



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

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

**Dydd Iau, 17 Gorffennaf 2008
Thursday, 17 July 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. Mae hon yn fersiwn ddrafft o'r cofnod. Cyhoeddir fersiwn derfynol ymhen pum diwrnod gwaith.

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. This is a draft version of the record. The final version will be published within five working days.

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
Joyce Watson	Llafur Labour

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Peter Hosking	Uwch Swyddog Polisi, Comisiynydd Plant Cymru Senior Policy Officer, Children's Commissioner for Wales
Marc Phillips	Pennaeth BBC Plant Mewn Angen yng Nghymru Head of BBC Children in Need Wales
Adam Rees	Cydlynnydd y Cynllun Dyn Dyn Project Co-ordinator
Elaine Richards	Swyddog Polisi, Comisiynydd Plant Cymru Policy Officer, Children's Commissioner for Wales

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

Sarah Bartlett	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Lara Date	Clerc Clerk

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 1.31 p.m.
The meeting began at 1.31 p.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Janice Gregory:** Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the Communities and Culture Committee. This is our last evidence-gathering session of this Assembly year, and we will continue our inquiry into domestic abuse when we return in the autumn. I welcome our guests this afternoon. The public gallery is empty at the moment, but I will run through the usual housekeeping announcements that we make at the start of every meeting. If you have a mobile phone—and this applies to all of us, not just the guests—or a pager, or any other electronic device, please ensure that you switch it off completely, rather than switch it to silent or flight mode, because it will interfere with the sound equipment. I welcome the guests who have arrived in the public gallery—good afternoon, and thank you for coming to the

Communities and Culture Committee. In the event of an emergency, an alarm will sound. We are not due to have a fire drill this afternoon, as I understand it, but if we do, you we will be asked to leave the building in a safe and timely fashion, and the ushers will direct us to the nearest exit.

[2] As I am sure you are aware, the Assembly works through the media of Welsh and English; on the headsets in front of you, you will find amplification of sound on channel 0, and simultaneous translation on channel 1.

[3] I have had an apology from Lynne Neagle, and I am sure that Members will join me in sending their congratulations to Lynne and Huw Lewis on the birth of their second son. We do not have a substitution for Lynne.

1.33 p.m.

Tystiolaeth ar gyfer Ymchwiliad y Pwyllgor i Gam-drin Domestig Evidence for the Committee Inquiry into Domestic Abuse

[4] **Janice Gregory:** We now move on to item 2. Members will be aware that this is the eighth evidence session for the committee's inquiry. I am delighted to welcome Peter Hosking, the senior policy officer from the office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales, and Elaine Richards, who is the policy officer. Thank you both for taking the time to come to committee, and thank you for supplying a paper for Members prior to your attendance. I will ask Peter to introduce the paper, and then Members will ask you a series of questions. I tell all of our guests that there are no trick questions here; all questions are a serious attempt to get to the bottom of a very serious issue, and your answers will form part of our final report. After the evidence session, you will be sent a transcript of the discussion. Again, I tell all guests that you cannot remove something that you wish you had not said—if you have said it, it will be included—but please check the transcript for factual accuracy, to ensure that you are happy with what has been put into the Record. If you feel that something has been said that you are not quite sure about, we will check the Record and get back to you.

[5] Without any further ado, I will hand over to you, Peter.

[6] **Mr Hosking:** We have heard the evidence that many other people have given the committee, and we do not wish to repeat it. We have taken the slant of looking at how domestic abuse can affect children in terms of their rights and accessing entitlements.

[7] It is only fairly recently that the effect that domestic abuse has on children has been taken seriously, and it has been taken very seriously more recently. We greatly welcome the development of the protocols by the local safeguarding children boards.

[8] We are not at all sure that all professionals who work with children are sufficiently well trained to recognise the signs of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse can result in some children acting up and displaying bad behaviour—that is one sign. Other children seem to grow up far too quickly when there is domestic abuse in the family, and it is important that we recognise those children who are being better behaved than they possibly should be, as that can also be a sign. We feel that there is an issue around training professionals to recognise that.

[9] Living with domestic abuse infringes on children's rights and prevents them from obtaining some of their entitlements. Play and leisure are some of the most obvious areas in this regard, and we feel that we need a consistent strategy for dealing with domestic abuse across all areas of children's services. We are concerned about the provision of refuges, and

the way in which many children, albeit those over the age of 16, possibly, are prevented from being with their mothers, who may be in a refuge. We see that as an infringement of their right to a family life. We have heard, but we are not in a position to provide details about this, that young males of the age of 14 are sometimes not allowed into some refuges, which is in contradiction to their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

[10] Some time ago, we did a scoping exercise on child and adolescent mental health services, which we distributed to all Assembly Members. One of the areas closely linked with domestic abuse is that of parents who abuse substances, whether that is alcohol, drugs or whatever. Due to our contact with some of our colleagues in health, we became aware that there was a disparity between the way in which adults' services dealt with the adults concerned and sufficient information being passed on to children's services to safeguard the children in those particular situations. We feel that that is also likely to be happening in terms of domestic abuse, namely that there may not be sufficient communication between adults' services and children's services.

[11] We are also concerned about the availability of counselling services. We are pleased to see counselling services in schools, but we feel that counsellors within a school really need to be provided with information about local services to tackle domestic abuse. The other aspect of domestic abuse that we are concerned about is smacking children, because that is a form of institutionalised domestic abuse. We are aware of the Welsh Assembly Government's stance on this and realise that, were it within the Assembly's powers, things would change. This is an area that needs to be looked into, because the use of violence to resolve problems is a learned behaviour. Therefore, if we do something about children being smacked, we believe that that could solve problems in the future, when the children become adults.

[12] 1.40 p.m.

[13] The full range of domestic abuse also includes sexual abuse, and we are concerned about the provision of services for children who have suffered sexual abuse. We know that there are many services out there, but we do not always feel that they are sufficiently resourced or promoted and advertised. That introduces our paper.

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

[15] **Paul Davies:** I want to ask you about the experiences and views of children and young people. What concerns relating to domestic abuse have children and young people raised with you?

[16] **Mr Hosking:** We get concerns about contact, which is problematic for us because the workings of family law in Wales are not devolved and are not, therefore, part of our remit. We have concerns about that when we feel that children do not want contact and yet the courts seem to assume automatically that contact with both parents is the best option for the child. However, we do not feel that that is always the best for the child. Children's voices are not always heard in family law proceedings. We know that the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service Cymru has a role to play in this, but then again, CAFCASS Cymru is bound to look at the child's welfare rather than his or her wishes and feelings. That might sometimes prevent it from representing the child's wishes and feelings to the court. I had one disturbing case where one young lad had to have his hands prised off iron railings to be made to have contact with his father; he did not want to have contact with him. However, as I say, this is an area where we are precluded from following up cases that are subject to court proceedings.

[17] **Lesley Griffiths:** In your paper, you state that the focus on domestic abuse as a

children's rights issue has received less attention than domestic abuse as a matter of child protection. We recently took evidence from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in Wrexham that highlighted the absence of a specific legal duty on public bodies to promote or safeguard equality of opportunity for children and young people. Could you explain to the committee how a children's rights approach to domestic abuse policy would differ in practice from an approach that focuses on child protection?

[18] **Mr Hosking:** We do not suggest that child protection is not of primary importance, but protecting a child—you may feel that a child has been protected in a refuge—is not the only thing that should be considered. There is no denying that that has to happen, but when children are in a refuge, they are often removed from their circle of friends, they have fewer opportunities to access play and leisure facilities and, often, they may not be able to access the internet, which is one way in which young people interact with their friends and associates. There are all sorts of difficulties like that. Clearly, they will not be playing with the children next door, for example. All these things relate to their rights; most people will think about human rights, but the importance of things like play and leisure do not necessarily figure in people's understanding of children's development, but they are quite important. So, all sorts of rights are important—for example, the right to have a say in what happens, as outlined in article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We do not feel that that always happens in court proceedings.

[19] **Lesley Griffiths:** In the absence of a specific duty requiring public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for children and young people, what practical tools might be used to facilitate a rights-based approach?

[20] **Mr Hosking:** That is a difficult question. The provision of more advocacy for children in situations of domestic abuse would be useful. As I said, people assume—quite rightly, in some aspects—that CAFCASS Cymru will act as an advocate for the child. However, it is bound by the welfare consideration, which is paramount. Some form of advocacy for children in those situations that assists them in making their views heard would be an important way of doing it. It is difficult.

[21] **Joyce Watson:** Good afternoon, both. I read your paper with interest; thank you. My questions will be on counselling services. The Children's Commissioner for Wales's submission calls for increased funding to support the implementation of the Assembly Government's national strategy for school-based counselling services in Wales, which is quite right. Do you have any concerns about the ability of certain groups of children and young people to access counselling services?

[22] **Mr Hosking:** I do not have concerns about the ability of children to access counselling services, but I suppose that I have concerns as to whether they will want to access counselling services. The way that school-based counselling services in particular are promoted will need to be considered carefully. I am thinking of various groups, such as children who are experiencing domestic abuse, young carers and children whose parents abuse substances. In each of these situations, there is always the fear that they will be taken into care if they raise the problems with the authorities. That should not necessarily happen with counselling services, although counselling services must be able to point them in the right direction. However, there is reluctance to raise with anyone in authority the activities of their parents that are causing concern. There is a genuine fear that they may be taken out of the family situation. What they really want to happen is for the situation to change and that they remain within the family. The way in which we promote the counselling services will be very important to allow children to want to take up those services.

[23] **Peter Black:** Following on from that, what changes would you like to see in the funding of the Assembly Government's national strategy for school-based counselling

services in Wales, and why?

[24] **Mr Hosking:** One of the problems with the funding for counselling is that it is largely in secondary schools. We should not think that children in primary schools are not subject to domestic abuse or do not witness domestic abuse. So, there is a wide age range of children who would not have access to counselling services anyway. We would like very much to see the counselling services widened for all children in school, and, in fact, all children not in school. However, we recognise that you have to start somewhere, and counselling for children in secondary schools is a good start. It may be that younger children in younger families are more likely to experience domestic abuse than the older children.

[25] **David Lloyd:** Diolch am eich papur ac am y cyflwyniad ar ddechrau'r cyfarfod. Yr ydych wedi sôn am wasanaethau ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc sydd wedi dioddef camdriniaeth rywiol. Yn wir, mae eich adroddiad yn dweud nad oes gwasanaeth digonol ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc sydd wedi dioddef camdriniaeth rywiol. A allwch, felly, ddweud wrthym pa fath o wasanaethau sydd eu hangen ar blant a phobl ifanc sydd wedi dioddef camdriniaeth rywiol, yn eich tyb chi?

David Lloyd: Thank you for your paper and for your presentation at the start of the meeting. You talked at the beginning about services for children and young people who have suffered sexual abuse. In fact, your report says that there are insufficient services for children and young people who have suffered sexual abuse. Can you, therefore, tell us what sorts of services children and young people who have suffered sexual abuse need, in your opinion?

1.50 p.m.

[26] **Mr Hosking:** I am not an expert on this, but one of the articles of the United Nations convention is that children have a right to be rehabilitated from all forms of abuse. One of the problems associated with this is whether they actually ask for those services in the first place, because this is yet another category where they may not want to ask for help—I suppose that what young people might say is that they do not want to land their parents in trouble. I think that the recognition of the problem is more problematic than the provision of some sort of therapy afterwards.

[27] **Ms Richards:** May I interrupt? There are services at the sexual assault referral centres, but they are very adult-focused, so there is a need for age-appropriate services. That can cause problems in itself, because what is suitable for a child of nine or 10 years of age will not necessarily be suitable for a child of 15. So, it is broader than just having children and adult sections within these centres. Also, there does not seem to be a consistent approach across Wales. Some areas may be providing services for children and young people—very good services—but there is no consistent approach. Very often, the postcode lottery comes into it again as to what services they receive. With the centres, there are also extra sensitivities because you have the health needs of the child very often versus the needs of the police or the forensic side regarding the sexual abuse. So, they will have quite a different focus and it is important to balance that with the needs of the child.

[28] **Mr Hosking:** We have heard of some centres providing therapy for paedophiles and that is not the same therapy that is needed for children. Therefore, it is important that you actually get the treatment correct.

[29] **Mark Isherwood:** You have expressed concern about the insecurity of children's workers posts in refuges and have recommended that Assembly Government core funding be provided for that. What awareness do you have of the views of children in refuges themselves of the value of these posts?

[30] **Mr Hosking:** We are not contacted by many young people from refuges, to be honest. In terms of evidence, without having spoken to the young people themselves, I am not entirely sure that it would be appropriate for me to say too much on it. There are problems, for example, with the understanding of their situation within the school situation, and, also, the problem of wanting to keep it fairly private exacerbates the situation and limits any help that can be given to them.

[31] **Janice Gregory:** In terms of refuge services, you mentioned in your introduction, and in your paper, concerns about young boys, 16 years of age and under. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that young males of 14 are denied access to refuge services, in that their mother goes in but they are not allowed. In your paper, you urge the Welsh Assembly Government to provide direction to local authorities on that. Do you have evidence to suggest that that is a problem in all local authority areas or, as Elaine has suggested, is there perhaps a certain disparity between local authorities? Do you have any examples of good or bad practice?

[32] **Mr Hosking:** I think that Women's Aid would be the organisation that would have the details that you want. We really only have some knowledge that there is wide disparity between how this is done. Some refuges will take 16 to 18-year-old males—it seems to vary.

[33] **Janice Gregory:** It is not a consistent approach.

[34] **Mr Hosking:** No, it is not.

[35] **Janice Gregory:** Is there anything that you in the commissioner's office can do to address this issue, or is it very much that you would urge the Welsh Assembly Government to provide direction to the WLGA? Is there another way by which you can influence this?

[36] **Mr Hosking:** We probably do influence it if we get individuals calling through our advice and support service. Then again, that is on a one-to-one basis and a one-authority basis. We would need to consider how we might be able to do some work that could influence it on an all-Wales basis.

[37] **Peter Black:** You expressed concern that projects that aim to address the impact that substance misuse within the family has on children and young people are generally funded in short term. I have heard that concern elsewhere. What sort of services should be available to children and young people affected by substance misuse within the family? How would you like to see those services funded?

[38] **Mr Hosking:** The decision needs to be made locally, probably through children and young people's framework partnerships. We believe, however, that there should be consistent and long-term funding for these projects, and for any support of this kind. These problems are not short-term problems, and so the funding for the solutions should not be short-term either.

[39] **Peter Black:** Sometimes, with substance misuse projects, some of the funding comes from the Home Office and some from the Assembly Government. Is that an issue in terms of the differences of conditions and the length of funding in your experience?

[40] **Mr Hosking:** I am not in a position to answer that. I do not have sufficient knowledge of all the projects throughout Wales.

[41] **Ms Richards:** Some of the projects that health professionals in the local areas were telling us about during the scoping would have been funded with project money. So, it was not even down to Home Office or Welsh Assembly Government money—it was project money. Projects were being set up, and were doing very good work, but after three years, the

funding was ending, and they did not—

[42] **Peter Black:** Is this lottery money?

[43] **Ms Richards:** Usually, yes. They did not know how they would sustain their work. They were telling us that the projects would likely close once the funding finished.

[44] **Mr Hosking:** We have seen some very good practice in dealing with issues of self harm, for example, although I know that it is not the subject of this inquiry. That work is funded by lottery money, and that will last for three years. They do not know of any real way of continuing these projects, despite the fact that they are very valuable projects.

[45] Another point is that health professionals told us a lot about the use of non-recurring funding, whereby, if they receive a certain amount of money in, say, December, they have to spend it by March. They told us at one point that they would rather not have this money in the first place, because if you set up a service that you later have to close, people do not appreciate the fact that you have set up the service and wonder why the local health board has acted so badly in closing the project down. This non-recurrent funding raises expectations and makes it difficult to provide sustainable services on a long-term basis.

[46] **Peter Black:** That may be down to accounting practices within the health profession, and the Assembly Government can perhaps look at that. Obviously, if you are just trying to spend the money by the end of the year, that is not sustainable.

[47] **Mr Hosking:** I got the impression that some of it was a pot of money that was given out by the Welsh Assembly Government rather than a local pot of money suddenly being found.

[48] **Peter Black:** So that they avoid underspends at the end of the year.

[49] **Joyce Watson:** I know that we are talking about children and young people who are vulnerable by virtue of being affected by domestic abuse, but are there any sub-groups in that category that you consider to be particularly and especially vulnerable?

2.00 p.m.

[50] **Mr Hosking:** All the usual suspects come up, particularly children with special educational needs, special needs, or learning difficulties—they are particularly vulnerable. However, in many cases, because we are talking about domestic abuse, these young people would fall into the category of young carers, caring for one parent or the other. They have this tremendous responsibility put upon them, and any child who is not allowed to have a normal childhood is particularly vulnerable. However, once you start looking at categories within categories, you could go on forever.

[51] **Mark Isherwood:** You made several references in your written evidence, and today in your oral evidence, to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Are there any other ways that you can envisage the convention being used as a mechanism to improve the lives of children and young people affected by abuse?

[52] **Mr Hosking:** I am not sure, because the convention does not have the status of law. However, cases could be brought under the Human Rights Act 1998, and so on, to change the provision in statute. I do not see the convention as a tool, particularly—except that, if more people knew about the convention, and about children's rights, they might design their services slightly differently. I am not entirely sure that it could be used as a tool.

[53] **Joyce Watson:** In your paper, you discuss issues around raising awareness of domestic abuse, and various programmes that do that. How can awareness of domestic abuse be raised among children and young people in general? If those children and young people speak up about their experience of domestic abuse as a result of awareness raising, how can they be supported? This is a significant factor, is it not?

[54] **Mr Hosking:** It would be appropriate to look at domestic abuse under a section of the personal and social education syllabus within schools—although, to be honest, I am not entirely sure that that is not being done already. It is a difficult subject to raise in a school context. Teachers in particular should be trained to recognise the signs of domestic abuse, and more awareness about it may come out of the counselling service, if teachers were able to suggest that certain young people took up counselling. I see schools as being fairly central to the business of giving information to children and young people. Advocacy services could be called in to support young people to raise their voices about domestic abuse, but it is difficult to know how they will do that until the young people have admitted that it is happening.

[55] **David Lloyd:** Turning to children and young people who perpetrate domestic abuse, how should the Assembly Government and other public bodies respond to them? To what extent is the current response adequate?

[56] **Mr Hosking:** A crime is a crime—there is no doubt about that, and there are various levels of this. I am not entirely sure whether the current responses can be improved. It is difficult to know what happens within families.

[57] **Peter Black:** You referred on several occasions to the campaign to outlaw the physical chastisement of children. What impact do you think that such a change in the law would have on domestic abuse?

[58] **Mr Hosking:** It is obvious how it might have an impact over a generation, in that violence is a learned behaviour for children who have been smacked and come from families where violence seems to be the way of resolving problems. So, over time, that would alter the prevalence of domestic abuse. In addition, where children have to be reasoned with, their parents will learn that behaviour and find that there is no need to resort to abuse to resolve situations. Parents who have learned to reason with their children are much more likely to reason with their partners and other members of the family.

[59] **Peter Black:** Domestic abuse situations can be difficult, particularly for the police, when a partner does not want to make a complaint. If a child were being drawn into that situation, it might give the police a reason to intervene earlier, and, in that sense, it might also have an impact in the short term.

[60] **Mr Hosking:** The unfortunate thing is that many children will not want to raise it with the authorities, because they are frightened of being taken into care. That may not always happen, but the children do not know that. We have heard similar things from young carers, who say that they have huge problems, but they do not want to tell anyone, because they want their family to stay together. You are right that if the partners do not wish to pursue the matter, it may be persuasable on the children's behalf.

[61] **Janice Gregory:** We have come to the end of your evidence session. Thank you so much again for taking the time to come to the committee. There is one final question, which I ask all our witnesses, which is that when we produce the final report, there will be a series of recommendations to the Welsh Assembly Government Minister, I do not want to put you on the spot, so to speak, but if there was one recommendation that you would like to see in our report, what would that be?

[62] **Mr Hosking:** May I get back to you on that?

[63] **Janice Gregory:** Certainly. Thank you both for coming today.

[64] We move on to evidence from Children in Need Wales. I am delighted to welcome Marc Phillips, who is the head of Children in Need Wales. I noticed that you were in the public gallery when we started the meeting, so you know about the equipment, and to check that your mobile phone switched off, and that, if the alarm sounds, we must all get out of the building and so forth. Thank you for coming today; you will have an idea of how things will progress. We will ask you a series of questions based on the information that you have provided, and thank you very much for providing a paper for committee members. Would you like to make a few introductory remarks on the paper or would you prefer to go straight into questions?

[65] **Mr Phillips:** Briefly, I am grateful not only for the opportunity to present this evidence, but also for the fact that this inquiry is being held. It is an important inquiry, and I hope that its findings, whatever they may be, resonate with the Government. We are a funder, not a service provider; we provide the funds for other people to provide services.

2.10 p.m.

[66] It has become patently clear over a long time that the dependence of some organisations on our funding for what can only be deemed core, essential services for the welfare of children in the most vulnerable of situations is growing to a proportion that is not sustainable. We have a long record of commitment to this sector and to the children in this sector. We are worried that we cannot sustain that level of funding, and the purpose of my paper is to illustrate the fragility of the funding regimes that exist. Some services appear to be funded as an optional add-on, when that is patently not the requirement: these are essential services.

[67] **Paul Davies:** You touched on funding in your introduction, and you state in your paper that many refuge centres are now overreliant on Children in Need funding to pay for children's workers posts. You express concerns about the instability of the sector as a result of current funding arrangements. Could you expand a little more on that and tell the committee a bit more about your concerns?

[68] **Mr Phillips:** We are a funder of a particular character. As we sit here at this point in the year, we have no money. Every penny that was raised in last November's appeal has been spent or allocated, a large proportion in the domestic violence sector. Our funding is dependent year on year on the success of one annual appeal. I acknowledge gratefully that Assembly Members have been involved in fundraising from time to time, but it is not a firm basis. Although we can sit here with some degree of optimism, forward planning and making optimistic projections of what might be our budget for grant-making next year, there is no way that we can guarantee that. When you have an entire sector of activity, such as child workers and refugees, dependent on that funding, it puts them in a very vulnerable position. The purpose of my paper is not to try to pull the rug from under the feet of organisations with which we have had a long funding relationship, but to acknowledge, as they do, that sustaining that level of activity—it is almost 20 per cent of our spend, and has even exceeded that in some years—would be hugely disproportionate, given the nature of demands made on our funds. If we cannot sustain that, it puts the children in an even more vulnerable position, and that is what we are seeking to redress.

[69] **Peter Black:** Allow me to turn your evidence on its head for a moment. On the funding that you provide for these domestic abuse services, are there any advantages to the people whom you fund in receiving moneys from a charitable sector body such as yours? For

example, do you impose fewer targets or criteria for that money than a Government body would?

[70] **Mr Phillips:** We do not impose targets or criteria; they are built into our application and assessment process, and we have an ongoing relationship and discussion with the organisations that we fund. There are ways in which funding from the charitable sector in general can provide an organisation with flexibility and freedom of action. That is entirely appropriate, and we would want to maintain that commitment to the sector. However, it is not appropriate for those services that are deemed essential and core. If we were to cease funding in this sector—and we are the only significant independent funder in the sector—the reality is that child workers would have to be withdrawn from at least 15 refuges. In fact, it is more than that now, because we have funded another three in the past week. A huge number of child workers would simply disappear.

[71] **Peter Black:** You referred in your evidence to the fact that, if you were not funding this core provision, you would like to use that money to develop innovations or provide enhancements that would directly benefit children. Could you outline what alternatives you would prefer to fund if you were not putting any money into these core projects?

[72] **Mr Phillips:** We see the core provision as being the role of specialist workers, who are well trained and have the skills to operate face to face with children on responding to their needs in various settings, within the refuge and out in the community. What they do with those children may involve a variety of different activities that incur costs. We are quite happy to cover some of those costs. We are also happy that we have funded, in the past week, a new and innovative refuge-based project that will focus directly, almost in a research-based capacity, on the incidence of drug and alcohol abuse in domestic violence situations. It will address specifically those issues as they affect children and their mothers. That is an innovative approach that I have not seen replicated in other refuges. I think that it is an entirely legitimate use of charitable sector funding to initiate that type of work that we hope will spin off across the wider sector. It could be seen as supplementary to the core, and it therefore becomes legitimate for us.

[73] **David Lloyd:** Yr wyf yn credu, Marc, dy fod wedi ateb y cwestiwn hwn yn rhannol. Yr wyt yn ymwybodol y buom, fel pwyllgor, yn cynnal yr adolygiad hwn ers rhai misoedd bellach ac yr ydym yn ddiolchgar am dy gyflwyniad ysgrifenedig. Yn ogystal ag ariannu'r hyn sy'n graidd, yr ydym eisiau darganfod pa weithgareddau arloesol a fyddai'n ddelfrydol eu trefnu ar gyfer plant mewn llochesi. Yr ydym yn awyddus i ddarganfod esiamplau o weithgareddau arloesol yn y llochesi sydd wedi'u profi eisoes i gael effaith bositif ar blant a phobl ifanc sydd wedi dioddef cam-drin yn y cartref. Mae'n siŵr bod gen ti brofiad o fwy nag un prosiect arloesol gyda Plant Mewn Angen ar draws y Deyrnas Gyfunol sydd wedi cael effaith bositif ar blant a phobl ifanc sydd, yn anffodus, wedi dioddef cam-drin yn y cartref.

David Lloyd: I think, Marc, that you have partly answered my next question. You will be aware that, as a committee, we have been conducting this review for some months now, and we are grateful to you for your written submission. As well as funding what is core, we want to try to discover what innovative activities it would be ideal to arrange for children in refuges. We are eager to find examples of innovative activities in the refuges that have already been proven to have a positive effect on children and young people who have experienced domestic violence. I am sure that you have experience of more than one innovative project with Children in Need across the United Kingdom that has had a positive effect on those children and young people who have, unfortunately, experienced domestic violence.

[74] **Mr Phillips:** Nid wyf wedi dod â rhestr o enghreifftiau felly gyda mi ond, yn

Mr Phillips: I have not brought a list of such examples with me, but, certainly, what works

sic, yr hyn sy'n llwyddo yw galluogi rhywun proffesiynol i weithio wyneb yn wyneb â phlentyn i ddatblygu ystod eang o weithgareddau, triniaethau, yn aml iawn, ac ymyrraeth ar ran plentyn sydd angen eiriolaeth o ran ei berthynas â'r ysgol, er enghraifft. Rheiny yw'r gweithgareddau sy'n gweithio, yn hytrach na gweithgareddau sy'n ddibynnol ar weithgaredd grŵp neu weithgaredd blanced ar draws sector o blant. Gwaith unigol sy'n cyfrif bob amser ac sy'n helpu'r plentyn i ddatblygu ac i ddod i delerau â sefyllfa ddyrs iawn iddo.

is enabling a professional person to work face to face with children on developing a wide range of activities, treatments, very often, and interventions on behalf of a child who needs advocacy to support his or her relationship with the school, for example. Those are the activities that are proven to work, rather than activities that are dependent on group work or blanket activities across a sector of children. It is always one-to-one work that counts and helps the child to develop and to come to terms with what is a very complex situation for him or her.

[75] **Joyce Watson:** A number of witnesses have provided evidence that indicates that some children and young people affected by domestic abuse might be those who are particularly vulnerable, such as disabled children and the children of disabled parents, boys and young men, particularly those aged between 14 and 18, and some children from black and minority ethnic communities. How do you think that BBC Children in Need could support vulnerable children and young people particularly? Do you even think that that is your role?

[76] **Mr Phillips:** In many ways, that is our bread and butter. The fund that we have to spend across Wales is roughly £2.8 million per annum, but the demands made on it are to the tune of £15 million, so it is inevitable that we need to focus our attention on those who are perceived to be the most vulnerable and those who are most in need of acute services. We have been able to focus funds on the BME sector, through the Black Association of Women Step Out and similar organisations. Children with disabilities have not featured heavily in our portfolio of grants in relation to domestic violence, but children living in homes where substance abuse occurs do feature heavily. That is an added sector of activity that we are heavily engaged in.

[77] **Mark Isherwood:** What impact have the arrangements for funding domestic abuse services for children in Scotland had on your work there?

2.20 p.m.

[78] **Mr Phillips:** In Scotland, there were negotiations with the Scottish Parliament around 2001, I believe, with local authorities and the Women's Aid network in Scotland, all of which enabled Children in Need to say that it would not fund this. We deem this to be core provision, as do other sectors. The Scottish Parliament has made it a statutory requirement to have the core provision of child workers in refuges across Scotland. That has enabled Children in Need to channel its money more creatively. Yes, we pay for some of the add-ons, the services and activities that go hand in hand with that work, and that is to be able to get more of a balance in our portfolio of grant-making so that other sectors of Children in Need are not disadvantaged by the disproportionate demand on one sector.

[79] **Mark Isherwood:** Can you tell us about any of the particular projects that you have been supporting in Scotland?

[80] **Mr Phillips:** I do not have details of the Scottish experience on a project-by-project basis, but I am certainly aware of examples of the funding of Saturday and weekend activities that take children out of the refuge situation and enable the child to socialise in areas where they may otherwise have been severely inhibited by the experience that they have gone through.

[81] **Joyce Watson:** You highlighted in the paper the development of service provision for children and young people. You welcome the Welsh Assembly Government's decision to fund children's services within Welsh Women's Aid. However, you warn that it is insufficient.

[82] 'The new work funded by the Welsh Assembly Government is an important extension to current provision: but the foundation itself is weak, and this now surely merits attention.'

[83] That being the case, which service areas do you think are in greatest need of development?

[84] **Mr Phillips:** The security of tenure and of development for child workers who are refuge-based and who are working directly with the children. The seven peripatetic workers who have been put in place via Assembly Government funding for Welsh Women's Aid are doing a valuable job, but it was additional to the perceived needs of the sector in many ways. It has enabled Welsh Women's Aid to take a much more strategic view of the needs of the sector, which I think has been reflected in its evidence to the committee, and it has a valuable input. However, if there is not the bedrock of the refuge-based child workers in the first place, there would be nothing for those peripatetic workers to do. So, it is raising the bar by improving standards, developing consistency, analysing data, and developing best practice, but the real demand is for the workers on the ground within the refuges.

[85] **Paul Davies:** I understand that Children in Need has provided funding for the first refuge in Wales to house male victims of domestic abuse who care for children. Can you tell the committee more about that, please?

[86] **Mr Phillips:** It is an innovative programme based in rural Montgomeryshire and is the first one to come to our attention. I am sure that Adam, who is giving evidence after me, will correct any misinformation that I give. It is the first example that has come to our attention of a refuge for fathers and their children who are seeking refuge from a domestic violence situation. There are similar projects in other parts of the UK, but this is the first in Wales.

[87] It is an interesting development. A great deal of the ethos of women's refuges is based on the women's movement and has its focus there. My focus, and that of Children in Need, is exclusively on the children. Therefore, regardless of whether those children are living with mothers or fathers who have experienced domestic violence, it is the children in that situation who are my concern.

[88] The submission to us for the funding for that project clearly highlighted that children who live with a father who has fled domestic violence seem to carry a much greater burden of discomfort about discussing the situation with anybody, because there is a perception that a man who flees a situation is open to allegations of being a wimp or of being inadequate in some way. That is an entirely false perception, but that is a burden that the children also carry in their interactions with their peers.

[89] **Janice Gregory:** Thank you very much for coming to committee today. Your evidence will form an important part of our report. As you know, there will be recommendations. I will now ask you the question that I have asked the previous presenters. I picked out a few recommendations from your paper, but I just wondered whether you have one recommendation that you would really like to see in our report.

[90] **Mr Phillips:** Quite simply, it would be the mainstreaming of stable funding for child workers in refuge settings and out in the community, working from refuges. They can work

on a face-to-face basis with young people. I am not entirely prescriptive in my ideas as to where that money should come from—it could come from the Assembly, via local authorities or wherever. The sector requires that stability of funding so that it can plan and develop.

[91] **Janice Gregory:** That is great. Thank you very much indeed, Mark. You are more than welcome to stay in the room with us if you want. Thank you for your evidence this afternoon.

[92] I now welcome to the table Adam Rees. He is the Dyn Project co-ordinator. Thank you, Adam, for coming to committee this afternoon. I noticed you up in the gallery with Mark, so I know that your mobile phone is off and that you know that if the fire alarm sounds we will all have to leave the building. You will also know about the translation system.

[93] Thank you for providing a paper for Members. We will follow the same procedure, in that I will ask you to introduce your paper, and then we will go to a series of questions. It is over to you, Adam.

[94] **Mr Rees:** Thank you very much for inviting me today. It is really important and lovely that we have got to the stage where somebody can come and speak about male victims. You have all seen in my paper that it is about acknowledgement and moving forward with working with male victims, in addition to working with female victims, and as an organisation, we acknowledge that the majority of domestic abuse victims are female.

[95] **Paul Davies:** I will ask a general question. In your view, what are the main differences in the circumstances and experiences of men and women who are domestically abused?

[96] **Mr Rees:** In the work that we do and with the victims that we work with, we have found that it ultimately comes down to power and control. So, the core elements are the same. We have done some research in the form of an evaluation report, which is distilled in the paper that I have given you. Obviously there is a physical difference there, and we can connect a lot of the physical violence to female victims because of the physical differences between men and women. A lot of the time that does not happen as early on in domestic abuse situations with male victims. There is also a difference in our service provision for heterosexual men and gay men.

[97] **Joyce Watson:** My question follows on quite nicely from where you finished there. This is an area that we were particularly interested in, because the statistics are so limited. This is about knowing who is likely to be a victim and whether there are differences. The statistics tell us that, for women, there are no differences. Have you found that there is any difference between the victims who are men? Are there more men suffering in heterosexual relationships or gay relationships? Do the victims come from particular ethnic minority groups? Are there any differences in any categories or groups?

[98] **Mr Rees:** To a certain extent, the differences mirror the findings of the research that has been done on female victims. The difference for gay men as opposed to heterosexual men is in terms of community, as there can be problems with coming out to friends, family and employees, and that can often affect a domestic abuse relationship, as the threat of being outed to colleagues and so on can be used as an additional tool in that abuse. So that increases the opportunity for abuse.

2.30 p.m.

[99] In terms of whether the abuse is more in certain areas, we do not have that information, because very little research has been done. My predecessor did a bit of research

on it, which showed that there has been a small increase in the number of gay men being seen at the unit under the Dyn Project. However, our most recent figures show that around 10 per cent of our cases are gay men, and that connects with the projection that 10 per cent of the population is gay.

[100] **Mark Isherwood:** Thank you again for your hospitality when I visited you. How many men have been supported by the project thus far, and how do you see the trend for future numbers?

[101] **Mr Rees:** The Dyn Project has two main branches. We have an advocacy project in Cardiff, which is connected to the women's safety unit—Jan Pickles came and spoke to you about that several weeks ago. That project provides advocacy support for men in the Cardiff area in the same way that the women's safety unit does for women. Last year, we dealt with 170 men in that project, and the majority of those referrals came from the domestic abuse unit and the police. We have also received funding from the Welsh Assembly Government to run the Dyn Wales helpline across the country, and that has been running since the end of March. We have averaged between five and 10 cases a week since March—those are men coming to us looking for support and to find services in their area.

[102] **Peter Black:** You said that a large number of your referrals in the Cardiff area come from the police. Obviously, in such instances, the victims have gone to the police with their concerns. However, what proportion of your clients overall would report an incident of domestic abuse to the police?

[103] **Mr Rees:** The vast majority of referrals to us and to the women's safety unit come from the police. I would say that about 98 per cent of our cases are referred to us through the domestic abuse unit. In terms of men coming to us themselves or through other sources, several have come recently from social services and from Cedar House, which is the male refuge in Cardiff. As advocates, we explain the criminal procedures to them and discuss whether the victim wants to go ahead with those. However, such cases are a small proportion of the total at the moment, and that is one of the issues with referrals—we would like to increase the number of referrals from sources other than the police, because they are often cases where physical violence has not happened yet, but where other forms of abuse are happening.

[104] **Joyce Watson:** Following on from that, your guiding principles document defines domestic abuse as,

[105] 'the misuse of power and control by one adult over another'.

[106] Why have you opted to exclude children and young people under 18 from that definition?

[107] **Mr Rees:** That was the original Home Office definition for the independent domestic violence advocate service; we took it from there initially. The guiding principles resulted from an evaluation in 2006, and as an advocacy service, we generally only work with people over the age of 18.

[108] **Peter Black:** In your submission to the committee, you highlight some of the differences in how men and women want to be supported. For example, heterosexual men are less likely to engage with established advocacy services than gay men or heterosexual women. Could you give us an overview of the different service needs of men and women?

[109] **Mr Rees:** I can talk specifically about the male victim side of that. Advocates are trained to follow the Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse regulations, which is how

independent domestic violence advisers are generally trained across England and Wales, but we have noticed in Cardiff that straight men tend to prefer to use facilitation services. When a victim comes to us, we go through an individual safety plan and work out what we need to do to make them safe and to reduce the risk of homicide or serious injury. We often contact housing departments, for example, on their behalf. However, with heterosexual men, it is more likely that we would give them the support to do that themselves. So, to an extent it is about enabling them and allowing them to regain control, because there are certain issues around emasculation.

[110] **Peter Black:** To what extent does current service provision, including male-focused and non-gender-specific provision, meet the needs of men affected by domestic abuse?

[111] **Mr Rees:** A lot of funding has come from the Home Office for the IDVA role, across England and Wales. It is a gender-neutral role, so many IDVAs work with both men and women. The gender-neutral position of the last domestic abuse strategy has meant that we are advertising domestic abuse generally, but we should really be focusing more on male victims, and helping people to identify that they could be male victims, because, a lot of the time, male and female victims do not realise that domestic abuse is going on in their situation, because, as you go through a relationship, you normalise what is happening. So, from our perspective, there are some services in the area, but even the people who are providing those services do not realise that they could be working with both male and female victims.

[112] **Peter Black:** If resources were available, which service areas would you prioritise for development?

[113] **Mr Rees:** That would be a big decision on my part. The advocacy services that are based around the IDVA and the multi-agency risk assessment conference services deal with high and very high risk cases. In Wales, it is great that we have the support of Women's Aid, which provides support to the medium and low-risk victims of domestic abuse who are female. Men in that position do not have any support at the moment, so I would like to look at some kind of support for that. When she came before you last time, I think that Jan spoke about the fact that we are hoping to develop a commissioning tool, so we would be looking at how we could commission male services. The idea is to create a signposting and support tool for medium and low-risk men.

[114] **Joyce Watson:** On the same theme of services for men, and the experience that you have gained from working within the Dyn Project, have you been able, in the early stage, to identify groups of men with particular support needs? If you have, to what extent does current service provision meet the needs of those particular groups?

[115] **Mr Rees:** We are seeing a need in a lot of men who are coming to us with issues, because there are no services being provided at the moment. In Cardiff, we are lucky that the Dyn Project has community safety partnership funding to provide advocacy, but that specific support is not available anywhere else. For a lot of male victims across Wales—I work in all the local authorities—it is about the issue of acknowledgement. Men suffering in certain areas could go to a police station and be laughed at for being a male victim. A lot of the referrals that we get through the helpline from across Wales are from Women's Aid, because a man will turn up there, because he knows that Women's Aid deals with domestic abuse, and that is the only resource that he can think of, but it does not have any resources to support him because of capacity issues. So, it is about acknowledging that there are differing services across the country.

[116] **Peter Black:** We will let some other Members in in a minute.

[117] **Janice Gregory:** Yes, we will.

[118] **Peter Black:** Your paper talked about the importance of screening to ensure that there is no collusion with perpetrators and to protect the victims of domestic abuse. Can you tell us more about that screening process, for example, is every man who approaches the Dyn Project for help screened, and how does that screening process work?

[119] **Mr Rees:** The screening process was created when we first started the Dyn Project, which came out of referrals to the MARAC in Cardiff for which there was no support. One of the issues of working with male victims, now and then, was the fear of a lot of women's organisations that we were working with men who would ultimately be perpetrators, and who would take the support and information that we gave them back and use it against the victim. So, the aim of the screening process was to stop any problems like that, and for us to screen out the perpetrators who were coming through to us. The process is that when someone comes to us, we have an initial interview when we go through their safety plan—we would do that with a male or female victim. During that interview, we would also ask the person about the incidence of domestic abuse. When one of our advocates walks into a room and speaks to a victim, they get clear signals from how a victim speaks and what they speak about. If you ask him or her about the domestic abuse and why they have come to you, they can give you details of the abuse that they have suffered over the last six months or year. A man who comes to us who could be a perpetrator will not have those definite details; they will say, 'I have been domestically abused', and use those kinds of terms. So, we speak to them and take down the information and look at the context of what they are saying and their intent in coming to us. We also take advantage of information-sharing protocol that we have through the MARAC in Cardiff. We check the Dyn Project database and the women's safety database, and we contact the local police domestic abuse unit. Through those three databases, we look to see whether there is any history of the victim or the perpetrator being the opposite. We also look for that when we are dealing with gay men, to identify whether there has been any history of that person being a perpetrator.

[120] Anecdotally, we have had recent cases with older people who have been in relationships in which they have been the perpetrator in the past but, due to disability or disability through age, they have become the victim in that relationship, and the victim has become the perpetrator. We would look into those issues and take them into consideration when giving support. Sometimes, we will be dealing with a man who has been known to be aggressive or violent towards their partner in the last two or three months, and we would have to consider seriously what support we could give that person, because the basic safety planning information that we gave, or any information that we would normally give to a victim, might affect how the other person in that relationship is dealt with by that person. That is one of the main issues that we would have with providing support. The other issue is that, if men have been through much domestic abuse, they might retaliate. If a female victim retaliated, people would say that she was defending herself, but when a man hits a woman, he instantly becomes, in the eyes of attending police officers and neighbours, the perpetrator. That is an issue, namely how we identify whether a man is defending himself perhaps once or has become a perpetrator.

2.40 p.m.

[121] **Mark Isherwood:** You have called for consistent risk assessment and a screening process across Wales; how would you like to see that done?

[122] **Mr Rees:** I would like to develop that through the Dyn Project. The screening process that we have developed comes from the Dyn Project, and we work with that in the area. Recently, I have been doing some training across Wales, specifically in north Wales, for local services that have no knowledge of working with male victims and that are keen to do that. So, we shared our screening process with them. That is a key point: many organisations

that currently work with male victims have no provision to look at that screening process. As I just explained, we do that to secure in our own minds that we are working with genuine victims and to stop any information going to the wrong parties. In some areas, that may not be happening at the moment.

[123] **Paul Davies:** Your paper argues that local domestic abuse co-ordinators should have a responsibility to become involved with the development of domestic abuse services for men. What is the current role of domestic abuse co-ordinators in relation to the development of services for men affected by domestic abuse?

[124] **Mr Rees:** There is one domestic abuse co-ordinator in each local authority, funded through the Assembly, and their role is to develop the multi-agency risk assessment conference process and to encourage independent domestic violence adviser services as well as look at specialist domestic violence courts. There is no provision in the domestic abuse all-Wales strategy to acknowledge male victims; the last strategy only acknowledged in the foreword that men may be victims. So, they have no direct input into working with male victims. Part of my role is to work with each of these domestic abuse co-ordinators and I have had a tremendous response from them in developing and raising awareness of male victims across the country, but that does not specifically come into any of their roles.

[125] **Paul Davies:** How effective are the current arrangements for commissioning services to meet the needs of all of those affected by domestic abuse?

[126] **Mr Rees:** I am not sure whether I am in a position to comment on all of that, but from a male victim perspective, the issue with many of the services that we look at is the recognition and acknowledgement that men can be victims. Often, documentation from the Assembly or from local authorities mentions female victims and sometimes men, and that is the acknowledgement. Part of our guiding principles for the Dyn Project is to acknowledge the asymmetric nature of domestic abuse—acknowledging that women are the majority of victims, but that, as a minority, male victims need some support and acknowledgement.

[127] **David Lloyd:** Mae cysylltiad agos rhwng eich ateb diwethaf a fy nghwestiwn nesaf ar yr angen i godi ymwybyddiaeth o gam-drin dynion yn y cartref. Yr ydych wedi cyfeirio at hyn eisoes, ac mae'r ffaith eich bod yma heddiw yn codi ymwybyddiaeth o'r mater hwn. Fodd bynnag, a allwch fynd ar ôl y broblem mewn mwy o ddyfnder ac olrhain eich pryderon ynglŷn ag unrhyw ddiffyg ymwybyddiaeth gan wasanaethau cyhoeddus, gan wahanol sectorau neu gan wahanol broffesiynau o'r problemau? Os oes gennych bryderon, sut mae codi ymwybyddiaeth o ddynion yn dioddef o gamdriniaeth yn y cartref?

David Lloyd: Your last response is closely linked to my next question on the need to raise awareness of male domestic abuse. You have already referred to this, and the fact that you are here today raises awareness of this issue. However, could you outline this problem in a bit more detail and tell us about your concerns about the lack of awareness by public services, different sectors or different professions of the problems? If you have concerns, how can we raise awareness of male domestic abuse?

[128] **Mr Rees:** One of the big issues for me is that, when I try to speak about male victims in many places around Wales, there is much reticence from certain organisations to acknowledge that men could be victims and, more importantly, that women could be perpetrators. Rather than looking at raising awareness for male victims, we need to raise awareness for victims generally and acknowledge that those victims could be men or women. Working together is the only way forward. Obviously, I am aware of funding issues and trying to get separate services going, but I think that the women's safety unit and the Dyn Project have worked well together. We work from the same office, but ultimately we run two

separate projects, providing services that differ slightly, but the core is the same. Across Wales, I think that that is the key. A lot of services are currently being developed through organisations, including some Women's Aid organisations, to provide for male victims. They are realising that there is a need for them and that they can also provide them, if they look towards doing so.

[129] **Janice Gregory:** Thank you. Raising awareness is really important, is it not? It is nice to see you here, because when we were the Social Justice and Regeneration Committee, a few moons ago now, we took evidence from your predecessor, when we were looking at the domestic abuse strategy. It is nice to see your organisation back. Awareness of your organisation has risen quite considerably from where it was to where it is now. We wish you well with your endeavours to raise that awareness even higher throughout Wales.

[130] The last question is from me. Adam, you will know that your evidence will form part of the report to the Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government. In that report will be a series of recommendations from the committee and I wondered whether you had one particular recommendation that you would like to see in that report.

[131] **Mr Rees:** As I have already said, probably several times, it is about acknowledging that women are the majority of victims, but it would be nice to move forward to acknowledge that men can also be victims. Rather than being considered as an aside or as an afterthought, men really need to be looked at as victims of domestic abuse. We often see documents that talk about women and children who experience domestic abuse, and it is that acknowledgement within documentation and within society that the Dyn Project is really moving forward with at the moment.

[132] **Janice Gregory:** Thank you. You will be sent a transcript of the proceedings, so please check it for factual accuracy. Thank you, Adam.

[133] Thank you to everyone for attending, especially my two serious-question askers, here on the right hand side—Peter Black and Joyce Watson. I did not mean to say 'serious', because they were all serious questions; I meant to say 'serial question askers'. Thank you all for your help.

[134] The next committee will be after the summer recess, as you know. You also need to know that the Business Committee has agreed an outline timetable and it looks as if we are going back to meeting on Wednesday mornings. I just wish you to be aware of that. Thank you all for your attendance. I wish you well over the summer and we will see you again in September. I declare the meeting closed.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 2.47 p.m.
The meeting ended at 2.47 p.m.*