

RDC-CAP6

Our Ref/Ein Cyf:

Your Ref/Eich Cyf:

Date/Dyddiad:

Please ask for/Gofynnwch am:

Email/Ebost:

KC/TP

04 May 2010

Katie Cavell

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WLGA • CLILC

Aled Elwyn Jones
Clerk, Rural Development Sub-Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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Dear Aled

Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy

The WLGA welcomes this inquiry by the National Assembly for Wales' Rural Development Sub-Committee into the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and note the importance of deep and wide consultation on such a crucial issue for the future of farming and rural communities in Wales.

As this debate is still gathering pace, the WLGA feels that it is still too early to form too rigid or concrete a position on what is a hugely complex and vital area of policy for Wales.

However, the WLGA would like to take this opportunity to outline some key issues that we believe will be important for Wales in this debate:

- The implications of moving from historic to area based payments and the need for effective planning and preparation for such a move.
- The need to consider a significant transfer of funds from direct income support to wider rural development in order to ensure that public funding contributes more effectively to the sustainable development of our rural areas. This will become more important as the rural development instrument will be expected to increasingly address current and future challenges, such as addressing climate change and more sustainable land use, which will require additional funding.
- Considering the close links between the Rural Development Programme and Cohesion Policy, we would like to see this relationship explored in more detail to see whether these programmes could be better aligned and complement the work of each other in order to reduce bureaucracy and to simplify

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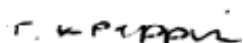
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funding streams and regulations. It is also important to ensure audit and control arrangements are consistent and proportionate to the levels of funding involved.

- We would like to see the LEADER approach developed and extended to ensure that the ambition of a bottom-up approach is not hampered by the bureaucracy and micro-management that has traditionally come with the funding.
- We strongly encourage the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government to engage closely with key stakeholders in the preparation of a position on the future of the CAP and in lobbying the UK Government and the European Institutions. For local government, Axis 3 and 4 Local Partnerships and Axis 4 Leader Local Action Groups are key networks with which we would encourage you to engage. Both have experience of the current programmes that would well equip them to articulate the issues for Pillar 2 of the CAP, as well as being able to comment on the development of the Local Development Strategies that have underpinned the current programming period. Further, as the All Wales Structural Funds Programme Monitoring Committee has already started to consider Future Cohesion Policy we believe that it will be important for that Committee, and the Rural Development Plan Programme Monitoring Committee, to also consider the reform of the CAP and the future of rural development funding for Wales.

As mentioned above, as this debate is still gathering pace, we feel that it is still too early for us to have a final position on this crucial area of policy for Wales. We are currently working with both our Rural Forum and our Members Task and Finish Group on Future European Funding Post 2013, and other stakeholders, to formalise our position and would be happy to discuss this with the Rural Development Sub-Committee later this year.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr Tim Peppin

Director of Regeneration and Sustainable Development
Cyfarwyddwr Adfywio a Datblygu Cynaliadwy