



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Interim Youth Work Board meeting: 3 November 2021

The agenda and minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2021.

First published: 7 March 2022

Last updated: 7 March 2022

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Agenda

Time	Item	Papers
10:00	Welcome Minutes and actions	1. Minutes of 15 September
10:05	Update from Keith Towler	
10:15	Update from Welsh Government	
10:25	Comms and marketing update: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reflections on the youth work conference• youth work excellence awards update	
10:40	Accessibility of polices for deaf young people	
10:50	Board's successor arrangements and transition planning	2. Paper
11:35	Future Board meetings and Strategy Participation Group meeting dates	
11:45	Grants update	
11:55	International Learning Exchange Programme stakeholder group	
12:05	Recommendation 2: strengthen or create a new legislative basis	

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Time	Item	Papers
12:45	Any other business	
12:50	Close	

Attendees

Members:

- Keith Towler (KT): Interim Youth Work Board Chair
- Eleri Thomas (ET): Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Gwent
- Simon Stewart (SS): Dean of Faculty of Social and Life Sciences at Wrexham Glyndwr University
- Dusty Kennedy (DK): Trauma Recovery Model Academy
- Efa Gruffudd Jones (EGJ): Chief Executive of the National Centre for Learning Welsh

Welsh Government (WG):

- Hayley Jones (HJ): Head of Youth Engagement Branch
- Dareth Edwards (DE): Youth Work Policy Manager
- Donna Lemin (DL): Senior Youth Work Strategy Manager

Apologies

Sharon Lovell: Executive Director for the National Youth Advocacy Service and Vice Chair, Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS)

Minutes and actions

Minutes from September's meeting were agreed as an accurate and true record with one minor amendment.

ET alerted the Board to the Estyn review currently underway into peer-on-peer sexual harassment in education settings which is due to report in December.

Action: KT to contact Estyn for an early discussion about the critical role of youth work in providing support in this space.

Update from Keith Towler

KT provided an update on recent meetings attended:

- CWVYS executive meeting: introduced to new CWVYS Chair, Eluned Parrot. In general terms, supportive of the Board recommendations and will be writing to the Minister imminently to outline any concerns or considerations from their perspective.
- CWVYS regional meeting: relationships with local authority partners in some areas was reported as being problematic.
- Attended presentation and Q&A given by EWC on the workforce survey results.
- Attended meeting convened by Play Wales which provided an update on the play review report: report is in near final draft. KT reiterated the connection between play and youth work and the importance of ensuring connectivity at both Ministerial) and Welsh Government official level.

Update from Welsh Government

HJ updated the Board on current branch resourcing.

Discussions about the future of the Young Persons Committee are underway including a consideration of its role in relation to implementation planning.

The Minister for Education and Welsh Language's response to the Board report is provisionally scheduled for 16 December. Board asked to consider whether the response should be delayed to allow it to reflect the budget allocation. Consensus from Board members was that a delay in publication could potentially risk losing the momentum that had been generated.

Communications and marketing update

Youth Work conference

258 delegates attended with good representation from across the sector. Many of the difficulties experienced on the day were attributable to limited planning time and resource capacity but a 'lessons learnt log' has been produced to inform future events. Lack of BSL interpreters reflects a national shortage which could not be overcome on the day.

Action: Flag difficulties with sourcing BSL provision with Welsh Government Equalities team.

Board members provided their own reflections on the event, acknowledging some of the difficulties but also flagging the importance of bringing practitioners together. SS recommended exploring potential for hybrid events in the future.

Youth Work Excellence Awards

Filming of finalists underway; premiere of virtual awards ceremony will take place on 9 December at 3:30pm.

Social media campaign will begin on 22 November to raise the profile of the finalists and to generate a buzz in advance of the ceremony.

Marketing and communications pilot

12 month pilot will come to an end in March 2022. In advance of that, an informal evaluation will take place in December assess the effectiveness of this approach and to inform next steps in line with the third sector code of practice.

Accessibility of polices for deaf young people

KT advised that a request was made at Conference for members of the Board to meet with a young person's deaf group and to explore how best to ensure that the work of the board and its subgroups is accessible to the group.

Action: KT to arrange meeting.

Board's successor arrangements and transition planning

Board members discussed potential successor arrangements for the current Board. Members were in agreement that the process should be by public appointment process to ensure openness and transparency. KT highlighted reflections from sector stakeholders that there should be a formal mechanism by which key stakeholders could be engaged with any future arrangements.

It was suggested future arrangements should also include the work of the current Strategy Participation Groups to continue engagement with the whole sector. The Board emphasised that there needed to be a clear remit for any new Board, and that should demonstrate the change from the current Board's remit to that of an implementation Board.

It was also suggested that a new Board's members should expect to sit on the subgroups as part of that remit, and there should be a clear emphasis on the

participatory nature of this work.

Future Board meetings and SPG meeting dates

The Board agreed they were content to remain in post until a new Board was put into place, and that the Young Persons Committee should continue until such time that the new Board had the opportunity to agree how they wished to engage with young people. It was agreed that the work of the Strategy Participation Groups should also continue as this approach has been very helpful in helping to develop the Board's work and in ensuring all views could be taken into account.

It was agreed that the Board should meet every 8 weeks, with a gap over the summer and timing should be set to enable discussions with the Young Persons Committee if possible. It was noted that if the Committee does continue clear areas of work need to be identified to assist their work.

Action: Welsh Government Officials to canvas for future meeting dates for 2022 to 2023.

Grants update

DL provided an update on grant funding, including the new £2.5m emotional mental health and wellbeing funding and the refocusing of the new Strategic Voluntary Youth Work Organisations Grant which will include a focus on meeting some of the diversity ambitions; aligning the grant funding with the Board's recommendations.

Board members highlighted feedback from sector that this was being perceived as a cut to funding for national organisations.

JS praised the inclusion within the funding guidelines for the Wellbeing grant to insist on joint working with the voluntary sector. More time needed for

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development of these partnerships.

Discussion was undertaken around the potential to fund for longer periods in line with a three year spending review, to provide additional stability in the sector to enable better planning of services and better security of employment contracts.

It was also suggested that collaboration within the voluntary sector also needs to be strengthened; with larger organisations supporting smaller groups at a local level.

International Learning Exchange Programme stakeholder group

DE outlined the work that was taking place within Cardiff University as the deliverers of the programme, highlighting that Kirsty Williams has been appointed Chair of its Advisory Board. It was noted that youth work have two seats at the table, however there was some concern that if the named representative was not able to attend they could not be substituted.

DE further highlighted some concerns raised by the sector in terms of the Welsh language standards not being applied appropriately, and the appointment process for the Executive Director not initially being open for youth workers. The Board raised concerns about the current structure and activity taking place around this work, and the perceived lack of opportunity for the youth work sector to actively shape this work.

It was also suggested that although the stakeholder group had needed to raise their concerns with both Welsh Government and Cardiff University, they also needed to ensure that they worked to clearly articulate how this programme should be developed to help guide future work.

Recommendation 2: strengthen or create a new

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legislative basis

Following on from the Board report the members were asked to consider additional questions to help clearly define the reasons for the need for changes to the existing legislative basis.

There were discussions around the desired policy outcome, defining youth work, accountability for youth work services, avoiding and managing unintended consequences, widening the scope of registrants for the Education Workforce Council, sufficiency assessments, protecting routes into youth work and the role the proposed national body.

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