

Third Sector Meeting with the  
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children

9 October 2017

Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay

Carl Sargeant	Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children
Amelia John	Welsh Government
Angharad Richards	Welsh Government
Sian Williams	Welsh Government
Anna Nicholl	Wales Council for Voluntary Action
John Hallett	ACE Action in Caerau Ely
Paul Glaze	Council for Wales for Voluntary Youth Services
Ian Davey	Third Sector Support Wales
Sean O'Neill	Children in Wales
Sarah Lloyd Jones	People and Work Unit
Gareth Hughes	Race Equality First
Kate McColgan	Interfaith Council for Wales
Karen Lewis	Wales Co-operative Centre
Peter Williams	Development Trusts Wales

**Item 1 – Welcome**

The Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children thanked everyone for attending.

**Item 2: Resilient and Empowered Communities: a third sector perspective**  
(presentation by third sector)

AN highlighted the importance of the resilient communities agenda to the third sector and shared the methods WCVA has utilised to engage with the sector on the resilient communities agenda. In order to ensure as wide a reach as possible to a diverse group, WCVA has utilised, Blogs, podcasts, events and internet based engagement methodologies.

SLJ proceeded to outline the main conclusions arising from the engagement with the third sector on resilient communities as follows:

- Resilient communities should be focussed on geographical or thematic communities rather than on individuals;
- Achieving resilient communities would require working with a wide range of partners including business, public services, health etc;

- The empowerment aspect of a resilient community would need to be about influencing change but also about the sharing of power;
- Achieving a resilient community is less about what community comes together to do and more about them coming together to work toward a common aim, important to that particular community; and
- Sector would appreciate a clear statement on what an empowered community looks like.

SLJ moved on to outline views on some of the things that can help to achieve a resilient, empowered community.

- Removing competition for funding between local community organisations (particularly anchor organisations) and encouraged shared learning between these organisations;
- Protecting and supporting the places communities gather is important;
- Time is needed to allow communities to become empowered and resilient;
- Revitalising local democracy and important part of achieving a resilient community; and
- Support is sometimes needed to help communities sustain the action and engagement over the longer term.

SLJ also set out what the barriers to achieving a resilient community could be:

- Competitive funding methodologies;
- Micromanaging funding;
- Disempowering Trustees; and
- Important to learn the lessons form previous programmes.

### **Item 3:** Discussion on key points raised in the presentation

CS thanked representatives for the hard work on the conversation around resilient communities. CS indicated he did not agree with all of the findings but wanted to discuss the things which need to be done in order to achieve resilient communities within the very little resource available. CS acknowledged planning for the longer term is a key ingredient for success.

SLJ indicated bringing people together is the start to achieving a resilient community. JH added that bringing people together around an issue which is of importance to that particular community is key. The organisations engaged in this agenda could encourage many within the third sector to contribute to resilient communities but clear communication on what a resilient community looks like would be welcome. CS indicated he would be content to consider how best to communicate the thinking around this particularly if there is a lack of clarity around the fact that there will not be a Communities First 2 programme.

AN indicated that the language is clear but the message hasn't got through everywhere. CS was clear that his intent was to empower communities and

that the Prosperity for All strategy was about changing how we do things to achieve more and not necessarily about funding. CS is interested in hearing views on what levers will work, especially to help public service boards appreciate the need to work with communities to bring about change. PW suggested that sometimes the engineered solutions such as Communities First can disempower communities. PW also added that engagement with communities shouldn't be about replacing cancelled services and that there is a really opportunity at the moment to support communities around asset transfer to provide them with the resources for the longer term.

AJ asked how we move away from relying on a small number in the community to deliver and how do we engage with a wider group of the community. SO suggested starting at schools is a good place to embed a sense of civic duty.

ID added that TSSW could be delivering some of the central support raised throughout the meeting and suggested further meetings with officials to discuss.

**Action:** TSSW to discuss at the next Infrastructure Core Group meeting and then engage with Communities Division officials.

AN summarised the discussion and agreed the final paper developed by the sector would be shared with the Cabinet Secretary. CS suggested continuing to engage with officials and he would take advice on communication.

**Action:** WCVA to share final paper with the Cabinet Secretary.