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Y Gweinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a Llywodraeth
Leol
Minister for Social Justice and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Leaders of Unitary Authorities
Chairs of Community and Town Councils
Chief Executives of Unitary Authorities
Chairs of One Voice Wales Committees
Chair of One Voice Wales
Leader of Welsh Local Government Association

April 2010

Dear colleague

A Shared Community – guidance on relationship building measures and charters for unitary authorities and community and town councils

At the Local Government Partnership Council, held in March this year, members were updated on the increased interaction and emerging relationships between unitary authorities and community and town councils. These outcomes have been facilitated by the “A Shared Community” guidance which was circulated two years ago. I was pleased to hear that of the twenty two unitary authorities in Wales, four have established charters, a further two are in the process of agreeing charters and over half are holding regular liaison meetings with community and town councils in their area.

We know that we are all facing a more challenging climate than at any time during the National Assembly’s inception in 1999. Co-operative working between unitary authorities and community and town councils will help public services to be more integrated, efficient and responsive to citizens and communities. It is without doubt that changes occurring in legislation will also enhance the potential of community and town councils and facilitate collaborative working with unitary authorities. For example, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 has established community and town councils as statutory community planning partners, while the recently approved Local Government Legislative Competence Order will enable us to bring forward legislation to deliver our commitment to strengthen the role of community and town councils, including extending to them the Power of Wellbeing.

The Welsh Assembly Government continues to work in partnership with the Welsh Local Government Association and One Voice Wales to support authorities in developing charters and partnership working arrangements, drawing on the guidance in ‘A Shared Community’ (this is available via the following link: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/communitytowncouncils/publications/asharedcommunity/?lang=en>.)

I commend you all for your continued efforts and dedication to partnership working, but it is imperative that, together, we continue to build on the good work that has already taken place. As leaders of your respective councils, it is important that you demonstrate the necessary commitment to bringing this about. My officials are in regular contact with your officers to facilitate mutual support between authorities in taking this work forward and I look forward to hearing more of your progress and developments over the coming months.

Yours sincerely

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