

Alun Davies AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Lywodraeth Leol a
Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public
Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref Scrutiny1/CAW/MoJWAG
Ein cyf/Our ref ARD/00632/18

Cllr Carolyn Webster
Chairman - Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Bridgend County Borough Council

Cllr.Carolyn.Webster@bridgend.gov.uk

25 September 2018

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 4 September regarding the transfer of funding for prisoners in the secure estate into the local government settlement.

Carwyn Jones, AM, wrote to me in December enclosing a letter from Cllr Hywel Williams, Deputy Leader of Bridgend Council regarding this issue. I have enclosed a copy of my reply which provides the full background for your information.

My officials have been in ongoing discussions regarding the transfer of funding for social care provision for prisoners in the secure estate into the local government settlement with the Distribution Sub Group (DSG), which is the technical working group under the Finance Sub Group (FSG) of the Partnership Council for Wales. The working group advises on the distribution of revenue funding provided to local authorities and consists, primarily, of local authority Chief Finance Officers and Welsh Government officials, as well as independent experts to ensure the fair treatment of all the different factors.

I recognise that your Authority has continuing concerns about the recommendation of the group to transfer funding for social care provision for prisoners in the secure estate into the settlement across all authorities. My officials and a representative of the Welsh Local Government Association recently met with Gill Lewis, your Authority's Director of Finance, to discuss this matter further. It was agreed that it would be referred again for discussion at the next meeting of the Distribution Sub Group, which subsequently took place on 13 September.

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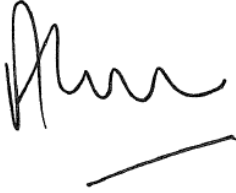
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

At that meeting, while the group conceded that there were lessons to be learnt from the handling of this matter, the group stood by its recommendation that the transfer of this funding into the settlement should be distributed across all 22 authorities, according to a pre-established settlement formula.

The group re-iterated that, if this funding allocation were to be determined by a specific distribution, its view was that a review of the remaining notional service areas would need to take place, in order to ensure that there was no inclusion of prisoner numbers in the population indicators used in other parts of the formula where prisoners have no bearing on the cost of delivering these services. A full review could, in all probability, result in a greater negative impact for Bridgend.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alun', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Alun Davies AC/AM

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