



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Budget Improvement and Impact Advisory Group meeting: 23 October 2023

Minutes of the Microsoft Teams group meeting 11:00 – 12:30
23 October 2023.

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Present

- Matt Wellington (MW) - Welsh Government – Chair
- Lisa Daniels-Griffiths (LDG) – Welsh Government – Budget Spending Team
- Chriss O’Connell (CO) – Welsh Government- Budget Improvement Team
- Dean Pymble (DP) – Show Racism the Red Card
- Rhiannon Hardiman (RH) – Office of Future Generations Wales
- Janine Downing (JD) – WCVA
- Gethin Rhys - (GR) Cytun Cymru
- Wayne Vincent- (WV) EHRC
- Jessica Laimann- (JL) WEN Wales
- Victoria Vasey- (VV)WEN Wales
- Annie Smith-Head (AS) Nature Policy and RSPB
- Riley William - (RW) Economist at RSPB
- Davinia Green –(DG) Stonewall
- Bethany Turner- has worked closely with Lisa Daniels-Griffiths (LDG) on Children in Wales work.
- Nigel Carter (NC) - Welsh Government – WEFO (Joining Budget Improvement Team 30 Oct 2023)

Apologies

- Sean Oneill (SO) – Children in Wales

Secretariat

- Tamzin Greatrex - Budget & Government Business Division, Welsh Treasury
- Michelle Harney - Budget & Government Business Division, Welsh Treasury

No.	Action	Who	When
1	If members have any suggestions in terms of the SIIA presentation for the 24-25 budget members to feed back to Budget team.	BIIAG members	No deadline
2	Members were asked for volunteers to resurrect the SIIA subgroup.	BIIAG members	No deadline

1. Welcome and introduction

1.1 Matt welcomed members to the meeting of the Budget Improvement Impact Advisory Group (BIIAG).

1.2 Details of the new mailbox provided, renamed 'BGB policy and delivery'.

1.3 Matt outlined the agenda for the meeting.

2. Update to BIIAG on Budget preparations

2.1. Matt explained that members of the group involved in budget discussions with the Minister for Finance and Local Government (MF&LG) recently, would have heard the message he was going to give and that this was a chance to reinforce and provide any relevant updates.

2.2. The group were reminded that the minister's statement released last week regarding the 2023-2024 savings exercise, emphasised government's aim of ensuring frontline services are protected, with particular emphasis placed on

individuals that are disproportionately impacted by the current economic context. After the UK spring budget, the Welsh budget was worth £900 million less in real terms.

2.3. For 2024-2025 the Welsh Government did receive additional funding in the UK spring budget but even taking that additional funding into account, the settlement was worth £2 billion less than it would have been if the budgets had grown in line with GDP since 2010.

2.4. The publication of the 2024-2025 draft budget is scheduled for 19 December, but the UK government autumn statement is on 22 November which leaves very little time and a very constrained timetable.

2.5. Matt opened up the meeting to questions. Discussed:

- Jessica Laimann voiced her concern that a lot of these savings have fallen into the equality and human rights budget lines which is quite concerning.
- Wayne Vincent wanted to check that equality impact assessments have been carried out and if there has been any formal work on cumulative impact assessment of those decisions. Matt responded informing the members that more information will be available in due course regarding how cumulative impacts were assessed and when available information will be shared.
- Annie Smith voiced her concerns - are the suite of wellbeing goals informing choices on the nature emergency been considered?
- Looking ahead to the 2024-2025 Budget, Matt stated that if anyone had any suggestions on how we could improve the Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment (SIIA) to feedback to him.
- Victoria Vasey made a statement that WEN Wales will be taking over the administrative role from Chwarae Teg, for the Wales Women's Budget Group.

3. Update to BIIAG on Budget Improvement Plan (BIP), Gender Budgeting and Review of the SIIA

3.1 Chriss updated the group on the latest progress towards delivering actions in the Budget Improvement Plan in advance of its updated publication alongside the Draft Budget on 19th December.

3.2 The focus for Chriss' team over the next 12 months will be to push forward with commitments that are in the BIP. This includes taking forward work on prevention with the support of the subgroup starting to plan for the following 4 years, shaping, and taking forward next steps on gender budgeting and a potential review of our approach to the SIIA.

3.3. Chriss outlined on Gender Budgeting the team are finalising a package of support, before being published for wider access by officials on the internal intranet.

3.4 Recognised that there is a lot to be learnt from others who are further on with this agenda, Chriss would like to re-establish the relationships that were forged with other governments working in a similar space. There is a recognition that to embed this approach, there will need to be a cultural shift in the way all areas of the Welsh Government consider impact.

3.5 Commenting on the closure of Chwarae Teg, Chriss noted the positive impact of Chwarae Teg on the work of Gender Budgeting and to the wider work on Budget Improvement alongside noting the unfortunate impact it will have on the Wales Women's Budget Group, where Chwarae Teg had the administrative lead.

3.7 Moving onto the SIIA published alongside the draft budget, Chriss stated that it is intended that a review would take place over the next year. The review of the SIIA would look at what has worked well, what not so well and how we can improve the process going forward. This is very much a very early discussion in

the interests of transparency and collaboration as this is still in its earliest formative stages. By sharing this now the intention is to ask for the input of BIIAG, which would be most welcome.

3.8 Chriss would like to resurrect the SIIA subgroup and asked for volunteers who would be interested to directly email the new mailbox:

BGB.PolicyAndDelivery@gov.wales

3.9 Rhiannon Hardiman stated that she will be picking up on the prevention work and that the group will be restarted.

4. Update on the Children in Wales animation and leaflet

4.1. Lisa Daniel-Griffiths gave an [update presentation](#) that was provided on Children in Wales work and a snippet of the animation of young person's version of the Budget Improvement Plan.

- The vision for the animation was to engage with young people and help them understand how the Welsh Government works what the Welsh Treasury does.
- Lisa explained what is next for them; Comms Cymru is holding an annual event at the end of November and are very interested in the work that Lisa and her team have done for young people and how they have done it.

4.2. The group were encouraged to ask questions about the work being done with young people in Wales to help them understand budgets:

- The group congratulated Lisa and Bethany on all the hard work which had gone into the animation.
- A question was asked; whether there were plans to keep the group of young

people together once the work on the young people's version of the BIP was finished and if the group could be developed going forward? Lisa and Bethany voiced that they were keen to keep this kind of work on going with young people.

- The animation is set to be launched on the evening of the 30th January and will take place at the Senedd.

5. Next steps for BIIAG, AOB, Questions & Meeting review close

5.1 No other business.

5.2 Matt thanked the group for their valuable time and questions. A reminder was given that questions, ideas, comments can be emailed to the new mailbox after the meeting has ended. BGB.PolicyAndDelivery@gov.wales