



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru  
The National Assembly for Wales**

**Y Pwyllgor Cymunedau a Diwylliant  
The Communities and Culture Committee**

**Dydd Mercher, 26 Medi 2007**

**Wednesday, 26 September 2007**

**Cynnwys**  
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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,  
cynhwysir cyfieithiad Saesneg o gyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.  
In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches is included.

**Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol**  
**Committee members in attendance**

Peter Black	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Paul Davies	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Nerys Evans	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Janice Gregory	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)
Lesley Griffiths	Llafur Labour
Mark Isherwood	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
David Lloyd	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Joyce Watson	Llafur Labour

**Swyddogion Comiswn y Cynulliad yn bresennol**  
**Assembly Commission officials in attendance**

Sarah Bartlett	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Neil Cox	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil yr Aelodau Members' Research Service
Gwyn Griffiths	Cynghorydd Cyfreithiol Legal Adviser
Chris Reading	Clerc Clerk

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.29 a.m.*  
*The meeting began at 9.29 a.m.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau, Dirprwyon a Datgan Buddiannau**  
**Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**

[1] **Janice Gregory:** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Communities and Culture Committee. This is our first proper meeting, and I welcome you all. I also welcome those in the public gallery; thank you for taking the time to come to the committee this morning. Before we start, I will run through some issues with regard to the headsets. As you know, the National Assembly for Wales operates through the medium of both Welsh and English. If you require simultaneous translation, please turn your equipment to channel 1; if you require amplification, that is channel 0. If anyone has any problems with the equipment, please indicate and the ushers will help. If anyone has a mobile phone, pager, BlackBerry or anything that is electronic, please switch it off, because it interferes with our sensitive sound equipment—

[2] **Peter Black:** Sensitive but robust.

[3] **Janice Gregory:** It always works too, of course. There is no fire drill today, so if the alarm sounds, we will be required to exit the building in a proper and orderly fashion. As I

always say, just follow the top table, because I am sure that we will be out first. *[Laughter.]* We will be escorted to the nearest safe exit and assembly point.

[4] I have not received any apologies, and therefore there are no substitutions. Dai Lloyd, who also sits on the Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee, will be in and out of committee today. That is not an apology, just a practicality for Dai.

9.30 a.m.

### **Ymchwiliad i Ariannu Sefydliadau Gwirfoddol yng Nghymru Inquiry into the Funding of Voluntary Organisations in Wales**

[5] **Janice Gregory:** I thank everyone for taking the time to read the papers that were so ably prepared by our secretariat. You will recall that in our informal meeting in July, we had a lengthy discussion as to how we wanted to take this particular item forward. You will have read in the papers that were prepared by the clerk and his team the reasons why the local authority housing strategies are not a priority for us to discuss. Everyone has agreed with that; no-one has come back with any contrary views. Therefore, during recess, Chris sent you information on how we would focus on specific types of voluntary organisations.

[6] The best thing to do now, if you want to, is to look at the responses, which are in the last paragraph of page 1 of the paper, and then discuss your opinions or wishes about which voluntary organisations we should review with regard to funding. To help you out, there are various categories: advice on advocacy, children and families, community, health and social care, sport and recreation, and youth. There is a wide range there, but we need to try to focus in and pick something from that list. Is everyone following thus far?

[7] **Mark Isherwood:** The issues that we are looking at are fairly generic to the sector, across all types of community organisations. Should we not be looking at the issues affecting them all rather than at one area, which may not cover all the issues?

[8] **Janice Gregory:** We need to have an effective inquiry. I am quite relaxed about this, as Chair, and I am happy for Members to have their say on this. I totally accept what you are saying, but we do not want to miss the boat. Do we need to focus in, or do you want to be more generic?

[9] **Nerys Evans:** I agree with Mark on that point. I am sorry that I was not here earlier, and I missed the previous meeting, as I was not on the committee, so I am not sure if the debate has already happened. However, if this is about looking at the strategic approach of the Welsh Assembly Government in terms of funding, if we focus too narrowly, I agree with Mark that maybe we will miss the boat on some issues.

[10] **Joyce Watson:** The remit is to look at the funding, and if we start looking at why various organisations receive funding, I do not know where it will end, because it will be so wide. If we look first at what organisations get funding, how they do so and how it is sustained—because the big issue for all voluntary organisations is sustainability in funding—then we could go on and do the next bit of work. However, we need to be focused at the start, otherwise we could lose track of it.

[11] **Janice Gregory:** The issue for us, in terms of organising the evidence that we will gather, is deciding which groups we choose to invite in. However, even if we took a generic approach, we could invite certain organisations and cover a whole range. I am happy with that. Is everyone happy that we will do it on a fairly wide basis? Do not come back to me to complain later that we have not been able to focus in properly, mind, because this is all on

tape.

[12] **Peter Black:** I am just looking again at the terms of reference. It is quite clear that we are looking at the policy for funding voluntary organisations and directions from the Assembly Government and the issues that arise from that. So, I think that it is fair that we take evidence from a cross-section of organisations from the whole range. Obviously, we do not want to bring too many in; we want to get a sample from each area.

[13] **Janice Gregory:** We need to be very focused.

[14] **Peter Black:** We need to focus on the terms of reference rather than on the organisations.

[15] **Janice Gregory:** That is fine. So, is everyone happy with that? I see that you are. Thank you for being so brief. No-one has said that they are unhappy with the terms of reference. I assume that everyone is happy, if they do not tell me otherwise; I should perhaps have mentioned that. If you do not say anything, then I assume that you are happy with that.

[16] I should have asked earlier whether there are any declarations of interest—you can tell that we have had a recess. I see that there are none.

9.36 a.m.

### **Blaenraglen Waith Forward Work Programme**

[17] **Janice Gregory:** Having made the decision on the inquiry into the funding of voluntary organisations, does anyone have any comments on the forward work programme? I remind Members that we decided in the informal meeting in July that we would meet on a fortnightly basis, but that we would be mindful of the amount of work that this committee had to do. I spoke to several Members yesterday—thank you all for your opinions. What I have in mind—and you are more than welcome to disagree with me—is that we will continue with the fortnightly meetings and perhaps review the situation after the Christmas recess. Peter's idea—I give him credit for this—is that we would hold scrutiny meetings outside the fortnightly meetings. So, the fortnightly meetings would continue in terms of hearing evidence, and then any scrutiny meetings would be in addition to those. Is everyone happy with that? We will review the situation after Christmas.

[18] **Peter Black:** The only caveat that I have is that Members should be given a fair bit of notice of when those scrutiny meetings will be held so that we can put them in our diaries. We would be grateful if you could plan those and let us know as soon as possible.

[19] **Janice Gregory:** Absolutely; that goes without saying. I am very mindful of Members' diaries. We would give the maximum amount of notice that we are able to give. To be fair, we would need to do that for the Ministers as well. So, as soon as we get an okay from the Minister, you would know immediately that there would be a scrutiny meeting. Is there anything else, Chris?

[20] **Mr Reading:** With regard to that, we have provisionally booked the Deputy Minister for Housing for 7 November.

[21] **Janice Gregory:** Oh, yes. The Deputy Minister for Housing, Jocelyn Davies, has indicated that she is available on 7 November to be scrutinised on her portfolio. As Mark will recall, housing was a very important issue for the former Social Justice and Regeneration Committee. I ask everyone to write that in their diaries.

[22] You will all have received the briefing, the scoping papers and the legacy report. No-one has come back to me on those. Everything in this committee will be distributed to Members. Nothing will be kept back. As soon as I read something as Chair and sign it off, the secretariat will send it out to Members. If you have any issues or ideas, or you just want to raise something, please tell me, because I am more than happy to include items on the agenda. I hope that Mark will agree that I was always happy to do that when I chaired the Social Justice and Regeneration Committee. The committee worked extremely well, and I am sure that other Chairs do that too, Peter.

9.40 a.m.

[23] **Peter Black:** I was also on that committee.

[24] **Janice Gregory:** Of course. I forget Peter. Bless him; he is on so many committees. [*Laughter.*] If Members have anything that they would like to raise, please do so, but I would be most grateful if you could copy me in on the email to the clerk. Having done all that, I think that we have finished today's business.

[25] **Peter Black:** I just wish to put on record my thanks to the researchers for the excellent briefing paper.

[26] **Janice Gregory:** I am sure that we all echo that. Neil, thank you very much. We look forward to many more of them, so keep your pencil sharpened. Those who sit or have sat on the Audit Committee will know that we have pre-meetings at which we discuss the questions that we are going to ask to enable a more organised meeting. Would Members like to do that? It is a question of being focused. When people are giving up their time to give evidence to us we need to make the most of the opportunity.

[27] **Peter Black:** Are we talking about a meeting at, say, 9 a.m., before the formal meeting or a separate meeting?

[28] **Janice Gregory:** I would prefer to meet a day before.

[29] **Peter Black:** That is okay.

[30] **Janice Gregory:** We will need to look at the Plenary timetable and so on. Perhaps Chris and I should have a word about it and then circulate something to Members for feedback. Are Members happy with that? I see that they are. I am mindful that people schedule meetings before the committees at 9.30 a.m., but if you leave it to us we will organise it. I thank everyone for their attendance.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 9.42 a.m.  
The meeting ended at 9.42 a.m.*