

## Meeting Note

### Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), 17 November 2021

The following provides a summary of discussions held at the meeting between the Deputy Minister for Climate Change and the WCVA on 17 November:

- The Deputy Minister outlined his reflections from COP26. Participants at the meeting welcomed Wales' increased levels of Ministerial and 'Team Wales' visibility at this year's COP compared to previous years, as well as the proactive use of social media and press engagement activity.
- The following thoughts were shared around how the voluntary sector and Welsh Government can work together to tackle climate change:
  - More conversations and dialogue needed between Welsh Government and the third sector. Whilst they welcomed COP Cymru, there was a call for more physical events and direct engagement at a local community level.
  - Recommended that further consideration is given towards what can be done at a practical level to deliver the Net Zero plan – whilst acknowledging that a positive mindset, clear vision and just transition will all be key.
  - Called for a more formalised and structured approach to engagement between Welsh Government and the third sector and suggested a new Community Empowerment Act to ensure the rights of communities are prioritised. The Deputy Minister proposed that the third sector might consider alternatives to passing new laws, and that there are sometimes other ways of achieving a stronger voice for the sector such as through Remit Letters.
  - Agreed on the importance of working together to turn commitments in the Net Zero Wales plan into action, such as making sure Wales' supply chains are fair, ethical and sustainable.
  - Acknowledged a number of key challenges in working together to reach net zero such as converting the unconverted, the scale of the task ahead, the need for pace and limited resources and budgets to deliver.
  - Discussed the avoidance of silo decision-making, including how different policies must work together in practice (e.g. housing policy, the need for green space to deliver sustainable communities and places, ensuring sites are designed in the right way, and leveraging planning and land reform). The Deputy Minister referred to examples of best practice such as the ambitious agenda already in place around use of public land.
- Key actions from the meeting included:
  - Ensuring that the WCVA has the opportunity to feed into the new Stakeholder Engagement Plan for Net Zero Wales to be published in Spring 2022, enabling representative groups within this sector to input into shaping Welsh Government policy on climate change. (Officials will follow up).

- The Deputy Minister invited organisations in this sector to take the lead on projects and programmes that will support the path towards net zero – suggesting that participants at the meeting might prefer to email him directly with proposals and ideas as this can sometimes be a more effective method for driving progress than meetings. The Deputy Minister agreed to provide his direct email address.