

Welsh Ministers' Business Scheme

Local Government and Communities: Communities Division

Annual Update report on implementation of Business Scheme

Date: January 2013 to January 2014

Lead Departmental Official for the Business Scheme

Name: Eleanor Marks

Activity

Communities First and the Private Sector.

Communities First (CF) is a Community Focussed Tackling Poverty Programme with three strategic outcomes: Healthy Communities, Learning Communities and Prosperous Communities.

The aim of the programme is to narrow the economic, health and the education and skills gaps between our most deprived and more affluent citizens by working with the most deprived communities across Wales. Over £75 million has already been committed to the Programme up to March 2015, which will directly provide over 900 jobs and support the valuable work in our most deprived communities.

CF operates through 'Clusters'. The Clusters comprise the 10% most deprived Communities in Wales (according to Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2011) and equate 24% of the population of Wales.

Clusters are required to complete a Delivery Plan which sets out the objectives for the locale, how these objectives will be met and how they will be measured. Clusters have the autonomy to examine the needs of their area and how best to meet those needs. As a result Clusters work with a range of partners in the delivery of their work, including third sector organisations, local authorities and statutory agencies and organisations including Public Health Wales, police forces and schools.

CF endeavours to increase the number of Private Sector organisations involved in the Programme. The Private Sector offers a variety of benefits including business management skills, advice on employability and recruitment and opportunities for mentoring and work placements.

Examples of CF and the Private Sector:

- The Cooperative Group is the Lead Delivery Body for 4 of the CF Clusters in Pembrokeshire, Rhyl and two in Blaenau Gwent.
- 'The **'Empty Shops'** project led by Mon Communities First in Anglesey has not only resulted in the creation of 17 new retail businesses in Holyhead,

but has also given employment opportunities to local young people who have been trained in skills to renovate disused and derelict premises. A hairdresser, florist, shoe shop, greengrocer, sports shop, pet supplier and a cafe are just some of the new ventures popping up along the high street as first-time entrepreneurs take advantage of the scheme which enables them to acquire well-located accommodation for their fledgling operations at ultra-low costs. The Cluster has worked with private sector owners of empty commercial properties to allow them to be used by the new start-ups in return for a package that would relieve them temporarily of the burden of business rates and give their properties a facelift, free of charge. CF then liaised with Welsh Government's Business Start Up Service provider, Menter a Busnes, to identify aspiring entrepreneurs interested in opening retail operations, and with local learning providers to engage construction trainees to begin the revamp of decaying premises. Within months the first of the new businesses began to open in the town centre and the process has gathered pace ever since.

- **Flintshire's Business Entrepreneurship Network:** Aims to develop entrepreneurship through a more accessible, more effective range of opportunities, to develop entrepreneurial skills through mentoring, work experience and apprenticeships for young people in all sectors. This is being achieved by supporting and enabling people to access opportunities in Flintshire and within that, nurturing business entrepreneurs supported through the Flintshire Business Entrepreneurship Network. Partners include Welsh Government, Flintshire County Council, Hicks Randles (Business Start Up provider), Barclays Bank, Glyndwr University, Coleg Cambria, Menter a business, Local Businesses and Careers Wales/Jobcentre Plus
- We are working with EST on the Tackling Workless Households projects, as part of the Early Years Child Care strategy, to identify areas where joint working can strengthen links between CF and the private Sector.
- In the HOV area an application to fund the **EFFECT Project**, jointly between EST and CF which aims to promote entrepreneurship and stimulate new business starts in the area through a community based enterprise facilitator and local businesses. The project also seeks to engage with individuals who would not traditionally access Welsh Government services. This supports both EST and CF priorities of tackling economic inactivity. The project, led by Merthyr Tydfil CBC is working with 8 CF clusters (3 in Merthyr, 3 in Bridgend and 2 in Torfaen).

### Digital Inclusion

The Digital Inclusion Unit (DIU) has developed relationships with private sector organisations that are well placed to help get more people online. These include:

- British Telecom (BT): DIU and Communities 2.0 (the Digital inclusion programme we oversee) work closely with BT to ensure their digital

inclusion activities align with Communities 2.0 to maximise impact. BT are represented on the Communities 2.0 Advisory Board.

- Post Office Ltd: engagement with Post Offices to signpost customers to digital inclusion classes in their area. Post Office Ltd are represented on the Digital inclusion Programme Board.
- ASDA: DIU have been in discussions with ASDA about delivering digital inclusion activities in a number of Welsh stores, thereby reaching digitally excluded people that wouldn't usually attend traditional community settings like libraries. Communities 2.0 are currently working to develop pilots in Blackwood, Llanelli, Tonybandy, Rhyl and Wrexham.
- Everything Everywhere (EE): to explore how they can help support digital inclusion.
- Computer Recycling Companies: DIU have a relationship with a number of Welsh based computer recycling companies that can support the digital inclusion agenda (e.g. Partners IT, Computer Recycling Ltd and MeTech Recycling) by providing low cost ICT equipment to individuals and community based organisations.
- Continuing to work with the Digital Wales Network to ensure digital inclusion is integrated in the work of other Digital Wales strands.

### Financial Inclusion

The Welsh Government has a contract with Northgate Public Services to manage the Discretionary Assistance Fund. This was awarded after open tender and Northgate run the contract in partnership with the Family Fund and Wrexham CBC. As part of the procurement process, the Welsh Government held an awareness session for potential bidders and private sector firms with an interest were able to attend along with those from the third and statutory sectors.



## **Sustainable Development Branch and Future Generations Bill**

### **Annual Update report on implementation of Business Scheme**

Date: 01/01/13 to 01/01/14

#### **Activity: Sustainable Development Charter**

The Sustainable Development Charter is a voluntary initiative under which organisations commit to make sustainable development their central organising principle, and to share best practice. It is our principal tool to engage organisations from all sectors, private, public and third, across Wales with more sustainable practices.

The Charter fulfils a commitment in the Sustainable Development Scheme to encourage and enable others to embrace sustainable development as their central organising principle.

The overarching context provided by the Sustainable Development Scheme, together with guidance to signatories help allow organisations in Wales to align their activities to the vision of a sustainable Wales, and be clear about their role in its achievement. This will be important as we move towards the Future Generations Bill.

At present 166 organisations have signed the Charter of which around half come from the private sector.

One of the major purposes of the Sustainable Development Charter network is the establishment of a 'community of good practice' which offers others support and encouragement in achieving the benefits of a sustainable development approach.

The Welsh Government asks organisations that sign the Charter to specify:

- a) the current activity they undertake in applying sustainable development as their central organising principle; and
- b) what additional actions they will commit to as a result of signing up to the Charter.

In light of a recent evaluation of the network carried out between February and May 2013, it has been proposed that it should be strengthened and made more proactive with increased levels of support, information and resources for signatories and a programme of knowledge transfer events and site visits. This has been broken into four key areas:

1. The nature of challenges should be changed so that the Charter network becomes a force for real change on the ground. Rather than each of the 160+ signatories undertaking an individual organisational challenge, it is proposed that challenges are shared and delivered collectively and collaboratively by clusters of organisations so that challenges deliver the

maximum benefit. Organisations would be encouraged to collaborate around themes such as skills, tackling poverty, good growth and climate change. This would align the Charter more closely with Welsh Government priorities and could be done on a sector or regional basis. There will a programme of events and site visits to support learning and best practice, these should be both sector specific and cross sector.

2. The Charter webpages are refreshed so that these resources will be available on-line. The website will also sign-post to existing good practice, guidance and tools. The development of a Charter logo would reinforce the Charter brand.
3. Encourage signatories to collaborate around the main generational challenges faced by Wales. This will move organisations into the direction of travel we are proposing for the Future Generations Bill, encouraging integration and collaboration. More importantly it recognises that tackling the challenges that communities face, from climate change, to creating jobs and improving the health of our nation can only be achieved by working together.
4. Strengthen the capacity of Cynnal Cymru to facilitate networking, sharing knowledge and best practice and working together independently between signatories outside the annual event.

### Next Steps

On 6 November the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty lead a re-launch of the Charter network at an event in Cardiff. The Minister outlined the four elements of action that will aim to improve the functioning of the network. Cynnal Cymru, who manage the majority of the support work of the Charter network have been asked to convene a Task and Finish Group of signatories to progress the ideas generated at the November event in order to determine the shared challenges that organisations will be asked to sign up to. It is intended that these will be small in number with the aim of starting them in April 2014 with a delivery date of March 2015.

### **Activity: Future Generations Bill – Legislation Development**

#### List of official communications on the Bill

<b>White Paper Consultation – Proposals for legislation on a Sustainable Development Bill</b>	<b>3 December 2012</b>
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White Paper consultation ran from 3 December 2012 to 4 March 2013

<b>Consultation on the Sustainable Development White Paper</b>	<b>15 May 2013</b>
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Publication of the summary paper for the White Paper consultation which ran 3 December 2012 to 4 March 2013 and noting key themes which emerged. (see below)

**First Minister's Statement on the Legislative Programme**

**16 July 2013**

Written Statement outlining the FG Bill in the Legislative programme including the change of name (to Future Generations Bill) and the timetable following the period of review

**Future Generations Bill – Better Choices for a Better Future**

**17 July 2013**

Written Statement expanding on the First Minister's statement on the legislative programme and what it means for the FG Bill

**Future Generations Bill – National Conversations**

**13 November 2013**

Written Statement introducing the pilot national conversation cycle – a period of engagement with the Welsh Public about the challenges that face Wales and the opportunities to overcome them.

White Paper Consultation

- The White Paper Consultation generated a total of 473 responses, the majority of which were supportive of the idea to further integrate sustainable development.
- 10 responses were received from businesses (Acclimatise, BSW Timber, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water, Ecostudio, Evocati Limited, Llanhennock Property Management, National Grid, Scottish Power Renewables, Valero Energy Ltd, Wales & West Housing) and 22 responses were received from professional bodies and associations (ACCA Cymru/Wales, Accounting for Sustainability Wales Forum (A4SW), Association of Welsh RIGS Groups, Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, Country Land & Business Association, Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges, Farmers' Union of Wales, HEA Wales ESDGC Group, Institute for Archaeologists, Institution of Civil Engineers Wales Cymru, Landscape Institute Wales, North East Wales Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites Group, RICS Wales, Royal Society of Architects in Wales, RTPI, The Law Society, UK Environmental Law Association, Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru, University and College Union, Welsh Further Education Purchasing Consortium, Welsh Local Government Association).
- Business groups were broadly supportive of the aims of the Bill, and noted the importance of clarity over what would be needed for compliance as well as a desire to see a policy which did not introduce a disproportionate burden on organisations.
- An SD approach to business supports the economy; improves efficiency, reduces consumption, and supports the health and wellbeing of people and communities.

### Bill Reference and Advisory Group

- The Bill Reference and Advisory Group (BRAG) is an external reference group lead by the Commissioner for Sustainable Futures for Wales, Peter Davies.
- It is constituted of representative organisations from the public, private, and third sectors and its membership includes the Confederation of Business Industry Cymru (CBI).
- The BRAG has been active since September 2012 and meets monthly. Information on the Bill is often provided to the group by Bill officials in the form of papers or presentations. The CBI are a key member of the group – they receive all papers and are regularly contacted to encourage their engagement with the group. The CBI were represented at the group when the Minister attended to discuss their views on the Bill on 21 October 2013.

### Forthcoming Activity: National Conversation

The proposed Future Generations Bill is intended to establish an independent statutory Sustainable Futures' Commissioner, whose role will involve undertaking such a conversation every 5 years and preparing a report on behalf of future generations. This Report will then be used to explore the priorities and challenges facing Welsh communities and inform the long-term goals and influence policies of an incoming government.

The Minister for Communities and Tackling poverty has asked Peter Davies, Wales' Commissioner for Sustainable Futures, to pilot a national conversation in the spring of 2014. This pilot conversation provides an opportunity to test out the potential role of a Future Generations Report, and also to test ways in which we can best engage communities, business, and the public sector in contributing to achieving our shared long term goals.

It will consist of a number of intensive engagement exercises over three months. There are likely to be a variety of approaches that will need to be used with a range of stakeholders – from youth to business groups.

The primary output from the project will be a report to Welsh Government, setting out the views of stakeholder networks about “the Wales We Want”. A summary evaluation of the effectiveness of various engagement approaches will also be produced.

The Commissioner, supported by Cynnal Cymru, intends to design a programme of engagement to achieve this and a key feature of which will be working through a number of ‘Future Champions’ (that is, place and sector based networks) and leaders within the community, including the business sector, to cascade the conversation.

The Commissioner is aiming to launch the National Conversation formally with the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty and Jonathon Porritt on 18 February, by which time he intends to have developed a series of toolkits to facilitate the programme of work. The Minister has asked that officials ensure that a leading figure from commerce/business is invited to launch the National Conversation alongside Jonathon Porritt.



Welsh Ministers' Business Scheme

(Cross-portfolio)

Department for Local Government and Communities: Children, Young People  
and Families

Department for Education and Skills: Early Years

Annual Update report on implementation of Business Scheme

Date: July 2013 to June 2014

Lead Departmental Official for the Business Scheme

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Activity

**Early Years and Childcare Plan: Building a Brighter Future**

The Welsh Government's Early Years and Childcare Plan "Building a Brighter Future", launched in July 2013, brings programmes and policies together in a joined-up and coordinated way to support children and their families across the early years. An Early Years Partnership Board has been established to reinforce this by drawing on knowledge from across the early years and childcare sector about the practicalities of developing and implementing these programmes. There is a lot of good practice already happening in Wales. Our aim is for this to be the norm. The Partnership Board, which includes representatives from childcare and play organisations, health, education and academia, will help us to identify what works well to make a real difference.

The Early Years and Childcare Plan highlights the importance of engagement with the business community and the promotion of early education and childcare and family friendly policies as part of wider economic strategy.

As part of ongoing action under the Early Years and Childcare Plan, Childcare and Play Policy officials are working with DEST officials to support and develop the childcare market by:

- increasing the number of child care businesses by providing advice, support and funding particularly in areas where there are gaps in provision;
- providing advice to businesses on the benefits and practicalities of adopting family friendly policies and exploring issues around encouraging businesses that have surplus space to offer this to childcare providers;
- piloting a new Social Firms Wales project, working alongside private sector anchor companies to provide childcare and more general social care so as to enable parents to participate in training or return to the workplace;
- putting plans in place to pilot two childcare businesses in Communities First areas and to work with an anchor company in support of childcare.

Independent Review of Early Education and Childcare Registration,  
Regulation and Inspection – Task and Finish Group

A further key action within the Plan, involves a review of the registration, regulation and inspection systems in place for the early years and childcare sector and their role in driving quality improvement across the sector. Professor Karen Graham from Glyndwr University is leading an independent external Task and Finish Group which will report in March 2014. Third sector organisations, early years academics and local and regional partners including the umbrella childcare and play organisations are represented on this Group and will be fully engaged in any future consideration or consultation that follows going forward.

- The review will:
  - test whether the current and proposed systems for the registration, regulation and inspection of childcare, including Flying Start and early education provision, adequately support and improve the quality of childcare and education across the early years;
  - consider whether the current systems for the registration, regulation and inspection of childcare need amendment in light of Welfare Reform changes, the HMRC tax-free childcare consultation and other relevant UK policy that affects early education and childcare in Wales;
  - ensure that the registration, regulation and inspection legislation supports the aims and intended outcomes set out in *Building a Brighter Future : Early Years and Childcare Plan*; and
  - identify, where necessary, recommendations for improvement and / or required changes to the NMS and / or legislation.

The review will not evaluate the Inspectorates/local authorities themselves, only the registration, regulation and inspection systems in place for the early years and childcare sector and their role in driving quality improvement across the sector.

Early Years 10 Year Workforce Plan

The Early Years and Childcare Plan includes a commitment to consult on the right approach for the childcare workforce in Wales in relation to minimum qualification levels, graduate leadership, continuous professional development and career pathways.

To fulfil this commitment, we are developing a plan for the early years, childcare and play workforce for the next ten years. The plan will develop proposals under three high-level themes:

1. Raising skills and standards across the existing workforce;
2. Attracting high quality new applicants;
3. Leadership.

A consultation on proposals will be published in September 2014, but we are engaging with key stakeholders in advance of this to help shape and inform our thinking.

### Baseline Survey

We are funding the Care Council for Wales (CCW) to take forward a survey of the early years, childcare and play workforce. The survey, which will be aimed at managers of settings, is due to commence week beginning 3 March 2014. This piece of research will form part of the evidence base for the 10 Year Workforce Plan.

We have engaged with childcare and play umbrella organisations during the development of this survey, through CCW's Workforce Development Network. These groups have responded positively to this piece of research and offered to promote the survey amongst their members.

### External Stakeholder Group

We are in the process of bringing together a reference group of key external stakeholders to test and further develop emerging proposals with regard to the 10 Year Workforce Plan. CCW have agreed to chair this group.

In addition to third sector childcare and play representation, we will be recommending that private/commercial business interests are also represented through the Federation of Small Businesses. This link will be particularly important as we consider how we can better support early years, childcare and play settings to operate as sustainable businesses.

### European Structural Funds (ESF)

Increasing the skills of the early years and childcare workforce has been identified as a specific objective of the Youth Employment and Attainment priority of the draft ESF programme for West Wales and the Valleys 2014-2020. An ESF programme is being developed in parallel with the 10-year workforce plan and will support theme 1 (Raising the skills and standards across the existing workforce) and have a smaller impact on theme 3 (Leadership).

The ESF programme will cover childcare, early education and play and will focus on improving the overall quality of the existing workforce through up-skilling workers within the sector.

The external stakeholder group will be used to develop and test emerging proposals with regards to utilising ESF funding. Favoured proposals will be consulted on jointly with those identified for taking forward the workforce plan, in September 2014.



Welsh Ministers' Business Scheme

Local Government and Communities Division  
Annual Update report on implementation of Business Scheme  
Date: 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014

**Lead Departmental Official for the Business Scheme**

Name: Lisa James  
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**Activity**

The Welsh Government has funded the Local Better Regulation Office and its successor, the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) to deliver a programme of work in Wales since 2009.

For 2013 -14, the Welsh Government provided funding of £200k to the BRDO. The purpose of the funding is for BRDO to carry out functions to help simplify the regulatory system; drive improvements in regulatory delivery that support growth; provide a forum business engagement at the heart of the regulatory system and provide advice on regulatory delivery with central Government.

In 2013 -14 priorities for BRDO were to focus on exploring local approaches business regulation that support growth – this will seek to develop relationships between regulators and businesses locally that help business comply through maximising support and minimising burden. BRDO are also aiming to introduce a revised Regulators' Compliance Code and promoting this with regulators and businesses – this will set a clear basis for how regulators should carry out their activities in a way that helps businesses to comply and grow.

**Please identify for all forms of engagement /activity:**

- Support Welsh Government programme of work on farming deregulation and implementation of the Working Smarter report's recommendations, and attend meetings of the Working Smarter Inspections and Records Task and Finish Group.
- Engage Welsh local authorities and national regulators in approaches to the delivery of better local regulation of business.
- Facilitate the sharing of good practice and learning in conjunction with the Welsh Regulator's forum which is a senior level group of national and local regulators in Wales
  - **Milestones** include the support for the production of a leaflet for farmers explaining who regulates them; - with BRDO's support a resource explaining how to prepare for inspections for distribution to all farmers in Wales was launched at the RWS Winter Fayre by the Natural Resources Minister on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013.

The establishment of a business perceptions evidence base on regulatory matters and conduct associated engagement activity to support collaborative regulatory service delivery by Cardiff City Council, Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend County Borough Council; Whilst BRDO undertook preparatory work to develop this project, the formal details of the collaborative arrangement are behind schedule preventing further progress. BRDO are therefore currently working with Denbighshire to help them develop a shared approach to business engagement across the council.

The organisation of a dedicated meeting of the Welsh Regulators' Forum which will focus on business engagement- the Forum meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2014 will include a session to share the business experience of regulation with the National and Local Regulators and Welsh Government policy leads with a view to identifying key themes and opportunities.

### **Forthcoming activities**

BRDO will be commissioning the next business perceptions survey during 2013 -14 and their aim is for the survey element to be completed by March 2014 with reporting early in the 2014-15 financial year. The survey is a UK-wide survey which will include a Wales boost to allow for sub-group analysis. The profile of the businesses sampled will be selected to be representative of all UK businesses.

Welsh Ministers' Business Scheme

Local Government and Communities: Public Service Reform Division

Annual Update report on implementation of Business Scheme

Date: January 2013 to January 2014

Lead Departmental Official for the Business Scheme

Name: Piers Bisson

Activity

1. Legislative process

Public Services (Workforce) (Wales) Draft Bill – EST representation on the project board. Monthly meetings held.

2. Policy development

The Division maintains regular stakeholder engagement with Social Partners and business sector representatives which allows them to feed into early engagement on the Strategic Public Service Reform Agenda. This is undertaken through a range of mechanisms including formal meetings, fora, task and finish groups, examples include Public Service Leadership Group and the Partnership Council for Wales meetings which include social partner representatives, although there are no specific business community representatives on these groups.

One of the key developments this year has been the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery. Juliet Luporini represents the business community on the Commission. The Commission has received oral and written evidence from a range of social partners and business representatives. In addition to formal evidence gathering sessions the Commission held a number of informal public meetings to allow the public to provide their views.

Regular Ministerial engagement with social partners through the Partnership Council for Wales and the Workforce Partnership Council (no business community representatives on the fora).

The development of proposals for support through the Regional Collaboration Fund and ESF LSB Project has also involved close engagement with social partners.

The Minister for Local Government and Government Business met with Emma Watkins (CBI) in November 2013.

In developing proposals for the proposed new Organisational Performance Management System (PAN) has involved significant

engagement across social partners and the business community has been invited to tender for the contract.

The Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) allows Welsh research and development companies to bid for more than £2.4m worth of research and development contracts to support the development of innovative solutions for public sector bodies. The Welsh pilot was launched in 13/14 and EST made representation to the PSLG in raising awareness of the pilot and to encourage the development of project ideas.

### 3. Consultations

The Public Service Workforce: Consultation on draft guidance and directions which including a Code of Practice on Workforce Matters was launched on 26 September 2013 and closed on 20 December 2013. Links provided to social partners and the business partners such as FSB, CBI, IOD, WTUC and affiliated trades unions. Social partners have responded and ongoing dialogue on the issues raised will continue. No response was received from the business community on this occasion.

Public Services (Workforce) (Wales) Draft Bill consultation was launched 28 November. Links provided to social partners and the business partners such as FSB, CBI, IOD, WTUC and affiliated trades unions. The closing date for responses is 21 February 2014.

### Forthcoming activities

Further engagement on the outcomes of the consultations mentioned above, together with continued regular meetings with social partners and business community representatives.