000 more than the previous government's target - and 5,000 empty homes brought back into use through the new empty properties initiative.

- Our flagship Supporting People Programme spends some £136 million each year helping the most vulnerable in Wales, providing essential support to around 50,000 people who find themselves in very difficult personal circumstances, enabling them to find or keep their homes.
- There is evidence that higher incidence and fear of crime in deprived areas has a negative impact on communities. We are funding an additional 500 Community Support Officers) in Wales to work in our most deprived communities, including in particular Communities First areas, to increase community safety and to reduce crime and the fear of crime. The Support Officers will be highly visible in their communities, engaging with people, providing reassurance and tackling anti-social behaviour.

The Welsh Government also supports programmes to reduce substance abuse, youth offending and reoffending, Violence against Women and Domestic Abuse.

- Living in an already deprived area or community can often compound issues associated with poverty and residents of deprived areas can experience higher levels of anti-social behaviour. We have provided over £15 million towards improving local environmental quality under the Tidy Towns initiative. With a commitment to a further £10 million until 2015. Tidy Towns projects have made improvements to the local environment, helping our communities become more resilient, with a better quality of life and a greater sense of well being. Tidy Towns has enabled Keep Wales Tidy to engage with 15,177 volunteers throughout Wales in April 2011 to March 2012, assisting them to take pride and ownership of their local area through undertaking 10,703 environmental improvement projects which have contributed to lasting improvements in their community.

What we will do in addition

Advice and support services

- Within the Strategic Equality Plan we committed to strengthen advice, information and advocacy services to help people with protected characteristics understand and exercise their rights and make informed choices. In response to this, and in the light of changes to the welfare system and Legal Aid, we will review our support for advisory services, including housing, drawing together programmes from across the Welsh Government. Our aim will be to develop a stronger network of services which is capable of providing people with support on all aspects of financial and housing related need. We will work in tandem with the third and statutory sector on this.

Support with the costs of living

- We will develop successor arrangements for the Social Fund as part of this network of support which will focus on sustainable solutions.
- Free School Meals are an important entitlement for children and their families. School meals, and particularly free school meals, are a means of reducing health inequalities brought about by poor diet. Free school meals provide those families that we have identified as being in greatest need with additional support. School provides an ideal environment to convey positive messages on healthy eating and support them through appropriate behaviours. The UK Government's proposal to introduce Universal Credit from 2013 will mean the current criteria for identifying entitlement for free school meals will no longer exist. In order to continue the provision of free school meals, we will find an alternative way of determining entitlement that aligns with the Universal Credit system. We will be considering a range of potential options for setting new criteria for free school meals and as part of this work the potential impact these changes may have on those currently in receipt of free school meals
- We will promote increased internet access for excluded groups. By 2015 we aim to reduce levels of digital exclusion in Wales to people aged over 50 to 40%, Employed to 8%, Unemployed to 20%, Economically inactive to 40% and Residents of social housing to 30%.
- We will publish guidance to water companies in the summer 2012 which will enable water companies to develop social tariffs during 2013-14. We will also work with stakeholders to evaluate the help we provide and identify gaps in provision and link with the wider advice services that the Welsh Government provides.
- We will report on the Number of Water company social tariffs developed in accordance with the guidance; Number of social tariffs approved by Ofwat; Number of households benefiting from social tariffs; The level of water company debt has reduced; Customer acceptance of proposed social tariffs; The decrease in the levels of people experiencing water affordability in Wales.
- We will announce in the near future which projects will secure funding in the first round of the arbed phase 2 European Regional Development Fund Project. Phase 2 is a £45 million programme, part funded by the Fund through the Welsh Government, that will improve the energy efficiency of a minimum of 4,790 homes by the end of 2015.
- We will report on the number of households supported through our Nest and arbed programmes each year. We will monitor and evaluate our programmes to ensure resources are targeted in the most effective way and that we facilitate additional investment in Wales through UK wide programmes.

- Our environmental and sustainable development work will focus on delivering an integrated package of support to communities where there is poverty, deprivation or need for regeneration. This place based programme will be piloted in a small number of urban areas and will later broaden to rural areas.
- We will develop and apply a screening tool that will enable us to assess the socio-economic impact of transport policy and investment options and enable us to make policy and investment choices that will contribute to tackling poverty.
- Future **Safe Routes in Communities** schemes will be assessed according to how they contribute to tackling poverty. This requirement will be included in our updated guidance for the scheme which will be issued by end Summer 2012.

Building community resilience

- Poverty is often linked to disability, as disabled people face both higher living costs and additional barriers to employment. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2011) has found that a third of low-income, working-age adults without dependent children are either disabled themselves, and/or have a disabled partner. Among those with dependent children, this proportion is a quarter. For all people of working age (and their dependent children), a disabled adult family member increases the risk of low income by about a half.
- We will tackle barriers and support disabled people so that they can live independently, and exercise choice and control in their daily lives. The Welsh Government is working with disabled people's organisations and other partners to develop a Framework for Action on Independent Living to be completed by Summer 2012.
- From this year, there will be a new approach to Regeneration. The consideration of areas which suffer from high levels of poverty will be given greater weight in future investment decisions. We will integrate our regeneration activity with our Communities First Programme. This will allow our regeneration activity to align with the priorities of our most deprived areas and support those people most in need.
- In health, we will aim to reverse the so-called 'inverse care law' that is the tendency for the best services to be provided for those people in the least need. Core aspects will be improved: management of chronic conditions and in particular mental health issues. The Communities First programme will be a key partner with the NHS.
- We are making an additional £16 million available this year to help provide more homes for those who need them.

- The Housing Bill will include a stronger framework for prevention of homelessness and more comprehensive homelessness services which help everyone in need and the Tenancy Reform Bill will improve standards and tenants' rights in the private rented sector.
- A new national programme to tackle empty homes has been launched. Working with local authorities, housing associations and third sector organisations, the programme will result in empty properties being used to house families in need of a home a target audience for help to overcome poverty, and a stable home they can afford is a key part of that.
- A key commitment is to drive up the condition of the private rented sector in Wales which will have a direct impact on those on low incomes.
- Following the Supporting People review, the administration of the programme will change which will mean that there are more efficient and cost effective services for vulnerable people in Wales ensuring those who most need help will get it.

Joining up in communities and across government

We recognise that many of the successes in tackling poverty are down to the efforts of dedicated and enterprising individuals, starting on a small scale, in their local communities. The principle of community empowerment is fundamental to our approach. Success will depend on the collective efforts of those working in their communities, be they public service workers, third sector organisations, volunteers or businesses. Local authorities have a clear leadership role to play. We will rely on our partners to build on this plan by joining up their actions and innovating at local and regional levels. We will work to support this:

- Our work with public service leaders in Wales is driving the pace of public service improvement, including effective services for vulnerable groups. Good practice is being transferred to areas across Wales.
- The public service reform agenda, including the simplification of plans and rationalisation of partnerships to support joined up delivery of local services, will support this approach.
- The single integrated plans produced at local level will have a clear focus on a preventative agenda and support for people who are excluded or vulnerable.

- We will work through existing fora such as Local Service Boards, Partnership Councils and the Public Service Leadership Group, to secure leadership and engagement at all levels.

Every part of government can contribute to tackling poverty. It is integral to promoting sustainable development. For example, heritage-led regeneration can mean that our towns are better places to live because we work with the grain and character of their historic origins and growth to develop them for 21st century living. Imaginative and creative use of the monuments in State care for the benefit of local people and visitors can mean that heritage sites can play a vital and contemporary role in strengthening communities. Our National Transport Plan has taken impacts on equality and poverty as important factors in deciding priorities. Our Communities First programme will play a key role in promoting joined up approaches and enabling mainstream programmes to work to greatest effect in these communities.

One of our biggest challenges and opportunities is to make the sum of our actions greater than their parts by integrating them properly. We will aim to do this through the leadership of our Ministerial Programme Board.

- We will assess the impact of every new policy development and every significant investment for its contribution to tackling poverty. We will do this by applying “Delivering Results”, the Welsh Government’s system for testing that policies and programmes are being developed and implemented effectively.
- Our independent, external expert group will advise and monitor progress.
- We will continue to develop ways of tracking and evaluating the impact of our actions.

Next year we will publish an updated plan which will track our existing and future activity.