**Interim Youth Work Board Meeting**

**Zoom**

**1400-1700**

**Thursday, 7 May 2019**

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|  | **Item** | **Papers** |
| 1400 | Welcome |  |
|  | Minutes and Actions | 1. Minutes 2. Rolling action points |
| 1410 | Welsh Gov update | 1. Welsh Gov update |
| 1445 | Board member updates and discussion topics including: - individual updates - EWC Questionnaire - Youth Information - Discussion of Board’s current role (SL) - Board communication with young people (SL) - Engagement strategy with local authorities (ET) - Communication with SPGs (JS) - Children, Young People and Education Committee: Covid-19 feedback (KT) - Data collection in local authorities (KT) | 1. EWC email 2. Terms of reference for Board |
| **1530** | **Break** |  |
| 1545 | Implications of Minister’s decision |  |
| 1600 | Membership discussion Next steps – timelines and expectations for drafting and publishing of Board reports (Interim and Final) |  |
|  | Next Meeting |  |
| 1650 | AOB |  |

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| **Attendees – Members** | |
| **Name** | **Role** |
| Keith Towler (KT) | Interim Youth Work Board Chair |
| Dusty Kennedy (DK) | Director of TRM Academy |
| Sharon Lovell (SL) | Executive Director for the National Youth Advocacy Service and Vice Chair, Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS) |
| Efa Gruffudd Jones (EGJ) | Chief Executive of the National Centre for Learning Welsh |
| Eleri Thomas (ET) | Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent |
| Simon Stewart (SS) | Dean of Faculty of Social and Life Sciences at Wrexham Glyndwr University |
| Joanne Sims (JS) | Blaenau Gwent Youth Service Manager |
| **Attendees – Welsh Government (WG)** | |
| Donna Lemin (DL) | Senior Youth Work Strategy Manager |
| Michael Maragakis (MM) | Head of Youth Engagement Branch |
| Joel Hodson (JH) | Youth Work Strategy Manager |

**Minutes and actions from last meeting**

* Minutes from the last meeting were agreed by all present

**Welsh Gov update**

* The Board was informed that its final report – due to go out in December – could be delayed in order to give Board members more capacity to support the sector during this period.
* The Board was informed that grant offer letters for the Youth Support Grant have now been sent out.
* Board members noted they were very pleased with the quality of the youth work bulletin that has been published fortnightly by Welsh Government officials and wished to thank officials for their work in putting it together.
* Board members noted how hard people at the meeting had been working to secure the NVYO and Youth Support Grants. Members felt Keith Towler and Government officials deserve a lot of credit for securing financial support for youth work during this challenging period.
* The mapping exercise – due to go to tender soon – was briefly discussed with Board members expressing a desire for the contractor to view new reports coming out at the moment as part of their literature review.

**Update from Board members and discussion topics, including membership discussion**

* Joanne Sims informed the Board that the Blaenau Gwent authority has spent time linking themselves to several different initiatives helping to develop an online digital service for young people. Staff at the authority continue to offer practical help for young people and youth services and there is a fairly similar picture across Wales.
* Sharon Lovell raised the issue of the different interpretations of the Coronavirus Act in Wales compared with England. Safeguarding referrals have trebled across Wales which can likely be attributed to the increased time young people are spending in their homes at the moment. This underlines the importance of youth services during this challenging period.
* Eleri Thomas noted the Police and Crime Commission has moved all functions to home working for the time being. They have benefited from positive engagement with voluntary organisations during this time.
* Simon Stewart raised the point that a digitised youth service is the kind of strategic leadership the Board can get involved in. He also mentioned the creation of the Confident Learner course by his organisation that will help young people transitioning between school and college or college and university.
* In terms of youth information, Government officials noted they have been pushing the Comms team within Government to take a more young person-centred approach to their communications.
* Sharon Lovell said that youth workers are looking to the Board for leadership at this point, especially given the absence of a national youth work agency. Michael Maragakis also mentioned that the bulletin is showing the benefits of the sector.
* Joanne Sims said there are members of the Workforce Development Strategy Participation Group who are worrying about if they should keep working on strategic issues. Board members agreed it is worth considering how to strengthen the message being sent out to working groups.
* Dusty Kennedy mentioned that a young person is still attending Digital Group meetings and said there is no reason the Board cannot accommodate one at this time too.
* Eleri Thomas raised the issue of the importance of engaging with senior people in local authorities. Focusing solely on the Principal Youth Officers is not sufficient but the Board must seek support from various people in senior positions within the authorities.
* Keith Towler raised some issues from an email he had received recently from an SPG member frustrated about data collection in Wales. The Young People are Thriving Strategy Participation Group had previously agreed this is an issue that needs exploring and the Board agreed that there should be more of a focus on measuring outcomes and impact of the work in the sector.

**Implications of Minister’s decision**

* The Board was in agreement that the final report is a good opportunity to influence party manifestoes and enhance the reputation of youth work in political settings.