# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Closure of the Communities First Programme** |
| **DATE** | **19 April 2018** |
| **BY** | **Alun Davies AM, Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services.** |

I want to thank all those who have played a role in the orderly closure of the Communities First Programme and the preservation of its best work. I pay tribute to all the front line staff who delivered the services, and to the Lead Delivery Bodies, local authorities and third sector organisations. They worked and acted in a way that made Communities First a real support for many who needed it.

During the transition year my officials worked closely with a number of Welsh Government departments, Lead Delivery Bodies, local authorities, third sector organisations and public bodies to ensure a smooth transition and to support alternative approaches to maintain the most important aspects of the programme. The way people have delivered to ensure the legacy of the Communities First programme continues has been a clear example people working collaboratively to achieve positive results.

Officials have worked closely with local health boards during the transition period to explore options of mainstreaming low level support. This has resulted in strong sustainable working relationships being developed going forward.

I’d like to thank the WCVA for the support they have provided during the year to help third sector bodies and lead delivery bodies move forward. The willingness of public bodies to work closely with officials to take on various projects previously run by Communities First and the legacy fund allocations to local authorities have enabled us to continue many positive aspects of Communities First moving forward.

With the positive, encouraging work already taking place, initiatives including the development of the Children First approach and the increased Communities Facilities Programme budget to make community centres and other buildings in disadvantaged areas more viable, I feel sectors are collaborating and have a real appetite to work in a different way to deliver the best possible outcomes at a local level.

This work aligns with our national strategy, Prosperity for All, which sets out our plans across government to invest in the prosperity and well-being of communities and individuals in all parts of Wales and emphasises the importance of early intervention and prevention.