

Lesley Griffiths MS

Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

Meeting with the Third (Voluntary) Sector Network

7 October

10:00 – 11:00

Notes

Third Sector

David Cook	WCVA
Anna Nicholls	WCVA
Rachel Sharp	Wildlife Trusts Wales
Karen Balmer	Groundwork North Wales
Kevin Rahman Daultrey	Size of Wales
Katy Stevenson	Groundwork
Sarah Evans	Wales Co-operative Centre
Gary Mitchell	Social Farms & Gardens
Cat Miller	WCVA
Mari Tudur	Grwp Cynefin
Gethin Rhys	Interfaith Council for Wales

Welsh Government

Lesley Griffiths MS	Minister for Environment Energy and Rural Affairs
David Warren	Head of Circular Economy Policy Development
Marcus Hill	Head of Programme Management and Delivery
Hugh Morgan	Head of Rural Payments Division
Jo Stevens	Head of Environmental Governance.
Ben Jones	Senior Frameworks Manager
Patrick Isaac	Economy Skills and Natural Resources

Agenda item 1 – Covid-19: Calls for a Green Recovery

The Minister informed the group that her officials are continuing to work across Government to look at opportunities to implement a green recovery and influence a variety of policy and delivery areas such as housing, transport, infrastructure, regeneration and the economy.

Further points were raised:

- For the recovery it's important that we look to lock-in some of the positive changes we've seen – the ability to work from home, the increase in shopping locally, the decrease in traffic, the boost to nature, the reduction in emissions, the increasing awareness of how important resources are.
- Economic renewal and recovery will also need to be accompanied by investment in the regional infrastructure needed for a circular, low carbon economy.
- The Minister highlighted the recently-published Clear Air Plan.
- Which offers the ability to unlock the potential Wales has to compete for greater economic added value.
- Examples such as repair cafes and economic infrastructure such as refill and repair shops and using untapped empty space for community hubs and innovators can complement environmental initiatives such as active travel and improved air quality for a new vision for our towns.

Agenda item 2 – Funding Issues in the Environmental Sector

The Minister opened up the discussion recognising that many of the issues raised by the Sector had been addressed and officials had worked with the sector to resolve or explain any issues:

In addition

- The group discussed funding issues in the environment sector and the need for longer term funding and ideas around blending financing with corporate investment.
- A short discussion followed regarding the Third Sector experiences with Rural Payments Wales and WEFO around delays in resolving issues which impacted on delivery.
- It was mentioned the online system lacked clarity and caused delays in resolving issues impacting on the delivery.
- Rachel Sharp referenced the claim/ payment issues for RPW identified by the Sector and made it clear that these were frequently experienced.

Actions

- The Minister agreed to hold an off-line discussion with Hugh Morgan about the RPW issues raised by the group and future funding discussions. **Hugh Morgan Rural Payments Wales**
- Following that she would write back to those present about moving forward. **Hugh Morgan Rural Payments Wales**
- The Minister agreed to write to the Third Sector about the Deputy Minister's Third sector Covid 19 –response funding group work. **Patrick Isaac – Business Unit.**

Agenda Item 3 – Environmental Principles and Governance

The Minister gave the group a brief update on environmental governance:

- Officials have been working closely with the Environmental Governance Stakeholder Task Group to identify an approach to environmental principles and governance in Wales which complements our existing legislation.
- The First Minister announced the legislative programme for the remainder of this legislative term on 15 July.
- Unfortunately, the legislation on environmental principles and governance cannot be brought forward this term, but the First Minister reiterated his commitment to do so.
- Work is ongoing to develop and prepare interim measures for receiving complaints about environmental governance in Wales. These will take effect by the end of the transition period for leaving the EU on 31 December.
- Development of the complaints form and content for the website is well progressed.
- Wales Environment Link have a governance group and will be writing to the Counsel General and Presiding Officer

Any Other Business

- Third Sector asked to be informed of Welsh Government officials attending ahead of future meetings.
- Ensure minutes/notes are sent to those who have attended the meeting.