

**Meeting with Third Sector and Cabinet Secretary for Education and the
Minister for Lifelong Learning & Welsh Language
Thursday 2 March 2017
Conference Room 2A.14, Ty Hywel**

In attendance:

Welsh Government: Kirsty Williams AM, Cabinet Secretary for Education (CSfE); Alun Davies AM, Minister for Lifelong Learning & Skills (MfLL&WL); Claire Rowlands, Deputy Director Curriculum (CR), Richard Harris (RH), Head of Delivery, Kara Richards, Head of Youth Engagement (KR); and Brian Herbert, Government Business (BH) (note taker).

Third Sector: Paul Glaze, CWYVS/Youth (PG); Catrin James, Urdd Gobaith Cymru (CJ); Uzo Iwobi, BME Alliance/Ethnic Minorities (UI); Ann Woods, WACVC/Local & Regional Intermediaries (AW); Rebecca Falvey, BiTC (RF); Rev. Dr. Phillip Manghan, Interfaith Council of Wales (PM); Lynne Hill, Children in Wales (LH); Martin Pollard, WCIA (MP); Kathryn Robson, Adult Learning Wales (KR, ALW); MaryAnn Hale, UNA Exchange (MAH) Victoria Branciamore, Prince's Trust Cymru (VB) and Judith Stone, WCVA (JS).

CSfE – Welcomed the Third Sector to the meeting and noted there were 2 substantive items on the agenda. Roundtable introductions took place. The first agenda item is the paper on the new curriculum for Wales. There are big changes to the curriculum arrangements in Wales underway. The development of the Areas of Learning and Experience (AOLE) are moving forward with pace with the target of having the new curriculum prepared for piloting from 2018 and to be compulsory for all schools by 2021.

JS – There is Third Sector interest in how schools embed equality, religion and safeguarding in the new curriculum and in developing young people into ethical global citizens of Wales and the World.

CSfE – The Third Sector is engaged already with the AOLE consultative groups which are working widely with experts as frameworks are developed.

CR – The Welsh Government is at the early stages of engaging with AOLE groups and keeping in mind the big picture will encourage them to look at Third Sector involvement.

KR – The Third Sector are engaged with consortia, sometimes the balance of engagement is not quite right in terms of engagement with Head Teachers with schools being busy places.

JS – Suggested that engagement with the Third Sector Partnership Council would be a good starting point.

MP – Would certainly like to be engaged as the AOLE for ethical and informed citizens of Wales and the world is developed.

UI – Mentioned some work with Llanrhydian High School around black history and the contributions made by black people to local, national and world history and culture. There is evidence of a rise in hateful comments since the Brexit vote and Head Teachers are struggling to find support in dealing with such incidents. Some work has been undertaken by Show Racism the Red Card that provide evidence that many teachers do not feel well trained in dealing with these situations. There should be a one Wales approach to freeing the country of racism and hatred.

CSfE – I am familiar with the work of Show Racism the Red Card and am grateful for the work they undertake. Agree that there is a lack of confidence amongst practitioners and the need for training events, perhaps co-constructed with the profession. It is not just about PSE lessons but more about the values of the whole school and how you promote that positive messaging.

PM – Religious groups would wish to be involved too.

CR – Some organisations are already engaged. It is more about the thinking around these issues and changing that in practice.

PG – It is good for third sector organisations to be engaged as the curriculum is developed, particularly in engaging young people in the democratic process. There have been positive discussions with officials about engaging with the Schools Challenge Cymru and it would be beneficial to replicate those in other areas in the future. Is there anything to consider with regard to engagement with the Education Workforce Council (EWC) for third sector organisations?

CSfE – That would be primarily around continuing professional development as the Professional Learning Passport is developed.

JS – There is a challenge around the myriad of organisations involved in developing the curriculum.

CSfE – What does the Third Sector see as its role in engaging with the EWC?

CJ – The difficulty for Third Sector organisations is not knowing where to engage and at what level, be that with the Welsh Government, local government, consortia or schools.

CR – There is likely to be a role in terms of e-learning as that is developed and accreditation both in and out of school.

CSfE – Yes the Third Sector could be engaged in developing that. Scotland has done some similar developments with Youth Work and with those children that don't have opportunities out of school.

JS – Can Welsh Government support the Third Sector to engage with EWC in developing online materials?

CR – Officials can arrange a meeting between the Third Sector and EWC.

Action 1:- Officials to arrange a meeting between the Third Sector and EWC.

MAH – Perhaps there is an issue around recognising and accrediting volunteering activities that young people undertake.

CSfE – Accountability is an issue, perhaps there is a need to change the way schools are accountable, it is not just about GCSE's and there needs to be equity or recognition for vocational and other activities young people undertake. It is also about winning the hearts and minds of parents, for example, regarding the value of the Welsh Bacculaureate.

PM – It was important that there should be opportunities for all. Is governance the key? There had been the recent consultation on school governor reform and the Third Sector could bring added value to this agenda.

CSFE – The key is to build capacity in school governing bodies and they must be equitable. For example, the Pupil Deprivation Grant has been used well by some schools, but greater improvements could be made by pooling resources amongst clusters of schools. This could see schools not only sharing best practice with peers but also pooling funds to make more of an impact.

UI – Perhaps Welsh Government would consider whether there should be greater diversity amongst the pool of governors and also whether there could be a strategic contribution from BAME in the Strategic Stakeholders Groups (SSG).

CR – Welsh Government does need to review and consider the membership of the SSG and the Third Sector representation of that.

Action 2:- Welsh Government to review and consider the membership of the SSG and the Third Sector representation on that.

CSfE – There is also a need to consider the diversity of the Welsh teaching workforce. There is some concern that teaching is not seen as a career choice for some groups and perhaps levers in terms of pay and conditions can be brought into play once that is devolved. The next agenda item is the implications of Brexit on the Education portfolio.

JS – The Third Sector is interested in how we can support teachers cope with incidents of racism and hate crime resulting from Brexit and what we do after Erasmus+ in terms of peer to peer learning.

CSfE – I sit on the Cabinet Sub-Committee on EU Transition, with the emphasis being on the implications for the post-compulsory sector in the White Paper – Securing Wales' Future. There are serious financial implications for the Higher and Further Education sectors in particular. Wales has seen a significant growth in the number of international staff and students in recent years and the economic benefits they contribute are significant. The

projections are that the number of international students will continue to grow, however, that was before the referendum result was known. I am clear that the message from the Welsh Government is that international staff and students are and continue to be welcome in Wales. Latest figures show that there is already a significant drop in the number of applications from international students and we have differences with the UK Government over including HE students and staff in immigration figures. I am also concerned that the TEF will be used to decide which HEIs can recruit international students, which will have a significant impact on a number of institutions in Wales. We are seeking the continuing participation in Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ post-Brexit. The Diamond proposals also include the piloting of Welsh students studying across the world and my officials are developing options for my consideration on that. Brexit has certainly produced a challenge and there are no guarantees forthcoming from the UK Government on the outcome of negotiations.

MfLL&WL – The referendum result has had an awful impact and we need to do some work around the growth in racism since Brexit. It is important that we complete the current EU programmes and then look to deliver on priorities by bringing together funding streams. The fiscal outlook is not good and there will be a need to look at how we stop doing things going forward.

CSfE – The UK Government will not guarantee that EU citizens will be here in 2 years time and that may well impact on teaching and learning.

MfLL&WL – There has been an increase in casual chauvinism and racism in different areas of life. How do we respond to that? Is there anything we can do to shape what schools do around the curriculum and global citizenship?

CSfE – Teacher training is an issue both in terms of Initial Teacher Training and continuing professional development. How do practitioners deal with victims and perpetrators of racism? There are some training materials available for social workers, but this is not extended to teachers and we need to make this available for teacher training.

LH – The training should also be extended to cover voluntary workers and youth workers.

CSfE – Indeed, and the influence of parents and in different settings.

MP – Schools value meaningful discussions about global citizenship linked to critical thinking and a number of Erasmus+ projects help to deliver this.

CSfE – The key will be to deliver a well rounded approach rather than a long list of priorities.

PG – There are approaches that could be taken to engage more effectively with global citizenship, for example, young people are very savvy with social media and that might be an opportunity to mine.

CR – The new curriculum embraces this approach, but the question remains as to what do we do now to address racism in the classroom.

UI – Advised that funding from the Police Commissioner no longer includes racism and focuses instead on drug use etc. It may be possible to engage with schools through the Black History cultural days in October and provide a focus around racism to those.

CSfE – Thanked the Third Sector for meeting with her and the Minister for Lifelong Learning & Welsh Language.