



Public Service Board (PBS) Chair

20 April 2020

Dear Chair,

I am writing to update you on the impact that the response to COVID-19 will have on Public Services Boards in this financial year.

First of all, I would like to thank you for your hard work, and that of everyone in your organisations, in the combined public service response to this virus. I know that your member bodies are supporting the people who work within them, some of them on the very front lines of this pandemic. I've also heard of how you are responding to COVID-19 by supporting the frontline, working collaboratively with partners to respond and sharing critical information.

As public service organisations, I am sure that you appreciate the need for all our efforts, and funds, to be directed at this time towards supporting the people in your communities - and to helping you support them. On 1 April, the Minister for Economy and Transport announced the Welsh Government's commitment to direct more than £1.7 billion into mitigating the impact of the coronavirus to provide support for our public services and to provide an economic resilience fund.

This means that across Welsh Government some hard decisions have had to be taken to reprioritise budgets for this year. This includes the funding allocated to support Public Service Boards, including the funding provided to you on a regional basis.

I know that this will have a significant impact on the excellent work delivered by your PSB but I'm sure you will agree that the current circumstances warrant such a decision. I would like to reassure you that my officials are there to support the PSB with any queries.

This should not be taken as any reflection on the value I see in the role your PSBs play, and the contribution they make to improve the well-being of your area. It is simply a consequence of these unprecedented times.

I would like to meet with you and your fellow Chairs as soon as it is appropriate to do so to discuss how this role can develop as we come towards the end of the first cycle of

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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.

assessments and plans. My officials will contact you to arrange a meeting in the coming months.

There are also a number of actions, identified by the Review of Strategic Partnerships, which can be taken this year to provide greater flexibility and clarity to PSBs; and to facilitate improved relationships with other partnership arrangements, in particular Regional Partnership Boards. The Partnership Council for Wales is considering the report of the Review of Strategic Partnerships, I anticipate the final report will be published in the coming weeks. I would welcome a discussion about its findings when we meet.

My intention would be to provide funding in 2021-22. I recognise that PSBs are more mature than when the current support arrangements were put in place. I have, therefore, asked my officials to work with you to explore the right focus and approach to this support in future years.

In the meantime, I would like to thank you for your work - not just during this crisis but in delivering on our shared commitment to improve the well-being of Wales' people.

Yours sincerely



**Julie James AC/AM**  
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government