



Third Sector Finance Planning Meeting

11 November 2019, 10am-12pm, WCVA Cardiff

Attendees

- Anna Nicholl, WCVA
- Ruth Marks, WCVA
- David Cook, WCVA
- Anne Meikle, WWF Cymru
- Gethin Rhys, Interfaith Council for Wales
- Helene Hayes, Citizens Advice Cymru
- Paul McDonagh, Welsh Government
- Sandra Stephenson, Welsh Government

Anna noted the meeting held between herself, Dave, Paul and Sandra about updating the Action Plan.

The group discussed the Action Plan crosscutting themes that should be included in the Plan. Group thinks these should be poverty, biodiversity, diversity and climate change.

Civil servants will be drafting a paper for the Minister on the role and remit of the Tax Advisory Group. Officials will later discuss with WCVA how the TAG and WCVA can work more closely together.

The Action Plan will be redesigned to present crosscutting themes at the top level, with activities – including with the Budget, taxation, EU and procurement - cross-referenced beneath these themes.

Paul noted there will be a consultation on the budgeting process. He will put Matt Wellington in contact with Anna. Together, they can work on an item to bring to the TSPC meeting with Jane Hutt.

Anna suggested Welsh Government and the sector work together to establish a forum for organisations to work on an Open Government Action Plan. Paul said the lead division on this would be Digital Services, but the day to day work may fall within the remit of the Finance Minister.

Conversation about participatory budgeting and its role within Open Government. Welsh Government are committed to doing more work in this area. Gethin noted that participatory budgeting is a way of hearing more citizen voices. If the UK Shared Prosperity Fund is to be administered by Welsh Government in Wales, participatory budgeting should be part of the agenda with the Finance Minister. Welsh Government are committed to four pilots on participatory budgeting. Helene will update the Minister on what Citizen's Advice are seeing on the ground. They see similar issues on Brexit as Universal Credit.

Paul and Sandra leave at this point.

Anne noted issues around Welsh Government asking the sector to spend capital funding with only a few weeks' notice until the end of the financial year. She doesn't think this happens in other sectors. The group will find examples of this to report back.

The group noted that the sector represents just 1.9% of the Welsh Government budget each year. Gethin said that there is no reason that this 1.9% can't be committed to every year. Helene said there is a disproportionate amount of monitoring for such a small amount of funding. Anna noted that the Compact says the sector is not supposed to be treated differently to other Welsh Government partners, and are the monitoring evaluation criteria the same for us as other sectors?

Helen asked if this is a disproportionate amount of monitoring for such a small amount of funding? Anne noted that, going back to compact, the sector is not supposed to be treated differently to any other government partner. Are the monitoring and evaluation criteria the same as other sectors?

On poverty, Gethin noted there would soon be some Bevan Foundation research published, but this has already been partly published to the Assembly Committee looking at welfare reform. Is this area relevant to the Minister?

Actions:

- *Helen to prepare latest Citizens Advice data ahead of Ministerial Meeting.*
- *Anna to email Simon Griffiths at Welsh Government for update on pilots on grants and procurement.*
- *Dave to ask Paul/Sandra if they can explain the need for capital funding to be spent in-year.*
- *Anna to continue to follow-up on strategic statement on how Welsh Government should do engagement with the third sector – re: openness, transparency, being treated as equal partners with other sectors*
- *Dave to enquire how Ministers communicate on crosscutting themes*

- *Anna to contact Matt Wellington and Simon Griffiths re commissioning and procurement.*

Agenda for the meeting with the Minister on Thursday 13 February, 2pm-4pm.

1. Draft budget
 - a. Budget improvement group – third sector involvement
 - b. Impact assessments
 - c. Transparency of budget
2. Cross cutting themes in budget:
 - a. Tackling poverty better through Welsh Government budget (consider Bevan Foundation report & Citizens Advice data)
 - b. Carbon and biodiversity; climate and nature emergency – how is this being delivered through the budget?
3. Short term funding streams
 - a. One-year budgets (examples of multi-year budgets; examples of where being told one -year only; why one-year budgets are so much more problematic. Capital funds having to be spent within a few months.)
 - b. short term spend on capital streams (eg. food banks)
 - c. We only have 1.9% of Welsh Government money per year – a lot to organisations, but not to Welsh Government. It is a small amount of overall budget that they should be able to commit on multi-year budget. (indicative budgets)
4. Brexit update
 - a. update on UK Shared Prosperity Fund