

# **Third Sector Partnership Council**

**Ty Hywel, Cardiff**

**15<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

## **Meeting Note**

### **Attendees:**

Jane Hutt AM – Deputy Minister and Chief Whip (DMCW)  
Uzo Iwobi – Specialist Policy Adviser on Equalities  
Ruth Marks – WCVA  
Judith Stone – WCVA  
Anna Nicholl - WCVA  
Chris Johnes – Building Community Trust  
Kay Denyer – Race Council  
Elin Maher – Mentrau Iaith  
Gethin Rhys – Interfaith Council for Wales  
Jamie Burt – Siawns Teg  
Gareth Coles – Voluntary Arts Wales  
Derek Walker – Wales Co-operative Centre  
Victoria Lloyd – Age Alliance Cymru  
Carl Cooper – CVC Cymru  
Sean O'Neill – Children in Wales  
Louise Hughes - Age Cymru  
Rocio Cifuentes - EYST

### **Welsh Government Officials attending:**

Alyson Francis - Deputy Director Communities Division  
Chris Buchan – Head of Communities and Third Sector team  
Hywel Owen – Media Policy Team Leader  
Bill MacDonald – Head of Finance Policy, European Transition  
Andrew Charles – Head of Futures  
Aaron Fortt – Third Sector Team

## **Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and Introductions.**

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and inviting attendees to introduce themselves. The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip explained how important she felt it is that the Third Sector Partnership Council has an established status and how she was looking forward to working with the group to ensure Welsh Government and the Third Sector can achieve our shared ambitions together through joint working.

## **Agenda item 2 – Discussion on TSPC's paper "Achieving Prosperity for All, Together" (led by Ruth Marks).**

### **Sustainable Resources:**

Key points raised:

Members noted that there is variance across Welsh Government and Local Government in its relationship with the sector (funding and wider).

The Funding Code of Practice needs to be applied beyond Welsh Government and hypothecated arrangements.

It was noted that the Third Sector Scheme works effectively as a framework for the relationship between the sector and Welsh Government. However, as a result of the pressures of austerity, relationships and collaboration between local government and the sector are challenging, with impacts on the sustainability of local groups providing community services. Could the Third Sector Scheme be replicated at a local level and is there anything Welsh Government can do to help facilitate this?

It was noted the Integrated Care Fund model, co-ordinated nationally by government and with a minimum level of investment in social value organisations at local level, provides a mechanism for promoting and monitoring the involvement and investment in the Third Sector that could be explored/adopted more broadly across government. The importance of timing and distribution of funding was stressed as it was felt sufficient time was needed to allow the sector to be properly involved in discussions and for all partners to co-produce and collaborate in the ways of working envisaged by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) and the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales).

The substantial opportunity presented by UK Dormant Assets was raised and it was proposed that the sector be involved in looking at how these resources are used.

It was suggested that the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) should be invited to be part of the next Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip (DMCW) was happy to see the relaunch/review of the Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee and agreed with the suggestion to invite WLGA and health boards.

### **Agreed Actions:**

- WLGA and Health Boards to be invited to sit on the funding and compliance sub-committee. Welsh Government's Community and Third Sector team to action.
- The paper "Achieving Prosperity for All, Together" and the TSPC meeting note will be shared with Julie James AM, Minister for Housing and Local Government.
- The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip will ask for the issues around the relationship between the third sector and local government to be raised at the Local Government Partnership meeting, ahead of a possible meeting with Julie James AM, Minister for Housing and Local Government to discuss.
- The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip will explore with Rebecca Evans AM, Minister for Finance and Trefnydd, whether the Integrated Care Fund model, and other examples of effective government funding practices, are is something Welsh Government could look at using more broadly with respect to Third Sector funding.
- The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip will promote the Code of Practice with public bodies.
- Hywel Owen will coordinate contact with the sector to ensure their involvement in the process of deciding how future Dormant Assets will be used in Wales.

## **Brexit:**

### **Key Points Raised:**

The impact of Brexit on EU migrants and the insecurities they face was highlighted.

Reflections were given from the UK civil society forum on Brexit event in Belfast attended by Jeremy Miles AM, Counsel General and Brexit Minister and co-ordinated by the Wales Brexit Civil Society Forum, led by WCVA and Cardiff University. Two main points were raised by members:

1. Human rights protections – there is no appetite at a UK level for the progress being made in the devolved nations, and there is continuing concern about the loss of instruments, but the work on of the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip in this area is very welcome.
2. Post Brexit Funding arrangements – we must keep in mind that the loss will be felt in our most disadvantaged communities.

It was noted that the Third Sector wants to support Welsh Government to deal with the impact of Brexit, but help is needed to get other Ministers to engage with them e.g. around areas such as the Foundational Economy where the sector is keen to continue to play a role in creating a more inclusive economy for Wales.

It was noted that WCVA is delivering an EU Transition Fund project to assess the impact of Brexit on community services. The final report is expected at the end of June.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip agreed to share the report with other Ministers, and said that there is a need to ensure the third sector is better considered at the EU Transition Cabinet Committee, raising the possibility of a paper presented to them around the sector.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip is keen to make sure Welsh Government's grant schemes are as open and transparent as possible. We need groups and organisations, including organisations working with BAME communities, to be aware of the opportunities schemes like Community Facilities Programme present.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip also discussed Wales commencing the Socio-economic Duty and scoping the possibility of Human Rights legislation in Wales.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip noted the involvement of the third sector External Regional Investment Group and asked TSPC to reflect on how we can work better with colleagues in the UK government.

Bill MacDonald gave an update on the European Transition Fund and noted that his team are keen to work with the sector on future developments.

#### **Agreed Actions:**

- The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip will share WCVA's ETF report with other Ministers and ensure the third sector is better considered at the EU Transition Cabinet Committee.
- Deputy Minister and Chief Whip will feedback on discussions to Lee Walters AM, Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport, and Ken Skates AM, Minister for Economy and Transport.

#### **Involvement and Co-production:**

##### **Key Points Raised:**

The Third Sector are supportive of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and its five Ways of Working and asked whether the way Welsh Government is implementing the Act internally could have more third sector support and involvement. A suggestion was made to create a forum of external stakeholders to support government's implementation of the Act.

Andrew Charles noted that there are ongoing discussions on how to better involve external stakeholders in how the Welsh Government is implementing the Act, and that this was a particular suggestion from the recent Third Sector Workshop.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip noted that Welsh Government needs the Third Sector's help to make this work – the sector has a lot of expertise, especially with respect to co-production and co-design, and saw merit in the suggestion of a forum that brings in civil society.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip also encouraged TSPC members to ensure they, and their networks, have joined the Open Government Network – Wales.

**Agreed Action:**

- The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip DMCW to explore arrangements for a stakeholder forum to support the Welsh Government in its implementation of the Act.
- TSPC (via Ruth Marks) to approach the Well-Being of Future Generations Commissioner's office to update her on discussion.
- Secretariat to share Welsh Government's Open Government Commitments with the sector as soon as they are published.

**Agenda Item 3** – Paper to Note “the Importance of Creativity” (led by Gareth Coles).**Agreed Actions:**

- The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip DMCW will share the paper with Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM, Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism.

**Agenda Item 4** – Special Leave for Domestic Abuse Victims**Agreed Actions:**

- TSPC to raise awareness within their networks and other bodies and encourage colleagues to look at the guidance provided by organisations like Welsh Women's Aid around putting in place workplace policies.