



David Melding AM
Chair
Scrutiny of the First Minister Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

18th December 2013

Dear David

During the recent Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister meeting held on Wednesday 20th November I gave a commitment to write to provide additional information on a number of matters raised by Committee Members. I write today to fulfil that commitment.

During the first part of the meeting, which focussed on the Welsh Government's relations with, and support of, the Third Sector in Wales, I gave a commitment to provide written updates in response to questions asked by Paul Davies AM.

In response to the request from Paul to state which of the recommendations of the Wales Audit Office report have been accepted and implemented – I should first of all explain that the WAO report recommendations were considered in the PAC final report on Grant Management in Wales. We accepted all of the 18 recommendation of the PAC and at this point in time 15 of the recommendations have been implemented in full, with the remaining 3 in the process of being implemented.

The Welsh Government will be publishing the 2013 Annual Report on Grant Management shortly. This will contain greater detail on the progress made on each of the 18 recommendations.

Paul also asked what difference the Equality and Inclusion Grant Scheme has made to the Third Sector and those organisations in receipt of its funding; and what difference it has made to the Welsh Government with regard to the monitoring of the funding provided by the Welsh Government.

The Equality and Inclusion Grant was launched on 1 August and closed to applications on 31 October. It will enable the Third Sector to receive grant funding up to a total of £1.6 million per year for three years.

The main difference is that the Welsh Government made this funding available to apply for within a competitive bidding process to deliver projects that support the objectives that the Welsh Government Strategic Equality Plan. Over 190 organisations applied for over £13 million of funding per year. Following the assessment and due diligence processes, successful organisations will be informed in writing by 31 December 2013.

As regards monitoring and assessment, all successful organisations will be required to send in quarterly monitoring forms, reporting on progress in meeting their objectives. Monitoring will be carried out in line with guidance from Grants Centre of Excellence.

Turning to the additional information requested during the second part of the meeting, the service to support the capacity of social partners to engage with Welsh Government is competitively tendered. This service is currently provided by the Wales Social Partners Unit. A requirement of this contract is for the service to be evaluated independently during the third year of the contract.

In relation to the queries raised about timetabling of task and finish groups, as I outlined in the meeting, if you would like to identify the particular groups that you would like further details of, then I will ensure that the information is provided.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carwyn Jones', written in a cursive style.

CARWYN JONES