



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

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

**Dydd Mercher, 16 Ebrill 2008
Wednesday, 16 April 2008**

Cynnwys
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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi 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
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
Lynne Neagle	Llafur Labour

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Kim Brook	Cadeirydd, Y Sefydliad Cymunedol yng Nghymru Chair, The Community Foundation in Wales
Jocelyn Davies	Aelod Cynulliad, Plaid Cymru (Y Dirprwy Weinidog dros Dai) Assembly Member, The Party of Wales (The Deputy Minister for Housing)
Brian Gibbons	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Y Gweinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a Llywodraeth Leol) Assembly Member, Labour (The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government)
Peter Jones	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr, Yr Is-adran Diogelwch Cymunedol Deputy Director, Community Safety Division
Liza Kellett	Prif Weithredwr, Y Sefydliad Cymunedol yng Nghymru Chief Executive, The Community Foundation in Wales
Anna Slatter	Arweinydd Polisi, Afiechydon Difrifol Policy Lead, Major Health Conditions
Gwenda Thomas	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Y Dirprwy Weinidog dros Wasanaethau Cymdeithasol) Assembly Member, Labour (The Deputy Minister for Social Services)
Paul Webb	Pennaeth yr Uned Strategaeth a Gwasanaethau Tai Head, Housing Strategy and Services Unit

Swyddogion Gwasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad yn bresennol
Assembly Parliamentary Service officials in attendance

Sarah Bartlett	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Chris Reading	Clerc Clerk

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.00 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.00 a.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Janice Gregory:** Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the National Assembly for Wales and to the Communities and Culture Committee.

[2] I have the usual housekeeping issues that we have to mention at the start of every committee meeting. Headsets are available for simultaneous translation from Welsh to English on channel 1, and the amplification of sound is on channel 0. I ask you to ensure that all electronic devices—mobile telephones, BlackBerrys, pagers and anything else that you may have on your person—are switched off, as they interfere with the sensitive recording equipment.

[3] There is no fire drill scheduled for this morning, I understand, so, if the alarm sounds, we will be required to leave the building in an orderly fashion. Please, therefore, be guided by our ushers who will ensure that we exit safely.

[4] I have received an apology this morning from Joyce Watson. You may be aware that Joyce has had a family bereavement recently—her father sadly passed away. I am sure that members of the committee would like me to pass on the condolences of the committee to Joyce.

[5] Nerys Evans is also away today; she is in Brussels on Assembly business.

[6] I am sure that the other members of the committee who are absent will be here later.

9.02 a.m.

Ymchwiliad i Gam-Drin Domestig—Tystiolaeth gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru Inquiry into Domestic Abuse—Evidence from the Welsh Assembly Government

[7] **Janice Gregory:** I am delighted to welcome Dr Brian Gibbons, the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government, Gwenda Thomas, the Deputy Minister for Social Services, Jocelyn Davies, the Deputy Minister for Housing, and the officials, Peter Jones, Anna Slatter and Paul Webb. Thank you all for coming this morning. Your evidence today will form an important part of this inquiry, and this is the first meeting of this inquiry into domestic abuse.

[8] I do not know whether anyone wants to start by introducing the paper. I would like to thank you for the information that you have supplied to committee, which has been distributed. We will follow the usual format whereby Members will ask you questions, and we will then be guided by the answers that you give. This is a nice committee, as I am sure that you all know; we are all very nice people. We are serious about looking into this serious issue. If no-one wants to start with a presentation, I am happy to go straight into questions, if that is what you prefer. I see that it is. The first question is from Peter Black.

[9] **Peter Black:** I have been given a really difficult question to ask you first of all: in what areas has the Assembly Government's domestic abuse strategy been most effective?

[10] **The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Brian Gibbons):** The big achievement is that we have a strategy that is working across a number of portfolios, and is putting in place a resilient framework to respond to domestic abuse in Wales. Another key achievement has been clearly stating that domestic abuse is an issue of public policy.

Domestic abuse is not acceptable and the Assembly Government regards it as a social evil that needs to be addressed. The strategy has achieved that in terms of the number of women coming forward, the increase in conviction rates, and so forth. The last point that I would like to make on this is that this is one of the areas where the interface between us and the UK Government is quite considerable. Through working with the Home Office unit in our Assembly Government buildings in Merthyr Tydfil, I think that we have built up a good working relationship. What we are seeing emerge in Wales in terms what we are trying to do, as an Assembly Government, is very much of a complementary nature to what the Home Office, particularly, but also the Ministry of Justice, is trying to do in this area.

[11] **Peter Black:** Would you like to identify any weaknesses?

[12] **Brian Gibbons:** This is work in progress because, five years ago, the extent of the strategy and our response was, in relative terms, quite weak. So, I think that several areas of development are still very much in evolution, rather than having got to the end of the road. I suppose that, in a number of areas, it would be legitimate to ask, ‘Why are you not doing more of X, Y and Z?’ I think that the answer to that is that it is very much an emerging strategy and we are working to fill in the gaps that exist at the moment. However, we also need to recognise and acknowledge the progress that has been made.

[13] **The Deputy Minister for Housing (Jocelyn Davies):** I will just add something in answer to Peter’s second question. I think that where there are male victims, it is not nearly as well developed and I think that we definitely need to look at that.

[14] **Janice Gregory:** Thank you. We will now move on to question 2, which is from Paul.

[15] **Paul Davies:** The paper and the information that you have provided describe the role of the all-Wales domestic abuse working group and the all-Wales network of domestic abuse co-ordinators in delivering the strategy. To what extent do the membership of the all-Wales domestic abuse working group and the all-Wales network of domestic abuse co-ordinators reflect the diversity of people affected by domestic abuse in Wales?

[16] **Brian Gibbons:** The working group has a membership of about 30 people, I think. It is a very big group, representing all the main Welsh Assembly Government players, but also a large number of external organisations. For example, it includes Shahien Taj from the Henna Foundation, which works on areas such as honour violence, genital mutilation and forced marriage. It includes the Black Association of Women Step Out, the Cardiff Women’s Safety Unit, Cymdeithas Tai Hafan from the social housing sector, the Legal Services Commission, the NHS, Gwent Police, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Wales Trades Union Congress, Victim Support Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association, the All Wales Ethnic Minority Association, the Crown Prosecution Service and so on. Those are just a few, but I think that that gives you a flavour of the range of organisations that are represented. It also includes the youth offending teams and a wide range of Assembly Government organisations as well.

[17] **Paul Davies:** Are you satisfied therefore that all people affected by domestic abuse in Wales are represented by those groups?

[18] **Brian Gibbons:** Yes, because I think that a number of the individuals represented also have personal stories to tell. Although they are there representing their organisations, I think that they have often come to this issue through personal experience. I think that maybe that is fortunate—obviously it is not fortunate for them as individuals—but in terms of representation, it is fortunate. If the make-up were to change, maybe you could say that there would be a case for more people who have been directly and personally involved to be

represented on the group, but I think that the background and personal experience of the current membership of the group gives us that expertise, personal experience and diversity.

[19] **The Deputy Minister for Social Services (Gwenda Thomas):** I just want to say that identifying the most vulnerable is still quite a difficult issue.

[20] **Janice Gregory:** Yes, the difficulty of identifying the groups is a very important point.

[21] **Jocelyn Davies:** Chair, I would like to add something. I suppose that this is about engaging with service users. We are now developing our new Supporting People strategy and we are in the pre-consultation phase at the moment. We will have a questionnaire for service users and we are trying to work out how we can formally consult them. Currently, of course, that will be done via the providers.

9.10 a.m.

[22] **Lesley Griffiths:** A report by Welsh Women's Aid last year estimated that children occupy nearly half of refuge spaces. What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to ensure that the needs of these children, in terms of access to dentists or general practitioners, for example, are met?

[23] **Brian Gibbons:** Gwenda might want to deal with the NHS aspect.

[24] **Gwenda Thomas:** There is also the social care aspect. It is important to make the point that children in refuges are no different to other children who are under threat of harm or in need of protection. The various Acts cover all children in need. It is known that domestic abuse frequently involves households where there are children and young people, and it is often appropriate for such children to be regarded as children in need. Children in a domestic abuse situation are now recognised as children in need of protection, and child protection issues have come to the fore. Therefore, all of the actions that we can take in regard to protecting children should also click in for children in refuges. The principal consideration of all statutory agencies should be that everything is in the best interests of the child.

[25] **Jocelyn Davies:** The Supporting People funding has a direct-access tariff for refuges and attached to that is funding for intensive services and an additional children's allowance. That is important. Our function is to do with housing-related needs, but there is this additional children's allowance that acknowledges the wide range of needs and support. I have just been passed a note by my official, who could say this for himself, I suppose. A requirement of that tariff is an individual support plan for children. I point you to paragraph 69 in the paper. Traditionally, refuges have been used and they are vital, but we are looking at other forms of support whereby victims could perhaps stay in their home and that environment is made secure so that the children go to the same school, have the same GP and still have their social network. That is in the early stages and we would need to evaluate the outcomes but, where it is appropriate—and it will not be appropriate in every case, obviously—the children's needs might be better met.

[26] **Brian Gibbons:** One of the big developments in the last 12 months has been the appointment to the refuges of children's outreach workers, with an overall national co-ordinator in Wales. It has been raised several times in committee and in the Chamber that, in the past, it seemed to be a series of ad-hoc arrangements but, with the appointment of these outreach workers, continuity and consistency is being put in place. In addition, there is at least one specialist worker working with black and ethnic communities, with the Black Association of Women Step Out. There is additional support in the three refuges that look after the interests of black and ethnic minority women.

[27] I do not know whether the committee will look at this, but an area in which we are trying to develop policy is that of forced marriages and female genital mutilation, which we regard as being part of this wider agenda. I do not know whether you want to return to this later on. This is a new area of work for us, and we are beginning to get to grips with it.

[28] **Janice Gregory:** We are going to explore those two points a little later on, so we will hold our fire for the moment and explore those points then.

[29] **Gwenda Thomas:** Brian's point about the outreach workers is clearly very important, and there are clear referral procedures. Those have developed well. Where things develop further for those children, and where the court service is involved, it is right to mention the role of Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service Cymru in domestic abuse cases. CAFCASS Cymru has the primary responsibility to safeguard and promote the best interests of children. It has developed effective initiatives, such as the domestic abuse toolkit, the inter-parental conflict assessment pack, and the development of a disclosure protocol. I could give you more detailed information on those developments, if you would like me to forward it to the committee.

[30] **Janice Gregory:** That would be most useful. Thank you, Gwenda.

[31] **Lesley Griffiths:** What is the Assembly Government's role in ensuring that public sector workers, such as teachers and social workers, recognise and support children who are affected by domestic abuse?

[32] **Brian Gibbons:** There are two elements to that. There is now a module in the curriculum that relates to domestic abuse, and the education system is part of the wider agenda of creating awareness of this problem. It is not a problem that should be hidden indoors; it is relevant to public policy and to public discourse. So, that is included as part of the curriculum. Linked to that, I know that Tŷ Hafan makes materials available to schools—and Peter may be able to provide more detail on that—and materials are also made available to front-line practitioners, which is a bit like what Gwenda was saying about CAFCASS. That is to make them more aware of the key issues relating to domestic violence and how that may affect children in schools. Therefore, there is a two-pronged approach: one for children, and the other for professional front-line staff.

[33] **Mr Jones:** Even prior to the strategy's publication, we published a guidance booklet in 2004 for people who work with children in school settings and youth settings, in which we set out the procedures and referral routes, and the warning signs that they should look for. It was probably one of the most successful booklets we have ever produced because, within a month, we had to order a reprint. There was a big demand for that sort of material. We are constantly looking at that to see whether it needs updating in the light of changes to the arrangements for safeguarding children.

[34] **Janice Gregory:** I know about that from my role on the former Social Justice and Regeneration Committee, but I was asking more about the practical issues. Do you intend to re-send that information, given that it has been four years since it was first published?

[35] **Mr Jones:** It needs updating, because we have moved on and local safeguarding children boards are now on a statutory footing. It is in our work plan to look at that over the next 12 months, to make sure that it is up to date. The key principles of safeguarding children have not really changed; it is just that the statutory framework around it has.

[36] **Gwenda Thomas:** On the guidance issued to local service boards, we might we referring to the same one, 'Safeguarding Children—Working Together under the Children

Act 2004', which requires everyone working with women and children to be alert to the frequent interrelationship between domestic abuse and the abuse and neglect of children. Any specific concerns about the safety and welfare of a child are referred to social services.

[37] 'In extreme cases, a child may be in need of immediate protection.'

[38] However, some children,

[39] 'who are experiencing domestic abuse may benefit from a range of support and services, and some may need safeguarding from harm'.

[40] We need to develop this next point further.

[41] 'Often, supporting a non-violent parent is likely to be the most effective way of promoting the child's welfare.'

9.20 a.m.

[42] So, we need to be able to support that non-violent partner to protect the family link. I also want to refer to the proposed legislative competence Order on vulnerable children, which, having been presented to the Assembly, is now working its way through the scrutiny process. One of the aims of that LCO is to rationalise the existing guidance and legislation, so that everything can be brought together. We hope in future to be able to consider passing a Measure that further protects those children who are subject to domestic abuse.

[43] **David Lloyd:** Moving on from children to older people and carers, how does the Assembly Government's domestic abuse strategy address the specific circumstances of older people who experience domestic abuse?

[44] **Brian Gibbons:** I think that that comes predominantly within Gwenda's portfolio.

[45] **Gwenda Thomas:** Elderly people suffering abuse in their homes have the same protection in law as any other group of adults. We know that elderly people can suffer abuse from a partner, family member or carer, and the importance of developing policy and practice on this significant issue is acknowledged by social care. Interestingly, Age Concern Cymru is currently being funded by Comic Relief—and it seems inappropriate to say that—to develop advocacy work in Wales as a key means of tackling the abuse of older people. That project aims to address elder abuse in Wales by influencing policy and practice, increasing general public awareness, and increasing the awareness and understanding of the value of advocacy in protecting and empowering older people. Elderly people living in a non-domestic setting will be covered by the Welsh Assembly Government guidance, 'In Safe Hands', on the protection of vulnerable adults in Wales.

[46] It is also worth referring to the registration of care workers. Although we are currently registering social workers, it would be very positive to roll that out to cover all care workers. We also need to consider the effectiveness of the role of the inspection and regulation processes, and we are consulting on a new model of inspection.

[47] **Mark Isherwood:** What action has the Assembly Government taken to meet the needs of carers who are subjected to abuse by those whom they care for?

[48] **Gwenda Thomas:** Carers have the same protection in law as anyone else. We have the carers strategy, which has been well developed in Wales, and which covers all aspects of carers' interests. I pay tribute to the carers alliance, which has worked hard with us, and also to individual voluntary organisations that may or may not be part of the alliance, which work

with us to develop effective policies. The identification of carers who may be suffering abuse is difficult, and we need to develop more effective procedures in that regard. Developing advocacy for older people is also important.

[49] You will recall that we have had two Plenary debates on carers' rights, and you will know that I am committed to introducing an LCO on carers, hopefully at the end of the summer recess. Various issues emerged during the Liberal Democrat-led debate, and the debate on the other proposal for legislative competence from Helen Mary Jones. Both covered a wide range of issues, but information sharing stood out, which is of the utmost importance, as is the carer's right to an assessment of need. If that happens, there is an opportunity for the person carrying out the assessment to use the toolkit that is available to the NHS—and this has just occurred to me—which is an effective way of asking questions, and may identify abuse. So, we are committed to the carers LCO, and we are working with external partners, as well as the political parties in the Assembly, to develop this LCO and to look ahead to possible developments on future Measures.

[50] **Janice Gregory:** We will now move on to something that was touched on earlier, namely female genital mutilation, honour abuse, and forced marriage. Peter has the next questions.

[51] **Peter Black:** Do you consider a need for female genital mutilation services in Wales? If so, what plans do you have to address the reported lack of services, and what guidance has been issued to NHS trusts in Wales on this?

[52] **Brian Gibbons:** I do not know about the NHS trusts, but we have recently produced some documentation on this, and we are looking at developing an action plan. Generally, we look at these three areas of forced marriage, honour violence, and female genital mutilation as a totality, following on from the ongoing work on the domestic abuse strategy. These areas emerged as an area of work as a sort of a sub-group of the overall strategy. As I say, recently—was it the consultation document?

[53] **Mr Jones:** No, we consulted with the working group. We have published an action plan, which the Minister launched in April. We are setting up the sub-group of the domestic abuse working group to take this work forward. We are involved with organisations such as the Henna Foundation, the Black Association of Women Step Out, and the Minority Ethnic Women's Network Cymru. It is about raising awareness, and ensuring that the statutory services have guidance. We plan to do a range of things over the next two to three years, and that work is beginning now.

[54] **Brian Gibbons:** Just before International Women's Day this year, I was invited to a conference held in Cardiff on this issue. I was interested to see what the turnout would be, but, in the event, the conference in Cardiff City Hall was sold out, and was oversubscribed by 20 per cent, so they could have taken an audience that was a quarter as big again. This area is probably not well documented at present, and policy is not well developed, but the extent of the interest, and the recognition of the extent of the problem, was reflected in the turnout at that conference, and I think that further work on that is important.

[55] **Peter Black:** So, do you have plans to put any support services in place? I note the guidance and raising awareness, but what sort of support services are you looking at putting into place?

[56] **Gwenda Thomas:** The NHS resource manual on domestic abuse covers the issues that you have just raised. However, there is also the guidance to local safeguarding children boards, which recognises that domestic abuse occurs in several forms, including forced marriage, honour beatings or killings, and female genital mutilation. That Assembly guidance

stresses the importance of differentiating between forced marriages, to which consent is not given by one or both partners, who may be unwilling participants, and arranged marriages, which are perfectly legal, and can lead to successful and stable relationships between willing and consenting partners. However, in any case, all social services departments are required to have procedures and protocols in place that include dealing with cases of alleged or actual forced marriages. That is covered in that guidance to local safeguarding boards. However, I will check on whether I can be more specific about the guidance to NHS trusts and LHBs, and come back to the committee if needs be.

[57] **Janice Gregory:** The next issue is the specialist domestic violence courts. What are the emerging outcomes of the first SDVC pilot programmes in Wales?

[58] **Brian Gibbons:** I do not know whether you want to deal with several related issues, Chair, but I will just say that the SDVCs, the sexual assault referral centres, and the multi-agency risk assessment conferences are all very much part of the judicial response to domestic and sexual violence, and most of that comes from the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, and so they are not areas that are directly under our control. The fact that they are working closely with what is going on in Wales has been one of the successes of the domestic abuse strategy, in that we have been able to complement what is going on.

9.30 a.m.

[59] The interesting thing about the SDVCs, the SARCs and the MARACs—particularly the SDVCs and the MARACs—is that much of the initial work has been pioneered in Wales, and the wider roll-out across the United Kingdom has been on the basis of the experience in Wales. As this is a Whitehall matter, the formal evaluation is in the hands of Whitehall, but the experience, particularly from the MARACs and the SDVCs, has come from Wales and has helped to inform the initial roll-out. We do not have a comprehensive network in place yet in a number of these areas. However, consider where we were two or three years ago. Peter may be able to give the latest information, but almost all areas—two-thirds, three-quarters or seven-eighths—of Wales are covered by these three agencies to a greater or a lesser extent.

[60] **Mr Jones:** We think that there is about 70 per cent coverage with regard to MARACs, and the number of courts in Wales is as set out in the paper. On the specialist domestic violence courts, the Home Office has published two evaluation reports in the past. There was an evaluation report of Caerphilly and Croydon courts—Caerphilly was one of the first specialist courts in the UK—and there was also a separate evaluation of five other courts in England. The key messages that emerged from those reports were that there were more successful prosecutions and that the wrap-around service for the victim was essential to help these courts to function.

[61] **Brian Gibbons:** To follow on from what Peter said, the number of victims who are coming forward has increased, and the number of court cases that are taking place in Wales has substantially increased. That is a bad thing in that it indicates the prevalence of domestic abuse still endemic in our society, but the fact that people have the courage to come forward and that the judicial system is sufficiently protective and supportive of the victims to allow them to come forward is one of the successes of the strategy. The increase in the conviction rate is also an important indication of the success that Peter mentioned.

[62] On the other support services, whether the referral units or the MARACs, the combination of the pursuance of a case and the supportive services for the victim are key features of the new developments.

[63] **Gwenda Thomas:** The witness support service, which is developing, is also worth mentioning. I attended the launch in Swansea for the service a few years ago, but it is

developing and it is taking account of the sensitivities of young children appearing in court, and it offers alternative ways of giving evidence. So, that is also important.

[64] **Janice Gregory:** Moving on to the NHS interface, Dai?

[65] **David Lloyd:** Your paper describes a number of ways in which action has been taken within the NHS in Wales to ensure that victims of domestic abuse receive an appropriate and effective service. In which NHS areas has the most progress been made? Conversely, are there any particular areas where work is needed to raise the awareness and skills of staff in relation to domestic abuse?

[66] **Gwenda Thomas:** This will be quite a long answer, but I think that that is to be welcomed.

[67] **David Lloyd:** I can cope. [*Laughter.*]

[68] **Gwenda Thomas:** I have mentioned the NHS resource manual on domestic abuse, and we will start there. This manual was first issued across the NHS in Wales in 2001, and it remains the fundamental guidance for all staff who are likely to come into contact with victims of domestic abuse. It is currently being updated for reissue with a revised, more user-friendly format that is suitable for use by front-line staff.

[69] On the ante-natal routine inquiry pathway, which I referred to earlier, it is recognised that domestic abuse often starts or intensifies during pregnancy. The ante-natal routine inquiry pathway has, therefore, been produced by the all-Wales midwifery and health visitors domestic abuse networking group as part of a project funded by the Welsh Assembly Government. The pathway reflects the guidance in 'Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Health Care Professionals', which I referred to earlier.

[70] The pathway is now in use in all ante-natal units across Wales, which ensures that all women receiving ante-natal care are, as a matter of routine, asked a series of scripted questions to encourage the disclosure of any incidents of domestic abuse. The pathway ensures that the exchange with patients starts with an explanation confirming that the questions are asked of, and applied to, all attendees. It is important to make that point from the outset. I could give you more detail on this, which I am sure would be helpful to give a flavour of the questions that are posed. A follow-up list of more detailed questions is provided for use if, or when, the abuse has been confirmed.

[71] The pathway is supported by a set of minimum standards that stress the needs of domestic abuse victims: the need for privacy, confidentiality and sensitive questioning by non-judgmental staff. The standards encourage professional confidence to approach sensitive issues, and they ensure the safety of the victim and the member of staff and the appropriate referral system for support and information. Referrals under the child protection procedures may also be involved. The pathway is subject to annual audit so that continuous improvement can be made.

[72] The accident and emergency routine inquiry pathway is a pilot that has just come to an end in Swansea, and following the success of the ante-natal routine inquiry pathway, a simplified pathway has been designed to assist staff in busy accident and emergency departments to deal with people who may be victims of domestic abuse. I can give you further details of that, but the basic messages given to victims are that domestic abuse is a crime, that the victims are not to blame because everyone has the right to live their lives free from fear and violence, and that help is available.

[73] On the role of primary care practitioners, and following the publication of the British

Medical Association's document, 'Domestic Abuse' in July 2007, the Minister for Health and Social Services commissioned work to ensure that information for victims of domestic abuse is widely available in all primary care settings in Wales. You may recall that the Minister wrote to party spokespersons in September 2007 outlining her preferred option for building on work already undertaken by the Welsh Assembly Government, but which had not been reflected in the BMA report. That referred to a schedule of short, medium and long-term actions to deliver this objective. The short-term actions consisted of posters and leaflets; the medium-term actions included a pilot scheme to be set up in Merthyr Tydfil based on the routine inquiry pathway, which would bring together the various strands and existing protocols; and long-term actions would include a pilot scheme resulting in this pathway being formally monitored and evaluated, with changes made where necessary for an all-Wales roll-out in two years. You could say that all of that work is linked together, but is developing.

[74] On NHS Direct and the ambulance service, NHS Direct has established a database of self-help and support groups, which includes an extensive list of domestic abuse support services. Information on victim support services is also sometimes used by paramedics responding to 999 calls, so that area of the service has also been covered. To answer your question of whether we can do more, yes, we can, but there is a commitment to roll out this programme and interlink these services so that they complement each other.

9.40 a.m.

[75] **Brian Gibbons:** Something that probably also fits in here is the role of alcohol in all of this. In the paper, we refer to the fact that close to two thirds of domestic violence incidents are fuelled by alcohol. Gwenda mentioned the BMA report on domestic violence. Two things came out of that: first, the cyclical nature of domestic violence; and, secondly, the role that alcohol plays in bringing matters to a head. We have highlighted this in the drugs and alcohol action plan review that is ongoing and said that this is the general attitude that we must take towards alcohol abuse in Wales. This is another area that is relevant to today's deliberations.

[76] **Janice Gregory:** Moving on to housing, Paul has the next question.

[77] **Paul Davies:** I believe that 'Supporting People' and the housing-related support strategy have already been mentioned this morning. How will the Assembly Government's supported housing policy team ensure that the needs of people who experience domestic abuse are considered and reflected in the new 'Supporting People' strategy?

[78] **Jocelyn Davies:** I mentioned earlier how we intend to consult, but I suppose the head of the unit might be able to expand on that.

[79] **Mr Webb:** As the Minister has said, at the moment, we are in a pre-consultation phase in which we are developing the ideas behind the strategy. Some expert panels are contributing to the thinking on that. There are currently a number of strategies: the national housing strategy, the homelessness plan and the 'Supporting People' strategy. With the expert panels for the homelessness plan and the 'Supporting People' strategy, we have developed a series of questions that we have distributed to providers across the range of needs to try to develop some understanding that those providers will then use with their service users to try to understand service-user views in the development of those ideas. At the point when we get to a formal consultation, we will also have to develop ways of engaging more directly with service users. As the Minister has said, that really must be done through providers, because they are our access to service users. We have not yet developed our formal consultation plan, but we are aware of the need to build service-user views into the formal consultation process.

[80] **Peter Black:** I understand from the evidence that you have given already that you are trying to develop a strategy that will help people to stay in their own homes and provide

security for them to do that. The ‘Supporting People’ revenue grant also supports the hostels and the refuges that we already have, but I am still hearing anecdotal evidence about people being unable to get into refuges because they are full or being offered places that are miles away from where they want to be with their children. Are you content that we have enough refuge places in Wales? I think that some money was put into capital for this in the current budget. If you are looking to expand refuges, have you made provisions through the ‘Supporting People’ revenue grant to expand the money available to pay the revenue costs of those refuges?

[81] **Mr Webb:** We must recognise that the development of the services provided under ‘Supporting People’ was done largely prior to the implementation of ‘Supporting People’ and the strategic framework that that provides. One of its key advantages is that it now provides a strategic framework under which there is a methodology for assessing needs, understanding the impact of existing provision, and planning for unmet need. That is translating into some redevelopment of existing services in new areas, such as floating support services or services that can move into an individual’s home and move away when that support is no longer required, rather than moving the individual into a refuge. There are examples of those services being developed with resources that have even been redirected from existing Women’s Aid refuge services or from other areas of need, as needs have been identified.

[82] That is an example of our being able to increase provision without necessarily increasing resources, because we are more strategic and more targeted. That relates to the point that Peter Jones made earlier about the importance of wrap-around services. If we are going to have an approach to the court system that deals with the perpetrator rather than the victim, we need to develop wrap-around services to fit that. At the moment, there is evidence that our strategic framework is working at redirecting resources to meet the need and increasing the provision. That does not, necessarily, require a separate top-down, top-sliced approach at present.

[83] **Jocelyn Davies:** The figures in paragraph 75 are for 2007-08. You can see that a specialist refuge is now being developed in Blaenau Gwent, but the figure is zero. We know, from the needs-mapping exercise that took place in Blaenau Gwent, that floating support was developed and was remodelled from a homecare scheme. So, the mapping exercise recognised this as a need, and then the forum prioritised it. This resulted in 10 new units of support where, as you can see, there was virtually nil provision before.

[84] **Peter Black:** Nevertheless, you have put money into the capital budget to develop new places. Where will those places be based? Is that the one in Blaenau Gwent that you referred to? Is support in the form of a revenue grant available to cover the cost of that?

[85] **Mr Webb:** There is. That specialist refuge together with a specialist service that is being developed in Cardiff, which will focus particularly on women fleeing prostitution and on trafficked women, are the two elements that make up the capital budget. The refuge that is being developed in Blaenau Gwent is a specialist refuge, which recognises that, in many cases for women fleeing domestic violence, domestic violence is not the only need that they have; there might also be a substance misuse problem or a mental health problem. The purpose of the Blaenau Gwent refuge is to allow other refuges to make referrals to that for people with dual diagnosis, as it were, in those terms and, therefore, to take the pressure off. That is one area in which there is specialist refuge-type provision. In addition to that, there are the 10 bed spaces of floating support to which the Minister referred. So, from having nothing in the area of Blaenau Gwent, we are moving to a position where there is a specialist refuge and there will be floating support available. That is where the specific capital has gone, but also the wider—

[86] **Peter Black:** So, the places funded by the capital budget will be based in Blaenau

Gwent and Cardiff.

[87] **Mr Webb:** Yes. The other element of the capital is in Cardiff.

[88] **Peter Black:** Thank you.

[89] **Mr Webb:** That is for regional service.

[90] **Jocelyn Davies:** That is for a regional service for women fleeing prostitution.

[91] **Peter Black:** I got that.

[92] **Mark Isherwood:** I have a question on move-on accommodation following the support. Normally, the victim would wish to be rehoused away from the perpetrator if the perpetrator is still in the area. However, that can subsequently cause further problems. For example, I have had cases where the victim was threatened with intentional homelessness if they did not accept a home that was close to the perpetrator, simply because of a lack of understanding among the housing officers involved. I have also seen a case where people have been resettled across a county border and then, when their circumstances have changed, they have had huge difficulty in coming back—in this case, it was due to health problems. In another situation, someone was relocated within the same county, but across a school admissions border, which caused a school admission problem, with knock-on problems for a vulnerable child.

[93] From the perpetrator's perspective, if a parole board releases someone with an exclusion zone applied to prevent them from living close to the victim, would that be managed by housing providers, to ensure that they did not inadvertently rehouse the perpetrator close to the victim?

[94] **Jocelyn Davies:** We talked earlier about the idea of having a more flexible approach, depending on how appropriate it is. It is difficult to talk in general terms. However, if you appreciate that it can sometimes be very important that the victims stay in their own home, but are made to feel safe there, there are some schemes that you might like to look at, such as the Sanctuary scheme in Rhondda Cynon Taf, where it might even be possible to have a panic room within someone's home. It offers, for example, panic alarms, ensures that proper locks are fitted, and makes people feel safe in their own home. This, for some, can be a huge advantage.

9.50 a.m.

[95] However, it is difficult for me to give a general answer to specific cases when I do not know the details of those cases. The main point is that refuges will always be vitally important, but there should be a range of options available, depending on appropriateness to the circumstances.

[96] **Janice Gregory:** It should be working within the knowledge of a strategy. We have faced a lot of that in constituency casework, but I have seen that things are different now because there is a strategy, and as there are so many partners and organisations involved in ensuring that things are not as they used to be and that they are moving forward.

[97] **Jocelyn Davies:** We also have the domestic abuse guidance—it is the only area where we have issued specialist guidance. However, if Mark is saying that not everyone is as au fait with our guidance as they should be, it is certainly something that I am happy to look at. As you say, it is important to have that framework and to ensure that it is flexible enough so that the needs are met without putting people in danger, as Mark pointed out.

[98] **Gwenda Thomas:** I want to mention quickly the importance of the interaction between housing and social services in order to develop early intervention policies and preventative action. That has been proved quite successful by the use of Option 1, which is a scheme that is being piloted in the Vale of Glamorgan and—I have forgotten the other area, but I will check what it is—which has been evaluated by a university. What that scheme does is to move into the family setting, perhaps when there is still time to support that family and to avoid a child having to be taken into care. Although early figures show that there is not a significant reduction in the number of children being taken into care, the length of time that the children are in care for is certainly reducing, so that option is available. Success in this area depends on interaction and good information sharing between departments.

[99] **Janice Gregory:** I am conscious of the time, so we will now move on to evidence-based questions.

[100] **Lesley Griffiths:** You mention in your paper that the development of an evidence base is continuing, and that you are gathering the most appropriate data to provide a reliable set of indicators. Do you think that there are any areas where it is particularly difficult to gather reliable data? To what extent will information held by service providers be utilised?

[101] **Brian Gibbons:** One area that is difficult is that of forced marriage, honour violence and female genital mutilation; if you look at the action plan, we acknowledge that. I am sure that we are only looking at the tip of the problem and that we are yet to fully get to grips with the overall challenge of domestic violence. We can only say that we have got to grips with it when we see the number of cases presented decreasing. There is reference in the paper to the new disclosure arrangements that exist, because we know from virtually every instance of child and adult abuse tragedy that the single biggest problem seems to be the failure to share information, with that failure leading to a failure to trigger the necessary actions within the various support agencies. There is reference in the paper to that and to the new disclosure arrangements, which will, hopefully, make that sharing of information more effective.

[102] **Gwenda Thomas:** That is fundamental, and it comes through in the recent serious case reviews. If you link it back to Maria Caldwell, 30-odd years ago, some things are the same. However, we are seeing the implementation of some of the recommendations of the Bichard inquiry, but we are not there yet. We need information sharing between all agencies. That is an important role for the local safeguarding children boards, to bring together the devolved and non-devolved agencies. The police forces also have a role, as have social services and housing departments. We do need to develop that. If we can achieve it, we will have achieved a lot for children, and adults, who are being abused.

[103] **Brian Gibbons:** If you look at the paper—I think that it is in paragraphs 19 and 20—as Gwenda has just said, the police have a key role to play in this. I think that there is a reference to this, but I need to look for it. There is a series of bullet points in the paper and they deal with the importance of police information and how we need to share that information more effectively to map out the extent and the prevalence of the problem. I have not been able to find it in my own paper, but there is an acknowledgement of it somewhere. We are working with the crime team from the Home Office, in Merthyr Tydfil, to develop that work in Wales.

[104] **Gwenda Thomas:** I mentioned the development of a disclosure protocol by CAFYSS Cymru. That does have a clear reference to the need for information sharing and it refers to agencies, such as the police. We will make these details available to you.

[105] **Janice Gregory:** Moving on to resources, I call Peter to ask question 14.

[106] **Peter Black:** As the budget is so transparent, for domestic violence services, there is, of course, a domestic violence services grant budget expenditure line. Are there any other BELs, in addition to that one, that support people fleeing domestic abuse?

[107] **Jocelyn Davies:** There is the Supporting People funding, which is mentioned in the paper in paragraph 75. As I said, you will not see anything there for Blaenau Gwent, even though we know that money had been spent on it, because it has been remodelled. I think that homelessness grants have also been used to fund projects with Safer Wales. There are a number, but it will predominantly be grants from the Supporting People fund. I think that there is £58 million in the Supporting People revenue grant and about £10 million is dedicated to domestic-violence-related housing issues.

[108] **Peter Black:** Are the homelessness grants that you referred to capital or revenue grants?

[109] **Mr Webb:** They are revenue grants.

[110] **Jocelyn Davies:** They are for projects. They have not had a project evaluation yet, but I can obviously give you a note on that, if you would like one.

[111] **Peter Black:** Do you know whether there is a revenue stream in the NHS budget for this?

[112] **Gwenda Thomas:** There is no specific funding provision for domestic abuse services in the NHS or social care budgets, as the services provided to victims have historically been provided within traditional healthcare settings and provision. This, of course, will need to be revisited, if and when the role of the NHS in community safety schemes is extended, particularly in respect of the development of sexual abuse resource centres. To pick up on what Dai was asking about—whether there are any weaknesses—I think that the development of sexual abuse resource centres is a prime example of an initiative in which health services in Wales have not been appropriately engaged from the outset. That has largely been a result of a lack of understanding on the part of the Home Office, but its agreement with the Department of Health and the public health partnership did not automatically roll out to the NHS in Wales.

[113] **Brian Gibbons:** Peter mentioned the BEL, when the question was asked, and it was probably five years ago when there was not a BEL for domestic abuse. There are a couple of other points that I would like to highlight, because I do not think that they have been mentioned. There is ongoing funding for the helplines, which have been gradually expanding. There is now a 24-hour bilingual helpline in Wales: it has been extended to 24 hours in the last 12 or 18 months or so.

[114] **Mr Jones:** It was in January 2007.

[115] **Brian Gibbons:** That is a big step forward. For male victims of domestic abuse, a new helpline has been developed in Cardiff. There are also a number of other projects. I think that every local authority area now has a domestic abuse co-ordinator who is responsible for monitoring what is going on with regard to domestic abuse in that local authority area. It is a very important step forward and a key part of putting in place a national framework through which we can respond to this challenge.

10.00 a.m.

[116] **Janice Gregory:** We are going to move on now to the perpetrator programmes. Questions 15 and 16 are Lynne's.

[117] **Lynne Neagle:** The ministerial paper refers to a pilot perpetrator programme. The End Violence Against Women report criticised provision in relation to perpetrator programmes in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Could you comment on the current provision of such programmes in Wales, Brian?

[118] **Brian Gibbons:** The British Medical Association report talked about the cyclical nature of domestic violence, and one of the issues that always comes up when we look at this is how effective the interventions are and whether we have a strong evidence base of effective interventions to make a difference. We must be honest and say that the jury is probably out on that. We cannot say for certain that we have a suite of interventions that make a difference for perpetrators. At present, the courts can work with the probation service and the perpetrators can be referred to the probation service for work on anger management, attitude change, and so forth, and that is probably the most universal provision. A scheme is being developed in Carmarthen, which we are looking at, and there is a bigger project with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children that we are working up. Peter might be able to give a little more detail on that. That programme is working its way forward, and I think that the evaluation will probably happen later this year. Is that right, Peter?

[119] **Mr Jones:** Yes. We are funding a three-year pilot project with the NSPCC; it is being run in north and south Wales, and we are building evaluation into that project. The evaluation will take place during this year. That will give us a handle on what we want to do in the next steps. However, it is a non-mandatory programme. That is where the gap is in Wales. The statutory provision is already there. The Minister has already mentioned probation service-run perpetrator programmes, and the national offender management service is now running a programme in Her Majesty's Prison Cardiff, but there has been little demand until now for non-mandatory programmes, and that is the area that we are trying to address.

[120] **Lynne Neagle:** To clarify, is the NSPCC pilot project the project that you have referred to in the ministerial paper?

[121] **Mr Jones:** Yes.

[122] **Janice Gregory:** We are coming to the end now; we are not far off it. Mark has a question on education.

[123] **Mark Isherwood:** How are you evaluating the impact of the all-Wales schools programme, the domestic abuse module and the Cymdeithas Tai Hafan's spectrum project?

[124] **Mr Jones:** The all-Wales schools programme has been subject to an independent evaluation. The module on domestic abuse is relatively new, and I am not certain whether it has been evaluated yet. Similarly, the Cymdeithas Tai Hafan programme is relatively new but it is operating in north and south Wales and is expanding. We have more work to do in evaluating both of those programmes. We have a rolling programme of review for all our domestic abuse programmes, and each one will be reviewed over the next three years. We are currently reviewing the core funding for Welsh Women's Aid, for example.

[125] **Mark Isherwood:** So there has only been an independent evaluation of the all-Wales programme.

[126] **Mr Jones:** There has been a published independent evaluation of the all-Wales schools programme, which was primarily about getting messages into schools about substance misuse. We have bolted on to that programme modules relating to domestic abuse, and there are separate modules there. I cannot say, hand on my heart, that the evaluation will have covered the domestic abuse element of this, because of the timing issues, but we will

certainly consider that in our rolling programme evaluation.

[127] **Janice Gregory:** The last question is about legislative competence. Do you think, as a Government, that you need any additional legislative powers to play an effective role in tackling domestic abuse in Wales?

[128] **Brian Gibbons:** This not something that is actively on our ministerial agenda. Having said that, the review of criminal justice and the interface between criminal justice and Assembly powers will be relevant to some of these matters. However, other than the proposed vulnerable children LCO, that is probably the single most important area of work.

[129] You will note that, at the end of the paper, we state that we are undertaking a review of the action plan on the back of the domestic abuse strategy. We would hope that the deliberations of the committee and the outcome of your deliberations will be fed in to that action plan so that we can take on board the findings and the considered view of the committee in due course.

[130] **Janice Gregory:** Thank you. We will see that that is done.

[131] **Jocelyn Davies:** On that point, as you heard earlier, we are developing our homelessness plan. During the development of that plan, if extra powers are required, I have already given a commitment that we would not hesitate to go for them.

[132] **Gwenda Thomas:** I stand to be corrected, but I think that most of this would come under field 15 in schedule 5 to the Government of Wales Act 2006. We will introduce a legislative competence Order—I did mention this earlier—with regard to carers, and the vulnerable children LCO is also proceeding. Powers have already been transferred to us for additional learning needs. It is possible to jump on the back of LCOs as they pass through to draw down powers to pass Measures. So, we may not need extra legislative competence Orders as it may be possible to use the competence that we will gain via LCOs that are proceeding.

[133] **Janice Gregory:** Thank you. That concludes this session. I thank you once again for sparing the time to come to committee. It has formed an important part of the start of our inquiry into domestic abuse.

10.08 a.m.

**Ymchwiliad i Ariannu Sefydliadau Gwirfoddol yng Nghymru—Tystiolaeth gan y
Sefydliad Cymunedol yng Nghymru
Inquiry into Funding of Voluntary Sector Organisations in Wales—Evidence
from Community Foundation in Wales**

[134] **Janice Gregory:** In this item, we take a slight step back to our inquiry into funding of voluntary organisations. This morning, we are going to take evidence from the Community Foundation in Wales. I am delighted to welcome to committee Kim Brook, the chair, and Liza Kellett, the foundation's chief executive. Thank you for sparing the time to come to committee. We felt it important, after issues were raised in our evidence-gathering, for us to speak to you. I think that it is true to say that we were not aware of your existence in Wales. Mark went to Greater Manchester, where he visited your colleagues. I thank Mark for taking the time to do that.

[135] I understand that you want to make a presentation. We are a friendly committee, and we are serious in our desire to get to the bottom of voluntary organisation funding. If you

would like to make a presentation to committee, there will then be a series of questions from committee members—not too many, and just to explore the information that you give us. Kim, are you going to lead on this, or will it be Liza?

10.10 a.m.

[136] **Mr Brook:** I will start, if I may, and then Liza will pick up on specific points. I am glad that you have finally heard of the Community Foundation in Wales, and I see that Pembrokeshire, for instance, had advocated the setting up of community foundations on a county-by-county basis. I am glad that you eventually found us, because the Community Foundation in Wales has been around in its current form since 1999, and it takes a long time to achieve what we have managed to achieve. To imagine that it is possible to have a sustainable community foundation in each county is slightly worrying for me, because, before I took over the chair of the Community Foundation in Wales, I was the chair of the community foundation in Powys, and we found it impossible to sustain that effort, although we worked hard at it. Eventually, we decided that we would pool our resources with the Community Foundation in Wales; that has been successful, and we have grown quite well over the past few years.

[137] In the last financial year, that has just finished, we made grants of more than £1 million. None of that money came from the Assembly or from local authorities. It all came from the kind of activities that we advocate in our paper: bringing in corporate donors, working with other charitable trusts, and encouraging the involvement of rich individuals who want to do something in their communities in a structured way. We also manage all the Sport Relief money—that is £200,000 over a year cycle—and we work for the lottery, as local agents for the Fair Share Trust, which is aimed at those local authority areas, or, in England, wards, that have not had their fair share of lottery funds. We have been working in five areas in Wales; it is a huge amount of work for us, but it is very rewarding. The five areas are: Neath Port Talbot, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Wrexham and Ynys Môn. So, all in all, we made £1 million of grants last year.

[138] It is fair to say that our approach is to work closely with community strategies and community compacts wherever we can. However, we are not slaves to them, and because our funding comes from independent sources, we have managed to be pretty flexible while continuing to support community strategies wherever we are working.

[139] I must say that there is an important difference between the way that community foundations in England have grown and the way that they have grown in Wales or, for that matter, Scotland. First, in England, some of the founding community foundations had massive challenges—the Greater Manchester foundation had a £1 million match-fund challenge from the Duke of Westminster. Unfortunately, we do not have many Dukes of Westminster in Wales at the moment. However, the big difference is that the local network fund in England has been handled through the community foundation network, and that has been worth a huge amount of money to them in the fees that they earn. As an example, Devon—a small-ish area compared with Wales—has probably received about £80,000 per annum of management fees from handling local network funds in England. That has been the pattern throughout England; in Manchester, it amounts to millions of pounds. That has now come to an end, and they are beginning to feel the crunch. However, in Wales, we have had to pull ourselves up by the bootstraps without the benefit of managing any Government or local government funding.

[140] Therefore, we are genuinely independent, with independent money coming in. It is hard work to establish a community foundation because you are relying on the generosity of individuals and companies to earn most of your crust, and we still managed to grow up to make £1 million of grants last year.

[141] **Janice Gregory:** The first questions will come from Mark, who, as I said, visited your colleagues in Manchester.

[142] **Mark Isherwood:** Yes, Nick Massey has already given me his answers, and I will be interested to hear yours. He was full of praise for you, I must say—particularly for your infectious enthusiasm.

[143] **Mr Brook:** Thank you.

[144] **Mark Isherwood:** In what ways are third sector organisations in other parts of the UK different from those in Wales? What impact, if any, does that have on the development of the Community Foundation in Wales?

[145] **Ms Kellett:** The English equivalent of the Wales Council for Voluntary Action is the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, and it has quite a different role. The English body provides support, mentoring, training and nurturing and acts as an ally for the third sector, but it does not deliver grants. So, the biggest difference for us is that, in Wales, the WCVA has a grant-making function as well. In England, the NCVO provides support, and community foundations distribute the grants, whereas in Wales, the money tends to be held mostly at the WCVA, with some notable exceptions. That is one of the biggest differences.

[146] The second factor is that, as Kim mentioned, the UK Government distributes large grants through community foundations, and the management fee for running those grant programmes is valuable income, supporting the core costs of community foundations. Again, that does not happen in Wales.

[147] Thirdly, Kim also mentioned that the bigger English foundations have benefited from challenge funding and some big chunks of investment. The Esmée Fairbairn foundation, for example, chose 10 community foundations and gave them each £100,000, saying ‘Invest this however you like, but the challenge is to raise £2 million in three years.’. With that additional investment, seven out of 10 of them were able to achieve the target. The chair of Bristol community foundation was given £1 million and told, ‘Do what you need to do.’, and that is quite common across the English community foundations. They have been able to beg, borrow, steal, align, associate, and attract some large chunks of money, either to set up a big endowment, from which they derive a small management fee that keeps them going, or indeed to encourage others to donate in a high-profile way.

[148] The final difference is this new programme that the Government at Westminster is announcing—hopefully being delivered through community foundations—of £80 million of small grants funding, and £50 million on top of that to support the growth of endowments. Therefore, community foundations right across England are currently tendering to manage that £50 million pot, which will enable them to encourage others to invest in an endowment pot, with the Westminster Government matching contributions pound for pound, or perhaps two pounds per pound—it has not been decided yet. So, there has been a great recognition from central Government, and from local Government, of the way that community foundations can complement the third sector and work within it, but perhaps use the fact that they are independent, cause-neutral, and not associated with Government to work with private individuals and private sector supporters, adding value to the money that they give. In the past three years, we have given £250,000 of our funders’ money to Newport, because we have been focusing on Newport. However, only about £100,000 of that came from Newport funds—that is, from businesses that we had encouraged to give money, or from individuals. We were able to lever in additional funds on top of that.

[149] Those are the four main differences between what has been happening in England and what is happening in Wales.

[150] **Mark Isherwood:** Just to clarify—do you qualify for grass-roots funds?

[151] **Ms Kellett:** No, they are for England only. It happens a lot—there are some fantastic initiatives that are only for England. It happened with the lottery. A few of the English community foundations were able to join together for a lottery programme for infrastructure support organisations, but that programme is not running in Wales. So, we find that there are differences, and sometimes it is disappointing not to be able to take advantage of opportunities that the English foundations have had.

10.20 a.m.

[152] **Mark Isherwood:** There is quite a variation in the sizes of the endowments held by community foundations across the UK. What factors—social, cultural and environmental—have had an impact upon the development of community foundations, and therefore their endowments, and how has that affected operations across urban and rural localities?

[153] **Mr Brook:** As Liza has indicated, the build-up of endowment funds in England started earlier. For instance, the community foundation serving Northumberland and Tyne and Wear started in the early 1980s. It set itself up independently, and I think that it did many of its deals on the grouse moors, going for the posh guys with buckets of money. It was able to persuade many of those people, through the connections that they had, to put something back into their communities in an intelligent way, so it was not a case of just giving money to everyone who applied, but using the funding in a structured way to support a coherent programme.

[154] So, that was one factor. Another factor that, again, is a big difference between Wales and England, is our lack of really powerful indigenous, Welsh-owned, Welsh-run businesses. We have to talk to head office in London or Tokyo or wherever in order to make an impact. Once or twice, that has worked to our advantage—because there is a world-wide network of community foundations, we can ring up our chums in America and ask whether such-and-such a company does anything for their local community foundation, and we can ask if there are any buttons that we could press to persuade them to do similar things here. When we set up the Newport initiative that Liza mentioned, one of the first companies to buy into that was an American-owned company that had a policy of corporate giving and putting something back into the community. So, our proposals did not come as any kind of wild idea to that company, and we were able to persuade it that this was a good plan for both of us. Basically, getting access to decision-makers in business in Wales is hard going.

[155] On the rural and urban spread, I do not think that there is any particularly strong pattern. Tyne and Wear and Northumberland includes the Newcastle conurbation but also rural Northumberland, so a number of community foundations handle both sides of the coin. Swindon and Wiltshire is another example; it is a big, successful community foundation that has had a great deal of investment from the likes of Hambro, WH Smith, and so on. I do not think that there is any discernible split between rural and urban areas as to the size of the endowment. If you track the size of the endowment, there is usually a direct relationship with the length of time the foundation has been in business. We were a bit late in starting in Wales, unfortunately, but community foundations in England—such as the Greater Bristol foundation, which is now called Quartet, and the foundations in Greater Manchester, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, and even places like Berkshire—have been around for a while, and their endowments have grown steadily over time. They have been able to do it as solid, sustainable foundations because they were earning fees from handling grant programmes.

[156] **Mark Isherwood:** What might the Assembly Government do to support the

development of community foundations in Wales? Three examples were raised with me in Manchester. You mentioned the need for core funding. As you say, Manchester got the Duke of Westminster money—which you do not have the luxury of—so it was able to develop a large, professional team to develop the operation. Secondly, I was told about the use of section 106 moneys. The Manchester foundation believed that some of that should go towards voluntary sector infrastructure costs. Finally, it was suggested that community foundations could be used as a gateway for all community organisations, and that you in Wales would also be ideal for that role.

[157] **Mr Brook:** On the first point, we have core funding, and it has gone up from £30,000 a year to £60,000 a year for the next three years. We are grateful to the Welsh Assembly Government for that. The application process and so on were very satisfactory, so thank you very much for that. However, in terms of our core costs, it takes something of the order of £240,000 per year to sustain a reasonable team, and we have to earn the rest of it from management fees. So, we have to work hard, and we are by no means certain of enough income on a year-to-year basis—we live very much hand to mouth. Yes, the core funding is great, but if you gave us some more we would be absolutely thrilled to bits.

[158] **Ms Kellett:** The core funding support has been very important to us, and it also helps us to raise money from other sources. For example, we have been working with the charity commission in Wales to release dormant and inactive funds, and the endorsement of core funding is so helpful towards that. We will not be backwards in coming forwards to the Welsh Assembly Government for support in unlocking funds and in raising our profile among community voluntary councils and local authorities, explaining the value of a strong community foundation in Wales. The best case that we can make for support is that we can add value to funds that already exist by introducing new funds, doubling up and leveraging in new money. However, we can also work locally: we have a fund for Newport, and if we are successful in current negotiations with the local authority, we will create a Powys fund as well.

[159] So, we can reduce costs by working nationally, but we can also work locally through local funds, encouraging local businesses to get involved. However, we need a driver for that, which is usually either a big chunk of money from an individual or a local authority investment. That enables us to develop the critical mass to be able to employ someone who can concentrate time and effort there, working in partnership with CVCs and local businesses to expand that work locally. Newport is the best example of how we have been able to do that, and it is working phenomenally well. We have been asked to talk to other CVCs about the Newport model, so I think that it has brought recognition of who we are and what we do. It is of course disappointing, as the new chief executive, to find that this committee had not heard of the Community Foundation in Wales, despite our written submission. However, the glory belongs to the fundholders; we are the conduit, but the glory belongs to Solutia, Rowcord and the individuals, trusts and foundations who choose us to distribute their donations, and to the small voluntary organisations at community and neighbourhood level that are doing such great work on the ground.

[160] **Janice Gregory:** Do not worry—there are 30,000 voluntary sector organisations in Wales, and that is why we did not know about you.

[161] **Ms Kellett:** Yes, and I think that 65 per cent of them have an income of less than £10,000. Small grants can be very effective for those groups and make a big impact, and we can help with that process.

[162] **Mr Brook:** If I can just add to that, we work very hard to find the sparks of energy in various communities, and each community has a different problem. We found that with our Fair Share programme: each of the five areas that I mentioned set completely different

priorities for how their money should be spent. In addition to that Fair Share money, we managed to lever in one and a half times as much, which was released from other sources—partly from local authorities, and partly from outside. The fact that we are independent makes it somehow more acceptable for businesses and individuals to give money, and I think that there would be a danger, if we tried to do this through the CVCs, for example, that they might be seen to be too close to local authorities. People are a bit more reluctant to give money in that context, but the community foundation idea appeals very strongly both to businesses and individuals, and they like the fact that we lever in other funds alongside their donations.

[163] **Janice Gregory:** Paul, you had a supplementary question on that.

[164] **Paul Davies:** I just want to clarify your earlier comments about establishing community foundations at a county level. Do you believe that that is just not sustainable at the moment?

10.30 a.m.

[165] **Mr Brook:** I know from experience that it is not. We tried hard with Powys: we got quite a number of the great and the good onto our board of trustees, we modelled ourselves very much on classic examples such as Manchester and Tyne and Wear, and we worked very hard, with some part-time support from an employee of the Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations—PAVO was backing the initiative. We drew up a long list of people who we might approach, and for whom we had contacts, but we simply could not find enough money, starting from scratch, to build an infrastructure. We had one part-time employee; he was terrific and he worked very hard, but in the end we could not afford it anymore.

[166] **Ms Kellett:** It is just not sustainable. It takes a great deal of money just to employ one person to manage the organisation and the grants. Even if you are distributing local authority grants and have an income from that, you are looking at £60,000 for a dog and a kennel, and you would need £6 million of endowments to earn that much in management fees. We have £1 million of endowments and we are looking to escalate that, but Tyne and Wear has £20 million. That is fantastic, but it has taken 20 years. We have seen, through programmes such as Communities First, how much investment it takes just to set up a core staff of development officers and to get the ball rolling.

[167] A strong and successful community foundation at a pan-Wales level—and we are on the cusp of being that—will be able to generate that momentum in much more cost-effective ways, leveraging in dormant funds and creating local initiatives that can generate a critical mass of funds so that the organisation is able to sustain itself in the long-term. Otherwise, each local authority or CVC would have to invest in its local community foundation—I am sure that the Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services is in that situation. How much does it cost to invest in Pembrokeshire Community Action, or the great Carmarthenshire pathfinder project? When you look at how much they can actually earn, there is element of the emperor's new clothes about investment in that kind of initiative. People do not recognise how much it takes, and how long it takes—especially with private sector money—to create a relationship that can generate the income to make an organisation financially sustainable.

[168] **Mr Brook:** Scotland and Northern Ireland, by the way, have a single community foundation for the whole country. That is not strictly true, because there is one in Fermanagh as well, but it is quite small. However, the point is that you need a big population to achieve the critical mass.

[169] **Ms Kellett:** Bath tried to set one up, and it is a very wealthy city, but it is still having to work with Bristol Community Foundation. They have it in mind to create a Bath offshoot one day, which would be fantastic, but even a city of that size, with that amount of wealth, is

not able to create its own community foundation at the moment. There is a fund for Bath, which is great, just as there is a fund for Newport and a fund for Powys, which we hold. However, to reach the critical mass where you are able to establish your own community foundation, takes an enormous amount of money and investment, and it is redundant anyway.

[170] **Janice Gregory:** We will move on now, because you are in danger of answering questions that have not yet been asked. We can mop up at the end, but I will move on now to Peter Black.

[171] **Peter Black:** In what way does your relatively small size—compared with Quartet, for example—affect your ability to work at a local level? For example, do you have committees at a local level that ensure that your funding is relevant to local needs?

[172] **Ms Kellett:** That is a very good question. It is a case of which comes first: the chicken or the egg? We are very pragmatic about working at a local level. Where we have a funder that wants to distribute money in a specific town, we will work at that level. Where we have an endowment that comes from a particular area or is geographically focused, we will work at that level. So, we have to have the investment to do that. However, we are working hard to ensure that we are a pan-Wales organisation by using our trustees and volunteers. We have a north Wales panel, a south Wales panel, and a Newport panel. It is a good point; we are a pan-Wales organisation with three full-time and two part-time members of staff, with trustees belting around the country representing us where they can. However, it is an issue, and we take a pragmatic approach, saying ‘Here is a chunk of money that will be associated with that pot.’, and then we are able to gather in allies, friends and committees to move that on and create momentum.

[173] **Mr Brook:** The most notable example of this working at a local level has happened through our Fair Share panels. We have convened local panels in each of the five areas; we chair them with a local trustee, and I chair two of them myself. We use our own trustees—we work them really hard—and we convene local people to sit on those panels, and that has been tremendously successful. We start off with an area assessment and set priorities and then work closely with the community. It is possible for us to reach out all over the country through our trustee network, even though we have a very small staff.

[174] **Janice Gregory:** We are keen to explore your relationship with other bodies, so we have three questions on that, and the first is from Paul Davies.

[175] **Paul Davies:** Why does the community foundation in Wales not distribute any Government or local authority grants programmes?

[176] **Mr Brook:** We have put in bids to manage them on a number of occasions. There was a period when I think that there was an automatic favourite for distributing all these grants, and indeed, it is more or less the Assembly Government’s stated strategy to use the Wales Council for Voluntary Action and the CVCs as the backbone of its presence in the voluntary sector, and that is fair enough. The problem about using that backbone for grant distribution is that there is often a conflict of interest involved, because they will be choosing between their own members who they give the grants to. However, we have placed bids, and we have been unsuccessful in most cases, which is probably due to a feeling that we had not reached the critical mass to be able to handle it. I feel that we have now proved that we have the critical mass to handle it, because of the success of our Fair Share areas, and if you are familiar with any of those areas, or you know the people involved there, they will all attest to how well we have done with that programme. So, we would love to do it.

[177] **Lynne Neagle:** Are there any specific grants that you feel you might distribute more successfully than some of the existing channels?

[178] **Ms Kellett:** The organisations that currently distribute grants do a good job, but we can add value when a grant scheme is limited in scope and needs to bring in other money. That is where we would be particularly strong, and it would be good to be involved in that. I do not think that what is happening at the moment is not working—it is working—but we are particularly successful, ironically, with the very small groups and the neighbourhood groups that the CVCs tend to focus on supporting. When it comes to applying for £200 here and £500 there, we make it so simple and straightforward, and because we are not necessarily in the same neighbourhoods as these small groups, we are quite good at distributing. We had a £20,000 grant pot for the whole of Wales, which was our most successful, over-subscribed programme, and we were able to distribute the money very quickly and easily. Community foundations were used in Leeds and Hull to distribute emergency money for flood relief, so again, where there is a pot of money or an underspend that suddenly becomes available, we can react very quickly and flexibly. So, those are areas where we would be particularly good.

[179] **Lesley Griffiths:** You briefly mentioned how you work with third sector organisations. Could you expand on the specific ways that you do that and on how you would like to see your relationships with them develop?

[180] **Ms Kellett:** We are a member of the WCVA, and now that we have a slightly bigger infrastructure, in that we have a chief executive in place, it has been lovely to get to know Graham Benfield and members of his team, and to talk about how we can complement their work and add value to it. We are a member of the funders forum, which has just been resuscitated, as well as the WCVA, and we try to support infrastructure organisations as best we can, although we must be careful that that does not lead to mission drift. We are here just to get more money in—we know what the needs are—so that is really our focus. The Institute of Fundraising is a neighbour of ours, and we have a gentle relationship with it in terms of adding value to each other's work.

10.40 a.m.

[181] There is another thing that we do, which is very understated, which is being a shoulder to lean on for those small groups that we work with, although some of them are actually quite big. The relationship that you have with them as a funder goes way beyond, 'Here is the cheque.' We often get phoned up for general advice and support, and again it is good for the third sector that it has the CVCs to do that on one level and its funders, and independent funders, on another level. Therefore, that goes unsaid—the added-value shoulder that we can give to the groups that we support.

[182] **Mr Brook:** The other key thing is that, in each of the areas where we are particularly active, such as the Fair Share areas, we work closely with the local CVCs. As it happens, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Newport are all bits of the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations, so we have a strong relationship with GAVO. We also know the Neath Port Talbot lot very well; it is an extremely effective organisation, and we get on well. We have a good relationship with Anglesey, but not so great with Wrexham. Wherever there is activity, we work closely with the CVCs, and we know most of them pretty well. Some of our trustees are also members of local CVCs.

[183] **Lesley Griffiths:** I represent Wrexham, and the Duke of Westminster, who you mentioned earlier, lives about a mile outside of the constituency, unfortunately. *[Laughter.]* Our local association is the Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham; how do you think you could develop a relationship with it?

[184] **Mr Brook:** We have a relationship with it, and, initially, we worked closely together. However, we had a slight backward step, if you like, because we commissioned it to do a

piece of co-ordination and it did not work satisfactorily. Therefore, we had to move that to another organisation—the Caia Park Partnership—with whom we have a strong relationship. We love them to bits, and Alison Hill is just marvellous. However, that is our only bad experience, and I am sorry.

[185] **Lesley Griffiths:** That is okay. [*Laughter.*]

[186] **David Lloyd:** Do you co-ordinate your activities or have any working relationships with any public bodies in Wales?

[187] **Mr Brook:** Again, with the Fair Share programme, the local authorities are all strongly represented on our local panels. We try to work hard to find out what is in the community compact or the community plan. For instance, the major work that we are doing in Caerphilly is directly in support of that community plan. The same is true in Newport, where we do not have a Fair Share area, but the city council has worked extremely closely with us; we have asked it to sit in on our grants panels and so on. Therefore, yes we do, particularly where there is a big activity.

[188] **Janice Gregory:** I am sure that you will be pleased to know that we are coming to the end of this session. Paul has the next questions on the allocation of funding.

[189] **Paul Davies:** You mentioned that you match the donor with the doer, providing a business service for donors, helping them to get the most out of their charitable giving and maximising its impact. In what ways does being donor-led affect the foundation's ability to distribute funding across a wide range of need, particularly in relation to unpopular causes? Are there any areas of charitable giving in which community foundations do not, or are unable, to operate?

[190] **Ms Kellett:** We have 23 fundholders now, and, interestingly, the areas of concern, the restrictions and the focus of their funding tend to match, or matches very well, the areas of need. Therefore, that is the first of happy happenstance. Being donor-focused and independent means that we can complement the work of the CVCs and others, without having the mission to support them in what they do. Therefore, we are separate and individual, but we can add value to what they do. Our fundholders recognise and often undertake research into what the needs are, or they ask us to undertake research into what they are, and we find projects that match the needs. So, it is a good distinction: we are donor-led, not needs-led. However, through our work, we are able to find out what the needs are and approach people in a way that works for them to encourage them to broaden their perspective of what their money can do and the impact that it can have.

[191] **Mr Brook:** For example, one of our donors is a sweet gentleman who lives in Llandinam in the middle of Powys, and he wanted to set up a fund in aid of Montgomeryshire boy scouts. I persuaded him that that was a narrow focus and asked whether he could make it open to all youth groups in the whole of Powys, but express it in a way that said 'For all of Wales, with a preference for Powys.' So, we always try to broaden the remit that we get from our donors. If the donor dies and if his successors do not mind, because of the flexibility that we have with our objects, we can broaden the funds out so that they become useful in the long term, and not, as happened in Manchester City Council, find funds that existed to sustain a Wainwright's fair in the middle of Manchester every year.

[192] **Janice Gregory:** Thank you very much. The final questions are mine and are rather long-winded, unfortunately. Has the Welsh Assembly Government committed to any similar or equivalent endowment funds? In what ways would a Government-funded endowment be preferable to Government using those funds for its own capital and revenue programme? Would establishing such a fund impact on or divert funds from existing funding programmes?

[193] **Ms Kellett:** Fabulous. I took Peter Owen from the third sector unit to a reception that we had at Westminster so that he could hear for himself the Minister in London talk about the global grants and endowment-building programme to encourage a broader understanding from it about what endowment can do. The best example is a fund of £5 million that was set up in Newcastle. They have just completed their 10-year review of that endowment, and in 10 years the value of the fund has increased to £7.5 million and they have been able to give £3.5 million in grants; and they can do more. So, that is the value; it is a short-term investment, of course, because you need to have a sizable chunk to set it up, but it is in perpetuity. We talk so much about sustainability in this sector, and that is why community foundations are so strong in their endowment, because we are there for the long term. We manage much pass-through funding, but the endowment is the key because it will always be there and it can often be changed or adapted in line with what the needs are and in line with local policy. So, endowment is very important.

[194] I am sure that the Community Foundation Network in London, which is our support agency, would be happy to talk to whoever about the global grants programme, as would the third sector unit, and to share why they felt that it was so important to invest in endowment-building. Community foundations know that, as does Graham Benfield at the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action, because it is the answer to many of the long-term sustainability problems, but it does require a big chunk of investment. It also requires organisations such as ours, who are experienced in managing endowments, to have an investment committee and be stewards of that money. A community foundation has the necessary skills to invest that money prudently.

[195] Does that answer all three points that you raised?

[196] **Janice Gregory:** Yes, it does, but would you be concerned that, if the Government were to set up such a fund, it would divert funds from existing programmes?

[197] **Ms Kellett:** Ideally, it would be additional money.

[198] **Janice Gregory:** Yes, 'additional', and not 'instead of'. Thank you very much for that. I am not putting you on the spot, but if you can think of a recommendation over the next few days that you would like to see in our report, we would be happy for you to contact us with that, and we would consider it, other than 'Please set one up in Wales.'. Your presentation was very interesting, and you are now on the radar. Thank you for taking the time to come to the committee this morning. I hope that you have enjoyed your experience.

10.50 a.m.

[199] I draw Members' attention to the fact that we wanted the education Minister to come to committee for the domestic abuse inquiry. You will have seen on the table in front of you a statement that we have received from the Minister. I have looked at it and it is clear that there is not a huge role here for the Minister, so I am happy to have received that statement rather than calling her in. I am sure that we can think of an organisation that could come in to present to us rather than asking the Minister questions on quite a narrow field.

[200] **Peter Black:** In fact, they covered education.

[201] **Janice Gregory:** Yes, they did. So, I am happy that we have got this statement. If anyone has any queries, we can ask the Minister to respond in written form, but to ask her to come in is fairly pointless when we have so many other organisations to question.

[202] I just need you to agree to holding meetings in Merthyr Tydfil and in Wrexham. Are

you all still happy for us to hold those meetings? If not, can you please indicate as much? I see that you are happy with that. Thank you.

[203] Our next meeting will be on the morning of 30 April, when we will continue our inquiry into domestic abuse.

Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 10.52 p.m.
The meeting ended at 10.52 p.m.