# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Update on the evaluation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014** |
| **DATE**  | **15th March 2018** |
| **BY** | **Huw Irranca-Davies, Minister for Children and Social Care** |

In March 2016, Welsh Government committed to an evaluation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. I would like to update members on the progress of the evaluation of the Act and highlight the excellent work of the Stakeholder Evaluation Group.

The Stakeholder Evaluation Group was established in July 2017 to shape how the evaluation is taken forward and play a critical role in developing the evaluation plan. The group includes a range of external representatives and key Welsh Government policy leads, some of whom were drawn from previous stakeholder groups who were actively involved in the development and/or implementation of the Act. Representatives involved with the project include:

* the British Association of Social Workers Wales;
* the Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru;
* Age Alliance Wales;
* Carers Wales;
* the Office of National Statistics;
* Care Inspectorate Wales;
* All Wales Forum;
* Children in Wales;
* the Children’s Commissioner;
* the Older People’s Commissioner;
* Learning Disability Wales;
* Local Authority Representatives;
* the Royal College of Occupational Therapists;
* Social Care Wales;
* Swansea University;
* the Wales Co-operative;
* the Welsh Local Government Association; and
* a member of the public

To date, the group have proposed the principles and scope of the evaluation and throughout the meetings the group have been considering key questions that should be considered during the evaluation. I can announce that the initial focus will be on the implementation of the Act. It will explore how the Act has been implemented and delivered, and identify factors that have helped or hindered its effectiveness. The evaluation will then consider the impact the Act has had on people who need care and support and carers who need support. It will also consider what the impact of the Act has been on key partners such as local authorities, practitioners and the third sector. Research reports highlighting the findings from the evaluation will be published throughout the life of the evaluation.

The Stakeholder Evaluation Group and Welsh Government officials are now developing a specification for the evaluation which will go out to tender in Spring 2018. The formal evaluation will commence in autumn 2018 for a minimum period of three years. I intend to publish a full evaluation plan in autumn 2018, once the contract has been awarded, which will outline further detail of the evaluation. To continue the co-productive approach the group will continue to be involved throughout the full evaluation.

I can also announce that I have agreed to a complementary evaluation project to be delivered that runs alongside the formal independent evaluation named ‘Measuring the Mountain’. The focus of this work is to capture service user experiences of local provision, using a community-based approach across the whole of Wales to help inform the impact and effectiveness of the Act. This will be an extensive piece of work which will include engagement with almost 2,000 service users.

I would like to close by extending my thanks to the stakeholders involved in the development of the evaluation for their contribution and commitment on this important piece of work.