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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

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref BG/00742/08

Ann Jones AM
Chair
Equality of Opportunity
Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA



5 December 2008

Dear Ann,

Thank you for your letter of the 9th December 2008 about local authority accessible information policies.

As part of our information gathering for the production of the Welsh Ministers Report on Disability Equality, my officials requested information from public authorities in complying with the general and specific duties of the Disability Equality Duty.

During the information gathering, we identified that 99% of public authorities working in Wales provide appropriate adaptations to ensure that staff and customers are able to fully access or take part in activities and services. In this context, appropriate adaptations includes providing information in accessible formats; Staff training for trainers on accessible communication; Producing guides on accessible communications and alternative meeting/communication arrangements, such as phone and electronic devices.

82% of public authorities responding to our questionnaire reported that the needs of disabled people are considered when their organisation's communications plan is being developed. Furthermore, 96% of local authorities include a statement in their Disability Equality Scheme or their Single Equality Scheme describing the way in which disabled people were involved in the development of the scheme. Accessible information is integral to these schemes.

As part of the recommendations contained in the Welsh Ministers report, public authorities have been asked to reflect on the report and how it can be used to develop and instigate further progress in promoting disability equality, while making sure that systems are in place to deliver the legal duties. Part of this is the requirement for information to be provided in an accessible format for their staff and members of the public.

It remains the responsibility of each public authority to monitor and enforce implementation of the disability duty and I continue to urge all authorities in Wales to make sure that accessible information features prominently in their plans. Welsh Ministers will be continuing to report on public authorities' progress in complying with the Disability Equality Duty, with the next report due for publication in 2011. I am confident that we will continue to witness significant improvements and progress in promoting disability equality.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Gibbons', written in a cursive style.

Brian Gibbons AM