



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

MEETING

Minister for Education and Welsh Language meeting with Voluntary Sector (WCVA): 28 June 2022

The agenda and minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2022 (HTML).

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Attendees

- Catrin James (CJ) - CWVYS
- Elin Maher - Parents for Welsh Medium Education
- Kathryn Robson - Adult Learning Wales
- Anne Marie Rogan - St Giles Trust
- Nathan Sadler - Interfaith Council for Wales
- Rebecca Falvey - RSPB Cymru
- Lowri Jones (LJ) - Mentrau Iaith Cymru
- Rachel Wrathall - Save The Children
- Phil Stubbington - Trust
- Susie Ventris Field (SVF) - WCIA
- Sophie Weeks - Welsh Woman's Aid
- Amy Bainton - Barnardo's Cymru
- Ben Lloyd (BL) - WCVA
- Fiona Harris - WCVA
- David Hagendyk - National Learning & Work Institute
- Dan Roberts - Cwmpas
- Hannah Jones - Prince's Trust Cymru
- John Muir - Wales Environment Link

Agenda

1. Matters Arising
2. Issues contributing to the curriculum (WCVA)
3. Workforce planning for Welsh medium education
4. and Youth Sector development (WCVA)
5. Refugees and Adult Learning
6. AOB

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Agenda item 1: matters arising

BL gave a brief introduction to the meeting and the papers that had been submitted prior to the meeting; their purpose and aim.

Agenda item 2: paper on supporting the curriculum

BL introduced the paper: Supporting the Curriculum for Wales by supporting the voluntary sector and volunteering and explained where it had come from and who had contributed - main points are: How can third sector work with WG to support the new curriculum and engage with its implementation and have sufficient resources/workforce to do so and the value of the third sector being involved.

LJ reinforced the value of volunteering and emphasised that language initiatives which enable the use of Welsh outside the classroom are key to supporting young people to use the Welsh language in the community; the third sector's contribution is key in this development as it helps develop all sort of Welsh language skills with the use of Welsh in play and volunteering opportunities.

LJ Made a plea to have more of a discussion about how to support schools and colleges to work around the language barrier. There is enormous potential with 1million Welsh speakers, and there is a need to continue to have a discussion, to look at provision and work with schools. There are lots of opportunities to conduct activities in Welsh and this needs to be made clear to headteachers and schools. It needs to be considered how we can plan it better and be more strategic; the Language Charter should help with this. Our children and young people should have confidence to use the language in all areas of their life. How do schools know about the third sector and the opportunities it can provide?

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It was agreed that the Minister would respond at the end to the issues raised.

CJ stated that there were some concerns over the engagement of the voluntary sector and felt that various elements of the implementation of the curriculum has been inconsistent. Whilst there is voluntary sector involvement in some groups, it has not always been central to the way these groups operate. There are also some concerns that groups have stalled because of the pandemic and therefore the voluntary sector voice has been marginalised with regards to curriculum implementation.

NS was due to speak about volunteering but was absent; **BL** raised some of the issues that she wanted to speak about such as the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. It is important to look at building on the volunteering that took place during the pandemic and through the Welsh Bacc, making sure volunteering is made available and there is provision to support the volumes of requests.

HJ talked about the Princes Trust - due to launch the Mosaic programme in 2020 at a high school in Cardiff but did not due to lock down; yet to launch in Wales. Spoke about the programme and mentoring; these are not currently in schools – includes World of Work Day and next steps beyond academic life. Volunteers work with and support young people to horizon scan and to aspire for a fulfilling career – looking forward to launching in in Wales.

CJ raised linking volunteering/maximising volunteering through the curriculum with an emphasis on equal opportunities for all people from all backgrounds; these are not always available later in life; needs to be embedded in the curriculum to have a level playing field. It provides a broad range of experiences for all people from all backgrounds - this had been highlighted in a case study in the papers provided to the meeting by WCVA.

CJ/SVF talked about the implementation process and the Strategic Stakeholder Group which was useful to engage across the sector and the third sector had been included in the design of the curriculum but feels that this has dropped off

since the launch of the curriculum; there is a lack of co-ordination. There are some fantastic opportunities for the third sector to support pupil enrichment; for this to work a directory or an easy way for schools to find services is needed, not only in their immediate community, but also beyond. Would like for this piece of work to be picked up – would like the opportunities to be involved with schools and the curriculum roll out.

SVF talked about funding and acknowledged that there had been some fantastic funding from Welsh Government and the third sector attracted a lot of funding from different sources. This information needs to be updated so that the third sector can help to design and support a full range of pupil enrichment programmes which will support the new curriculum. **SVP** emphasised that they are very supportive of the new curriculum but would like to have more opportunities to support it.

CJ stated that there is a need to kick start as a sector, so we know where we are at and extend it to a higher age; they have had discussions with Hayley Jones in Youth Sector to get a briefing session for youth groups/workers.

Minister thanked those who had contributed to the paper and stated that it was a golden opportunity for third sector to participate and make a contribution - we need to be clear with schools about what they can take advantage of. He hopes that there will be more flexibility to discuss work with the sector and feels there is a very specific role for them such as the role of volunteering, supporting learners to become more rounded. The Minister stated that he would like to see a stronger sense of their offer, rather than their asks – he would like to see plans and needs a clearer sense of their offer as they move forward

Minister stated there were some specific points to state – strategic stakeholder working group has looked at links between school and 3rd sector. It is felt that the National Network structure is the forum to feed into and is important in the development of the curriculum. There will be opportunities to work with the network; needs careful planning as to how it will work. It needs to be structured

and helpful and is felt to be of value to all, so that there is maximum engagement. It needs to be tangible. There is a review of the governance of the groups taking place. Discussed the role of volunteering and there are excellent opportunities for this; it connects school to the work and world outside – keen to work with schools to provide opportunities.

Lost link to the meeting for approximately 10 mins.

Agenda item 3: workforce planning for Welsh medium education and youth sector development (WCVA)

Joined when discussing Welsh Education Workforce – Outcome 7.

EM: Third sector partners involved in Welsh language planning have contributed widely on the formation of the Welsh in Education Strategic plans through the Welsh in Education Forums across Wales and have appreciated the opportunity to do so. The Welsh-medium workforce is a key element which needs to be part of targets and development for both statutory and third sector. EM welcomed the 10 year plan which the Minister has just published. Felt there isn't enough mechanism there – the annual monitoring element from local authorities is not something that will give a proper picture to enable us to monitor and respond to matters that might arise promptly and effectively as its limited to the Local Authorities. We need a wider annual look of all stakeholders that have responsibility to move this along. We would like a response from WG to the paper that was sent to the Minister asking for a body to be put in place to apply an active monitoring and advisory mechanism that will assist to increase the Welsh-medium workforce immediately. There needs to be a formal body that leads on this. The paper prepared for today's meeting addressing these points was late reaching the Minister, but these issues have been raised with Minister

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already.

Mudiad Meithrin also published a report called 'Grym ein Gweithlu' in February 2022 which clearly sets out the problems in the Early Years field with workforce recruitment and development; it offers a view on early years and the need to get it right. Mudiad Meithrin would like the opportunity to discuss the paper with the WG. We need to discuss issues such as training and issues that concern us.

LJ followed on with the Play Sector in mind – lots of opportunities with the possible extension of the school day and during the school holidays. We see massive challenges with the Welsh speaking workforce; recruiting and developing workforce is very challenging we foresee these challenges will increase, we need to develop play workforce, not just Welsh Speaking but throughout the sector.

CJ – Youth Work – in terms of this sector the Minister has made a commitment to develop workforce in the medium of Welsh and the infrastructure of training and assessment of the workforce; we hope there is a way of drawing in the strategic aspect – we work together and not in silos so we can develop together.

Minister thanked the meeting – did not have opportunity to read the paper before the meeting. Minister stated that we need to look at developing the Welsh Language holistically and work together. There is a 10 year plan – hope it is clear we are trying to be creative and see the wider picture and challenge ourselves to do more and in a different way. We need to focus on progress every year, so it will be re-announced every few years and there will be public accountability. There is a need for regular and consistent planning which needs to be done jointly and to set expectations. The Minister does not see the case for a new body, but we do need to co-ordinate and drive forward strategically; the Minister does not want to create a new body.

Another element which is important is that councils make progress with their strategic plans; they need to meet their responsibilities and there is a lot more

work to be done. Discussed the work with WESPS – hope that an element can be done - training the Welsh speaking workforce and this can be mapped in terms of working with the workforce – discussions are happening which are detailed; although no announcements – it is a constant point of discussion with Julie Morgan who is responsible for Early Years and with the designated member of Plaid Cymru as part of the co-operation agreement. Minister hopes this has answered their questions

EM, WCVA, member, thanked the Minister for his response and was pleased to hear about early years work. However, there are concerns over the co-ordination of all the bodies, organisations and partnership who are responsible and are part of the workforce development such as universities and consortia. Our concern is about the co-ordination and the planning for Welsh-medium workforce, we need to ensure all elements happen and everyone realises what their responsibilities are and that is why we are asking for the new body.

Agenda item 4: refugees and adult learning

BL asked for information/clarity for financial support from asylum seekers

The Minister clarified that provided a learner is lawfully resident in Wales (or England if the nearest available provision is in Wales) the Welsh Government allows school sixth forms and colleges to draw down post-16 funding for them. In addition, the Welsh Government has agreed young people seeking refuge in Wales from Ukraine are immediately eligible for post-16 education or training in college and also are eligible for apprenticeship programmes.

BL welcomed the news and thanked the Minister for his time.

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