

# WELSH FINANCIAL INCLUSION DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Meeting Note – 16 July 2015

Merthyr Tydfil

## Present

## Chair

Chris Gittins (CG) Financial Inclusion Unit, Welsh Government

## Welsh Government Officials

Charlotte Anscombe (CA) Financial Inclusion Unit, Welsh Government  
Erika Helps (EH) Financial Inclusion Unit, Welsh Government  
Kathryn Markey (KM) Financial Inclusion Unit, Welsh Government  
Karl Thomas (KT) Housing Policy Division (Welfare Reform Housing and Rent Officers Wales)  
Beverly Morgan (BM) Tackling Poverty (Policy & Analytical)

## Members

Dave Brown (DB) Wales Co-operative Centre  
Elizabeth Emmons (EE) Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit  
Helene Hayes (HH) Citizens Advice Cymru  
Lee Phillips (LP) Money Advice Service (MAS)  
Paul Langley (PL) Community Housing Cymru  
Rhys Evans (RE) Nominated by Bethan Jenkins AM  
Tony Kirk (TK) National Probation Service (representing interests of National Offender Management Service in Wales)

## Secretariat

Jan Morgan (JM) Financial Inclusion Unit, Welsh Government

## Apologies for non attendance

Ian Albert (IA) Department of Work and Pensions  
Michael Curties (MC) Communities Division (Programme Development)  
Leanne Herberg (LH) Cardiff and the Vale Credit Union  
Lisa Hayward (LH) Welsh Local Government Association  
Helen Matthews (HM) DWP (Universal Credit Programme)  
Pat McCarthy (PMc) Welsh Government, Education and Skills (Literacy and Numeracy)

## 1. Welcome & Introductions

1.1 CG welcomed members to the second meeting of the Financial Inclusion Development Group (FIDG). CG noted two changes to the Group's membership – Lisa Hayward will attend future meetings on behalf of the WLGA and Pat McCarthy has replaced Kevin Griffiths, to represent the Welsh Government's Education Department.

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### **2. Minutes of the previous meeting/matters arising**

- 2.1 The minutes from the last meeting held on 13 May 2015 were accepted as a true record and it was agreed they would be published on the Welsh Government's Financial Inclusion webpages. The Group agreed to CG's proposal to publish the minutes of future meetings as soon as the Group has the opportunity to comment on them, to ensure they will be uploaded onto the Welsh Government's website sooner.
- 2.2 There were no matters arising.

### **3. MAS Financial Capability Strategy for Wales – Update on Progress**

- 3.1 CG invited LP from the Money Advice Service (MAS) to give an update on the progress of evidence gathering and the development of the MAS Financial Capability Strategy for Wales.
- 3.2 LP explained that the MAS had been holding consultation events and stakeholder engagements in Wales as part of the development of the Wales section of the UK Financial Capability Strategy 2015. In Wales so far there had been input from the Independent Advice Providers Forum (including the OPC, Age Cymru, Macmillan, Citizens Advice) North Wales Financial Capability Forum, West Wales Financial Capability Forum and South Wales Financial Capability Forum and the Money Advice Service's own Wales Forum. It had also been seen by Children in Wales and Cardiff Credit Union. Following the Workshop held with Welsh Government Financial Inclusion Development Group on 13<sup>th</sup> May a number of current priorities and also current known activities have been identified.
- 3.3 LP explained that whilst MAS was responsible for drafting it was not their strategy. The UK Financial Capability Strategy is based on collective impact, where there is a common vision for what the sector is trying to achieve, and collaboration to achieve that, building understanding of what works. The development and delivery of the Strategy is therefore based on wide consultation and establishing partnerships across Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland and England. Following consultation at the Wales Forum and with Welsh Government, there is general agreement that there should be one strategy for Wales - the MAS Wales Financial Capability Strategy incorporated as part of the Wales Financial Inclusion Strategy. CG noted FIDG members will have an opportunity to comment on how the Wales Financial Capability Strategy fits within the Welsh Government Financial Inclusion Strategy.
- 3.4 There was discussion around the advisory role of FIDG regarding the MAS Wales Financial Capability Strategy. LP explained that UK Financial Capability Strategy will be guided by an experienced Financial Capability Board. The Board has been formed to develop, maintain & champion the

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Strategy and to use their collective & individual influence to promote the strategy. The Board is made up of key players from the financial services industry, the consumer and third sectors and policy makers. Eleanor Marks will be the Wales representative member of the UK Financial Capability Board. LP said that the intention is to set up a steering group in Wales to identify the actions from the Wales section of the strategy and delivery agents for those actions and monitor the delivery of that work. This group will be jointly chaired by MAS and Welsh Government.

- 3.5 LP informed the Group the draft Wales section of the UK Strategy would be available shortly and offered to circulate it to FIDG members for review before the document is finalised by 1 September. The UK Financial Capability Strategy is expected to be launched in late October 2015.

**Action:** LP draft Wales's strategy paper to be circulated to FIDG members for comment when available.

#### 4. Draft timeframe for refreshing the 2016 Financial Inclusion Strategy

- 4.1 KM provided an overview of the activities required to develop, consult on and publish the Strategy.
- 4.2 KM suggested an eight week consultation period could be agreed, given the inclusion of key stakeholders during the development of the draft Strategy. Concerns were raised that this could hinder the ability of Third sector providers to submit responses / evidence within timeframe if umbrella bodies needed to consult their members. KM noted the views expressed and agreed to review consultation proposals.

**Action:** KM to review consultation plans

#### 5. Developing the 2016 Financial Inclusion Strategy – Feedback from FIDG May meeting.

- 5.1 KM provided feedback from the workshop sessions at the FIDG May meeting and explained how this was being used in the development of the draft Strategy. She invited FIDG members to discuss the emerging key points and identify any gaps in the proposed content for each theme of the Strategy. The input from FIDG members included:
- Agreement that the Strategy consider the groups: Children & Young People, Working Age People and Older People/in Retirement
  - Acknowledgement the Strategy will be universal and applicable to those at differing points on the spectrum from financial exclusion to financial inclusion, with appropriate interventions relating to circumstances

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- Recognise that a preventative strand needs to be considered as a proactive measure
- Need to map / understand existing services to determine appropriate delivery and quality standards
- Linking the Strategy themes to life events e.g. Everyday Living, Planning Ahead and Unplanned Events
- The use of plain English definitions/descriptions to be used avoiding jargon
- Reviewing the evidence already available to see what works

### 6. Feedback & Next Steps

- 6.1 KM informed the Group she was developing a log to record research and publications that were being reviewed by the team developing the Strategy. She offered to circulate the log to FIDG members and invited them to identify any evidence they considered the team should be aware of.

**Action:** KM agreed to circulate the research/publications log and a copy of her presentation to FIDG members and invited them to identify any additional content that should be included in the Strategy as it is developed. It was also agreed to circulate the presentation provided by LP.

- 6.2 KM invited FIDG members to notify her of any events that could be used to publicise the development of the Strategy or as part of the engagement on the Strategy during the consultation period. Suggestions of potential events that could be used for engagement included Landlord forums, Welsh Government Tackling Poverty Advisory Group, Practitioners Group and End Child Poverty Network, and the WCVA e-Networks.

### 7. Any Other Business & Date of Next Meeting

- 7.1 The provisional date for the next meeting is 8 September 2015 in Merthyr Tydfil.

**Jan Morgan**

20 July 2015