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Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref

Chairs of local service boards
Leaders and chief executives of local
authorities

19 June 2012

Dear colleagues

I wrote to local service boards at the beginning of the year to introduce the consultation on guidance for integrated plans, *Shared Purpose – Shared Delivery*. In Plenary today I made a statement announcing the publication of the final guidance (<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/improving-services/local-service-boards/?lang=en&status=open>) and this seems an appropriate time to update you on progress both in respect of integrated plans and the Effective Services for Vulnerable Groups (ESVG) workstream of the Public Service Leadership Group (PSLG) which I also outlined in my previous letter.

Local service boards (LSBs) have been instrumental in developing the model of integrated planning and this guidance reaffirms our commitment to a robust and ambitious model of partnership working in Wales. Integrated planning represents a significant reduction in bureaucracy and the rationalisation of partnership working which you are currently undertaking marks a significant strengthening of accountability. Ensuring effective scrutiny of partnership working under the provisions of the 2011 Local Government (Wales) Measure will take this further.

The challenge ahead is to ensure integrated planning leads to integrated delivery – tangible improvements in joined up commissioning of services. I have set out in my statement that I intend to explore options for improving integrated delivery and my officials will be seeking your views over the summer and early autumn.

In addition to leading on single integrated plans, LSBs also have a crucial role in making the link between local and regional commissioning. While this will vary from place to place, depending on local circumstances, the fundamental connections are about defining need and holding to account. Regional commissioning, however this is managed, must be informed of local need through the strategic needs assessment which underpins the single

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integrated plan. This is to ensure the right services are commissioned. Local democratic structures will want to hold those regional service providers to account through Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees. We have provided a framework and it is for you to make it work coherently.

I also believe that the role of LSBs in transferring and adopting best practice will be critical in improving service delivery. Recognising this, the Public Service Leadership Group agreed collectively at its last meeting that all LSBs should be asked to review the periodic findings of its Effective Services for Vulnerable Groups workstream and consider whether the local evidence indicates best practice is being implemented in their area and, if not, to determine what joint action can be undertaken.

To that end, my officials will shortly be in touch with a discussion paper on the Domestic Abuse model, developed from the learning of three Kafka Brigade-led projects undertaken by Merthyr Tydfil, Newport and Rhondda Cynon Taf LSBs. I would be grateful if you would consider this paper at your next LSB meeting.

As demonstrated by the work on domestic abuse, I believe that local service boards are the key to unlocking the full potential of public services in Wales. You are uniquely positioned to bring together those responsible for the welfare and well-being of your area to provide the leadership and democratic accountability needed to deliver rapid and significant improvements.

Please share this letter with members of your local service board.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carl Sargeant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

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