

Third Sector Partnership Council

Ty Hywel, Cardiff

20th November 2019

Meeting Note

Attendees:

Jane Hutt AM – Deputy Minister and Chief Whip (DMCW)
Ruth Marks – WCVA
Judith Stone – WCVA
Anna Nicholl - WCVA
Carl Cooper – CVC Cymru
Rocio Cifuentes – EYST
Karen Whitfield – Wales Environment Link
Andrew White – Stonewall Cymru
Helen Hayes – independent Advice Providers Forum
Kate Young – Health, social Care and Wellbeing
Bev Hampson – Volunteering Wales Network
Christopher Williams – Age Cymru
Gaynor Jones – Welsh Refugee Council
Adeloa Dewis – BAME Alliance
Claire Sain Ley Berry - WCVA/Cynnal Cymri

Welsh Government Officials attending:

Alyson Francis - Deputy Director Communities Division
Chris Buchan – Head of Communities and Third Sector team
Andrew Charles – Head of Futures
Aaron Fortt – Third Sector Team
Helen Brown – Third Sector Team
Emma May –Third Sector Team
Tanya Nash – Futures Implementation Manager
Lucy Corfield – Head of Decarbonisation

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and Introduction

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip (DMCW) opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and inviting attendees to introduce themselves as they addressed items for discussion.

Agenda Item 2 – Minutes/Action from last TSPC meeting held on 15 May 2019

The minute and actions from the last TSPC meeting held on 15 May 2019 were agreed and have been published on the Welsh Government website.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip drew attention to the TSPC cumulative action log and noted that all actions were either completed or in progress. Ruth Marks expressed a need for the Action Log to be jointly owned and agreed by Welsh Government and TSPC.

Agreed Actions:

- Officials in the Third Sector Unit to ensure that in future the TSPC Action log is co-produced and agreed with TSPC.

Agenda Item 3 – An update on voluntary sector involvement in implementing WBFG Act

Key points raised:

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip commented on the importance of the role the sector has to play and, as part of her Ministerial responsibility for Well-being of Future Generations Act, reiterated her commitment to working in partnership with the third sector, co-designing proposals to establish more effective channels for involvement.

Claire Sain-Ley-Berry outlined research being conducted on behalf of Cynnal Cymru/Sustainable Development Alliance (endorsed by WCVA) to examine the creation of an effective role for the third sector in contributing to the Implementation of the WBFG Act. This work has resulted in a report (to be published shortly) containing a series of recommendations for more effective and productive involvement.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip said that she looks forward to seeing the report and considering the recommendations. She also noted the First Minister's commitment to citizen involvement and co-production, and drew attention to the power and success of the Civil Society forum on Brexit.

Andrew Charles provided an update on work to progress the action taken at the TSPC in May to explore the idea of a civil society forum on the WBFG Act

Andrew noted that the work has identified four different needs that a potential forum and other structures need to seek to address. A potential package of solutions are currently being refined (along with the Third Sector), and will be tested to inform an options paper for the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip in the New Year. The report produced by Cynnal Cymru/ SD Alliance will inform this process.

Rocio Cifuentes commented on the need to ensure BAME communities are involved in the development of this work going forward, and there is some work needed around how these links and connections are best made. The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip agreed and commented that any forum needs to be representative of the diversity of Wales.

Helene Hayes welcomed the approach being taken and commented on the need to involve independent advice services, particularly with respect to the impact data they can provide.

Ruth Marks noted work in progress with the Future Generations Commissioner's office to ensure the sector is well represented in her work. The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip welcomed these developments

Karen Whitfield noted that Involvement mechanisms require investment and support if we are to engage people outside the usual parts of the sector. Claire Sain-Ley-Berry echoed the need for resource to be available to take forward actions with focus on purpose, engagement, being inclusive and having the power to influence.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip closed the agenda item by noting that good progress has been made since May and underlined the importance of going through the process properly in order to ensure we understand what we need and what it does. She also noted that it is critical that this work continued to be co-designed.

Agenda Item 4 – working together to tackle the Climate Emergency – The role of the third sector in creating a collaborative response.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip noted that since the last TSPC meeting in May she has met with the WCVA to discuss the vital role the Third Sector has to play in tackling the climate emergency.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip noted that all Ministers are looking at their portfolios in relation to tackling the climate emergency but conceded that the third sector is not always currently at the forefront of their minds in this respect.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip thanked the sector for its involvement in the Climate Change Conference which she felt was a very valuable event – recognising the need to work collaboratively across the sector and beyond with the public sector and business in order to tackle the emergency.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip stressed the importance of the role and contribution of the sector in the development and delivery of our next All Wales Delivery Plan in 2021.

Anna Nicholl presented a discussion paper concerning how the third sector's role around this vital issue is developed. Anna noted that TSPC recognise that the sector is a key asset in tackling the emergency that needs to be engaged at lots of different levels. TSPC recognises the breadth of the voluntary sector and the need to be involved, working together and exploring practical solutions. Anna noted Welsh Government and third sector need to work collaboratively to achieve more, and there is a desire on the part of the sector to do this as it will be critical to so many agendas such as equalities, migration and refugees and health.

Claire Sain-Ley-Berry noted the difficulties that stop/start funding create in limiting the ability of the sector to help tackle the emergency – explaining the need for continuity and to look back at past initiatives to identify what has worked.

Rocio Cifuentes noted the affect climate change will have on creating more refugees in the world and the potential impact this will have in Wales. In this context Rocio referenced our responsibilities as a 'globally responsible Wales' and the requirement for cross-cutting action across all government departments.

Karen Whitfield noted that Welsh Government has published "Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales" which includes actions for the public sector. She noted that voluntary sector involvement in the design of any future iterations would be beneficial. Karen noted the shared responsibility across Cabinet for the climate emergency but queried if any one Minister had responsibility for ensuring climate change is considered when making decisions around e.g. spend?

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip stated that the whole cabinet is moving to tackle this issue and that the budget is being reviewed from a low carbon perspective; she explained that this is not about how much money is being spent but changing the way existing spend takes place, looking at everything in a different way to make sure our budgetary spend, policy delivery, grant funding, is all viewed from a climate emergency perspective. The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip clarified that Lesley Griffiths AM, Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, is the lead Minister

with responsibility for climate change. The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip agreed that any review of “A Low Carbon Wales” needed to involve the Third Sector.

Lucy Corfield explained that the Welsh Government are at the beginning of the process for the creation of the All Wales Delivery Plan (for 2021). Lucy welcomed the opportunity to start the dialogue with the third sector about their involvement as soon as possible.

Andrew Charles commented on how the Well-being of Future Generations Act is informing the grant assurance process within Welsh Government.

Christopher Williams indicated that there is a lot of potential around areas such as housing and community transport where the sector could help raise awareness and help tackle the climate emergency. He noted that getting diverse perspectives is very important, and there is a specific need for more engagement with older people.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip agreed and suggest the Older People’s forum would be a good vehicle to raise this.

Gaynor Jones noted that the wider third sector is fairly disparate around this agenda and ensuring there is a collective voice will be important.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip brought the agenda item to a close by noting that this is about involving citizens as much as organisations and in that sense the sector will be key, and there’s a real opportunities to break new ground with the sector’s help. The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip noted that it’s now crucial for the sector to be involved in the creation and delivery of the All Wales Delivery.

Agreed Actions:

- Third Sector networks and Welsh Government officials (from the Decarbonisation team and third sector unit) will work collaboratively to develop proposals for how we can work together to tackle the climate emergency – specifically to begin discussions around the involvement of the sector in the development and delivery of the All Wales Delivery Plan (for 2021).

Agenda Item 5 – Draft theory of change for the Third Sector Scheme

Judith Stone gave the council an update on the work to produce a draft Theory of Change for the Third Sector Scheme as part of the Shared Improvement Plan for improving the engagement between Welsh Government and the third sector. The draft theory of change has been produced involving TSPC networks, WCVA and Welsh Government Third Sector Unit.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip welcomed the progress that has been made and was pleased to see a more structured approach being taken to help demonstrate the value and effectiveness of the Third Sector Scheme as well as giving us a better sense of shared purpose. The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip was also please that a positive, co-productive approach has been taken to this work and noted that we should be proud of Third Sector Scheme in Wales but that we need to make sure it works for today.

Carl Cooper re-iterated a point made in previous TSPC meetings that we should be proud of the Third Sector Scheme in Wales. However, it is not mirrored at local level to underpin the sector's value and contribution, and where there are instances of this happening it is based on principles rather than concrete action. Carl asked whether there is something that Welsh Government can do to encourage and influence what we have in the Third Sector Scheme at local level.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip stated that as a result of an action taken at TSPC in May (and at Peter Davies' request) the relationship between the third sector and Local Government is on the agenda of the Local Government Partnership Council in January with the possibility of a future bi-lateral meeting between the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip and the Minister for Local Government and Housing to look at this issue. The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip made a plea for council members to provide examples of where the relationship between the third sector and local government is working well.

Aaron Fortt noted that Building Communities Trust are currently leading a piece of work with the sector that will be collecting examples of where the relationship between the third sector and local government is working well.

Agreed Actions:

- When the Theory of Change work is sufficiently progressed it will be shared publicly (through e.g. a written statement) and with the Cabinet – stressing its value as an example of co-design and its links to the WCFG Act in terms of both outcomes and Ways of Working.
- CVCs to provide examples to the Deputy First Minister of where the relationship between the third sector and local government is working well, including through local compact arrangements.
- Officials in the Third Sector Unit to ensure that the work being undertaken by Building Communities Trust with wider sector is presented to the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip when it is sufficiently progressed.

Agenda Item 6 – AOB and closing remarks

Rocio Cifuentes gave an update on the work of the TSPC's Funding and Compliance sub-committee which has met twice since the last TSPC meeting. The last meeting was on 12 November; action is continuing/planned around dialogue with WLGA and Grants Centre of Excellence around their involvement along with the key role for TSPC to identify systemic issues, trends and good practice and how they are brought to the sub-committee's attention. The sub-committee is also reviewing its Terms of Reference to align with the Theory of Change being developed for the Third Sector Scheme.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip noted the update and stressed that it was important for the Grant Centre of Excellence to be involved in this work.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip thanked members for a well-planned and structured meeting.

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip formally thanked Catriona Williams for her invaluable contribution to TSPC as a representative of the interest of children and Families in Wales, and wished her well on her retirement.

Agreed Action:

- The Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee will begin to bring items to TSPC as appropriate.
- The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip will send an official letter of thanks to Catriona Williams.