



Care & Repair Cymru

*Gwella cartrefi, newid bywydau
Improving homes, changing lives*

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Pwyllgor yr Economi, Seilwaith a Sgiliau

Caffael cyhoeddus yn yr economi
sylfaenol

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Ymateb gan Care & Repair Cymru

National Assembly for Wales
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills
Committee

Procurement in the foundational
economy

Evidence from Care & Repair Cymru

Public procurement in the foundational economy

Written evidence submitted by Care & Repair Cymru: 5th September 2019

Introduction to Care & Repair

1. Care & Repair Cymru is Wales' Older People's Housing Champion. Our aim is to ensure that all older people in Wales can live independently in safe, warm, accessible homes. We are the national body for Care & Repair in Wales, representing 13 independent agencies operating in every county offering a wide range of home improvement services, tailored to client's needs and local circumstances. Last year we supported over 30,000 older people across Wales, and provided a home-based assessment for over 10,000, whilst delivering £11.5 million's worth of physical alterations and adaptations to improve the health, safety and warmth in people's homes.

Summary

2. Care & Repair Cymru welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee consultation on public procurement in the foundational economy:
 - While we support 'local procurement' in terms of understanding our clients' needs, providing them with a high-quality service and employing local people to deliver this, we don't believe that everything must or can be purchased locally.
 - Care & Repair is a good example of a movement that takes a symbiotic approach to procurement where nationally commissioned services reinforce and support the development of locally commissioned services and vice versa.
 - Flexible procurement arrangements are essential to providing holistic, person centred and joined-up services that support many of the objectives and principles laid out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) and Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014).

What is the current position regarding the proportion of public contracts in Wales that go to Welsh suppliers?

To what extent could increasing 'local procurement' by the public sector create stronger local supply chains and build wealth in communities across Wales?

3. While we fully support 'local procurement' in terms of understanding our clients' needs, providing them with a high-quality service and employing local people to deliver this, we don't believe that everything must or can be purchased locally. The Care & Repair movement is a good example of a nationally funded service that provides vital local support via our thirteen agencies that operate in every county of Wales. From our experience there are several benefits to our 'commissioned nationally delivered locally' operating model that should not be overlooked when assessing more locally orientated public procurement in the foundational economy:
 - *A trusted service and brand:* Care & Repair has over 30 years' experience ensuring older people across Wales live independently in safe, warm, accessible homes. Welsh Government's national core funding over this period has enabled us to deliver a consistent high-quality casework and technical service to hundreds of thousands of clients, making Care & Repair a tried and trusted brand used by older people in local communities up-and-down the country.
 - *More sustainable local delivery through national support:* All our 13 agencies operate independently of one another delivering services to meet identified local need and demand. However, they also benefit from being part of a national network of agencies coordinated by Care & Repair Cymru that supports them in areas such as fundraising, developing good practice, innovation and organisational governance enabling the development of more robust organisations and the delivery of more sustainable local services. The support provided through core funding and the national network also give agencies the confidence and security to deliver more local services tailored to local circumstances by developing social enterprise arms and accessing local and regional statutory and charitable funding.
 - *Enabling innovation and partnership from the local level up:* As a movement we have a strong tradition of piloting and developing innovative local approaches, partnerships and delivery models and upscaling them. A good example of this is our Welsh Government funded Hospital to a Healthier Home service¹ which was originally piloted in Bridgend and is now working in partnership with 11 hospitals across Wales. Through listening to our local agencies and their clients, alongside developing strong partnerships, we have also been able to identify gaps in housing, health and social care provision and develop services to better meet people's needs. A good example of this is

¹ Care & Repair Cymru, 2019, [Hospital to Home Service](#)

our Wales wide Managing Better² service developed in partnership with RNIB Cymru and Action on Hearing Loss Cymru. Managing Better is delivered out of our 13 agencies by dedicated Caseworkers who work proactively with Health and Social Care locally, to identify vulnerable, frail older people with sensory loss to help them achieve a safe and healthy home environment.

- *Bringing local experiences to national strategy:* Another advantage of our locally delivered nationally supported model is our ability to bring the experiences and voices of our local agencies and their clients to national strategy. On the back of this we have a strong track record of contributing to strategic thinking on housing, health and social care in Wales. A good example of this is the development of the Rapid Response Adaptations Programme (RRAP) in 2002/3 enabling Care & Repair agencies to carry out minor adaptations such as ramps and handrails, to enable people to return safely to their own homes as soon as possible. RRAP now helps over 16,000 people annually, with works being completed in an average time of 8 days.³
4. From our experience it is essential that public procurement systems remain flexible, ensuring commissioning is driven by local people's needs and circumstances while retaining national, regional and local procurement options. Care & Repair is a good example of a movement that takes a symbiotic approach to procurement where nationally commissioned services reinforce locally commissioned services and vice versa. Through our 13 independent local agencies, the Care & Repair movements' national work supporting older people to live independently in safe, warm, accessible homes creates stronger local supply chains and builds wealth in communities across Wales through the local delivery and development of our services.

What is your view of the Welsh Government's intended approach to increasing the amount of 'local procurement' undertaken by the public sector in Wales (including how 'local procurement' will be defined and monitored; how the principles of sustainable and ethical procurement are being applied; and how the statutory goals set by the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act are being met)?

5. While we are supportive of 'local procurement' where it best meets local need, supports joined-up working and is flexibly commissioned, we don't believe it should be target driven and an end in itself. The 'sustainable development principles' and 'five ways of working' outlined in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) are indicative of a flexible and inclusive approach to procurement, particularly in the interests of supporting integration, collaboration and preventative working. A Healthier Wales: Our Plan for Health and Social Care (2018) reinforces these principles and the necessity for more joined up and flexible working in order to achieve a whole system approach to health and social

² Care & Repair Cymru, 2019, [Managing Better](#)

³ Care & Repair Cymru, 2019, [RRAP](#)

care. We believe public procurement should reflect these key objectives and principles flowing from the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015).

6. Similarly, the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014) has created and promoted models of regional partnership working and funding across the public and third sectors which need to be fully considered in any plans to increase 'local procurement'. The Act also encourages public purchasing from coops and the third sector, alongside clear objectives promoting increased voice and control for service users, multi-agency working and coproduction. From a Care & Repair perspective, the more flexible the procurement process the better able our agencies are to provide a holistic, person centred and joined-up service to address older people's local housing, health and social care needs.

In what ways can local spend, and collaborative procurement amongst SMEs, be increased and sustained while working within the EU procurement framework, whatever arrangements may be in place following Brexit?

Can you give examples of similar public procurement initiatives elsewhere in the UK and EU?