

Ken Skates AM
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport

17 August 2018

Dear Cabinet Secretary

Making the economy work for people on low incomes in Wales

Following the recent plenary debate on the Committee's report, I am writing to seek a response on a number of outstanding issues. We were disappointed with the lack of detail and meaningful engagement with our recommendations in your written response to the report. As a result, Members raised several matters in the plenary debate that they felt were not answered in the response.

However, there was a lack of detailed discussion of the Welsh Government's views on our recommendations during your response in the debate. Members across the Chamber sought a response on eight specific points, none of which you answered in your reply to the debate. This included a number of questions which I highlighted. Therefore, I would be grateful for:

- Clarity on why the Welsh Government believes that a dedicated tackling poverty strategy is not required and would prevent a holistic approach to tackling complex issues. As you will be aware from recommendation 1 in our report and our report on Communities First – Lessons Learnt, we strongly believe that the evidence underpinning our reports shows a need



for a dedicated strategy to help provide a clear direction, including performance indicators.

- Whether the Welsh Government will consider undertaking an analysis of the risks and benefits of devolving the administration of Universal Credit.
- Clarity on why recommendation 2 was not fully accepted, given the importance of clear timescales, deliverables and milestones to ensuring effective delivery of the economic action and employability plans.
- Further details on how the location strategy will relocate jobs to areas in Wales that will lose EU structural funding, and whether there are any plans to review the strategy.
- A commitment to, and timeline for, publishing the composition, terms of reference and details of Fair Work Board meetings. You noted in your written response to Recommendation 17 that this information could be made available but did not indicate whether it would be made available or when.
- Clarity on whether the Welsh Government will develop a broad and wide-reaching campaign to encourage payment of the voluntary living wage. The written response only provided details of what the Welsh Government has already done in relation to the voluntary living wage, and no response to the further action called for in the recommendation.
- A commitment to providing detailed responses to recommendations 14–16 following the publication of the procurement review.
- A commitment to providing detailed responses to recommendations 18, 20, 21 and 22 following completion of the Fair Work Commission's work which is referenced in your response.

In reference to the two commitments above, I would be grateful if you could advise when you will be able to provide these detailed responses.




I also seek a response to the following questions:

- Clarity about the Fair Work Commission, including when it will report, how it will go about its work, how it plans to engage with the public/workers, and whether the Welsh Government intends to undertake any work before the Commission reports;
- Details of the outcomes that have arisen from the Symposium held on 13 July. Your response to our report recommendations 11 and 12 placed much emphasis on this Symposium, in reference to the four foundational economy sectors.

I would be grateful if you could provide a response by xx xx.

Yours sincerely



John Griffiths AM

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

