

Finance and Local Government Planning Group meeting

Friday 4 February 2022, 1.45pm-3.30pm

Notes

Attendees

- Ben Lloyd, WCVA
- Ruth Marks, WCVA
- Anna Nicholl, WCVA
- David Cook, WCVA
- Phil Fiander, Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee
- Gethin Rhys, Cytun
- Helene Hayes, Citizens Advice Cymru
- Victoria Lloyd, Age Cymru
- Andrea Cleaver, Welsh Refugee Council
- Roxanne Treacy, Coproduction Network for Wales
- Catrin James, CWVYS
- Paul McDonagh, Welsh Government
- Annie Smith, RSPB Cymru
- Iwan Thomas, PLANED
- Rob Simkins, Shelter Cymru
- Janine Downing, Welsh Government
- Chris Johnes, Building Communities Trust

Minutes from most recent Ministerial Meeting

Action regarding examples of local government and voluntary sector working well together is in progress.

Actions:

- *Drop Rocio a line re action around coproduction in relation to Equalities and Integration information being sent to officials.*
- *Annie to send briefing document re climate change and budget transparency to Dave to share with group.*
- *Janine and WCVA to continue discussions re webinar/other events on Welsh Government budgeting processes.*
- *WCVA to link with Chris Johnes to ensure examples of engagement between community and voluntary sector are being sent to Paul.*
- *Minister due to discuss voluntary sector relationships with local government with WLGA – Paul to check if this has been actioned.*

Engagement around the budget

Janine outlined draft budgeting timeline, and that 23 March is a UK Government Fiscal Event. Highlights Budget Impact Improvement Advisory Group, which replaces Budget Advisory Group on Equalities.

Annie highlighted the need for accessible and understandable budget info relating to climate change.

Discussion held around which Minister is responsible for social homes. Janine said it was the Minister for Climate Change.

Group noted that the Climate Change group has only met so far with the Deputy Minister for Climate Change, which makes it more difficult to discuss housing issues with Welsh Government. Ben suggested organisations could use other public affairs mechanisms than the TSPC for this.

Cost of living crisis was noted as important for the sector and TSPC going forward.

Actions

- *Budget planning for 23/24 to be on agenda at next Ministerial Meeting.*
- *Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee update to be shared with group after next Committee meeting.*

Local Government

The COVID recovery report has been raised with WLGA and was an item at the Partnership Council meeting. This meeting agreed there should be a workstream looking at how relationships between local government and the voluntary sector can be improved long-term.

Anna said work has been commissioned to look at how community-led organisations create change.

Annie raised potential impacts of the Levelling Up White Paper. Ben noted this subject crosses Finance and Economy portfolios.

A discussion around the Shared Prosperity Fund. Some group members felt it disjointed between local and regional levels. Gethin noted links between Corporate Joint Committees and how they might bid into the SPF.

Actions

- *WCVA to put together paper on regional relationships to share with group/officials.*
- *Phil to write a blog about the impacts of the work of the Sub Committee by summer 2022.*
- *Next planning meeting to look at further items for subsequent meetings with the Minister*

Summary of agenda points for next meeting:

1. Welsh Government budget process for 2024-25

This item will give an overview of the budget process and opportunities to engage. Officials and WCVA will take forward actions/ look for opportunities to support better engagement outside of the meeting. This is opportunity to highlight the WG Budget Improvement Advisory Group.

The item will also give an opportunity for government and the sector to raise any key points following the UK Government budget announcements due 23 March.

2. Funding and compliance TSPC sub-committee update

This is now a standard item on the agenda for these meetings. Potential update on next step priorities and delivering WG's commitment to 'longer term' funding agreements with the sector.

3. Relationships between the voluntary sector and public bodies

This item will focus on structures for engagement between the voluntary sector and regional structures. Decisions around policy, delivery and spend are increasingly made at the regional level. Structures to support relationships with and involvement of the voluntary sector can be weak or absent in these new structures. Voluntary organisations are struggling to co-ordinate engagement with this additional tier, whilst maintaining local engagement. A paper will set out the key issues, opportunities and challenges for us to consider collectively.

The item will also allow for any update on the 'relationships' work stream under TSPC and along with findings from recent programmes that can help us strengthen these relationships.