



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

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

**Dydd Mercher, 3 Tachwedd 2010  
Wednesday, 3 November 2010**

**Cynnwys**  
**Contents**

- 3 Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon  
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions
- 4 Ymchwiliad i Hygyrchedd Digwyddiadau Celfyddydol a Diwylliannol yng Nghymru—  
Casglu Tystiolaeth  
Inquiry into Accessibility of Arts and Cultural Activities Across Wales—Evidence Gathering
- 28 Papurau i'w Nodi  
Papers to Note

Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynnddi 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**

Mohammad Asghar	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Eleanor Burnham	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Mark Isherwood	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
David Lloyd	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Sandy Mewies	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)
Lynne Neagle	Llafur Labour
Joyce Watson	Llafur Labour

**Eraill yn bresennol**  
**Others in attendance**

David Anderson	Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol, Amgueddfa Cymru Director General, National Museum Wales
Robin Gwyn	Cyfarwyddwr Cyfathrebu, Amgueddfa Cymru Director of Communications, National Museum Wales
John Howells	Cyfarwyddwr Diwylliant, Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru Director of Culture, Welsh Assembly Government
Alun Ffred Jones	Aelod Cynulliad, Plaid Cymru, y Gweinidog dros Dreftadaeth Assembly Member, Plaid Cymru, Minister for Heritage
Paul Loveluck	Cadeirydd, Amgueddfa Cymru Chair, National Museum Wales
Michael Tooby	Cyfarwyddwr Dysgu, Rhaglenni a Datblygu, Amgueddfa Cymru Director of Learning, Programmes and Development , National Museum Wales

**Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol**  
**National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance**

Sarah Bartlett	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Tom Jackson	Clerc Clerk

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9 a.m.*  
*The meeting began at 9 a.m.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon**  
**Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Sandy Mewies:** It is 9 a.m. and so I intend to start this meeting of the Communities and Culture Committee. I welcome the Minister for Heritage, Alun Ffred Jones, and John Howells, who are with us to give evidence in today's meeting, which I think is the last at which we will gather oral evidence for the committee's inquiry into the accessibility of arts and cultural activities across Wales.

**Ymchwiliad i Hygyrchedd Digwyddiadau Celfyddydol a Diwylliannol yng  
Nghymru—Casglu Tystiolaeth  
Inquiry into Accessibility of Arts and Cultural Activities Across Wales—Evidence  
Gathering**

[2] **Sandy Mewies:** As I said, Alun Ffred Jones, the Minister for Heritage, is with us this morning, as is John Howells, the director of culture. Thank you for the paper that you have submitted to us. Members have read the paper, but would one of you perhaps like to begin by giving us a general introduction? It is up to you. Then, Members will ask their questions.

[3] **Y Gweinidog dros Dreftadaeth The Minister for Heritage (Alun Ffred Jones):** Diolch yn fawr am y **Jones):** Thank you for this opportunity. cyfle hwn.

[4] **Sandy Mewies:** Before you go on, as there are people sitting at the back, I ask everyone here to turn off their mobile phones, BlackBerrys, or any other electronic devices that might interfere with the broadcasting equipment.

[5] I invite Members to make any declarations of interest. I see that there are none.

[6] For the information of everyone here, we operate in both the Welsh and English languages. Interpretation from Welsh into English is available on channel 1, and, if you have any hearing difficulties, it is channel 0.

[7] Alun Ffred, please start if you would like to do so.

[8] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr iawn. Yr wyf wedi cyflwyno'r dystiolaeth, felly nid oes pwynt imi ailadrodd yr hyn sydd yn y papur. Yr wyf yn ddiolchgar am y cyfle i ddod yma i geisio ychwanegu at y dystiolaeth mewn unrhyw ffordd y medraf. Yn gyffredinol, mae gan y Llywodraeth record dda o safbwynt ceisio hyrwyddo mynediad i weithgareddau yn y maes treftadaeth a'r maes celfyddydol ar draws Cymru. Fodd bynnag, nid da lle gellir gwell.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you. I have presented the evidence, so there is no point repeating what is in the paper. I am grateful for the opportunity to come here to try to add to the evidence in any way that I can. In general, the Government has a good record with regard to trying to promote access to activities in the fields of heritage and the arts throughout Wales. However, there is always room for improvement.

[9] **Sandy Mewies:** Thank you for that. I have the first question. You have spoken about the Welsh Government's 'One Wales' commitment to provide high-quality cultural experiences to all people, irrespective of where they live or their background. In your view, to what extent has the Welsh Government achieved its 'One Wales' commitment?

[10] **Alun Ffred Jones:** By and large, we have done reasonably well, but there is always more to be done, as I suggested in my introductory remarks. However, if you look across the piece at the work done by various agencies such as Cadw, CyMAL, and the Arts Council of Wales, you will find that a number of the actions have resulted in more people accessing arts and cultural activities. The figures seem to suggest that a wide range of people are able to access and are accessing various activities. For example, with regard to the work of CyMAL, which looks after libraries and museums, between 2008 and 2011, there is a record investment of £10 million in libraries. The latest figures suggest that Wales has seen a large increase in the number of borrowers. Recent figures show that there has been an increase of 5 per cent in the number of people borrowing from libraries across Wales. That is in stark

contrast to the figures for England and, indeed, the figures for Wales are better than those for any other part of the UK. That is one example of the type of activity that is ongoing. I can refer to others, but much of it is referred to in the written evidence.

[11] **Sandy Mewies:** The Arts Council of Wales told us that participation in the arts has broadened, but it said that more needed to be done because access to different art forms across the country is patchy. Do you agree with that statement, or is it only partly true?

[12] **Alun Ffred Jones:** That is certainly true of the arts and would undoubtedly be true of other cultural activities, because of various barriers, whether geographical or social. It also depends to some extent on the investment made by local authorities.

[13] **Sandy Mewies:** Thank you, that is very useful. We will go on to Dai Lloyd's question now, and I must make the point that Dai, as always, is doing a wonderful job covering two committees, so he may have to leave us at some stage.

[14] **David Lloyd:** Yes, but hopefully not halfway through this question.

[15] I fanylu ar y thema y mae'r Cadeirydd newydd ddechrau arni, mae tystion i'r ymchwiliad hwn wedi cyfeirio at nifer o rwystrau sy'n atal pobl rhag cymryd rhan ac ymwneud â digwyddiadau celfyddydol a diwylliannol. Yr ydych yn cyfeirio yn eich tystiolaeth at sut y gall daearyddiaeth, iaith a phoblogaeth wasgaredig effeithio ar hyn. Mae sawl tyst arall wedi cyfeirio'n benodol at sut y gall caledi economaidd, trafnidiaeth ac anabledd gael yr un math o effaith. Sut ydych chi'n gweithio i roi sylw i'r rhwystrau sy'n atal pobl rhag ymwneud â gweithgareddau diwylliannol?

To go into detail on the theme that the Chair has already touched upon, witnesses to the inquiry have identified many barriers that prevent people from accessing and participating in arts and cultural activities. You refer in your evidence to how geography, language and a dispersed population can impact on this. Many other witnesses have referred specifically to how economic hardship, transport and disability can have the same kind of effect. What are you doing to address the barriers that prevent people from participating in cultural activities?

[16] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mae hwnnw'n gwestiwn eang iawn. Pe baem ond yn cyfeirio at fynediad am ddim i'r safleoedd dan ofal Amgueddfa Cymru ac i'r rhan fwyaf o safleoedd Cadw, byddech yn gweld yn syth fod hynny ynddo'i hun wedi golygu fod y nifer o bobl sydd yn mynd i'n hamgueddfeydd wedi cynyddu yn aruthrol dros y cyfnod y bu'r polisi hwn ar waith. Mae hynny, yn sicr, wedi agor y drysau yn llythrennol i lawer o bobl na fyddai efallai wedi cael y cyfle fel arall.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** That is a very broad question. If we were just to refer to free entry to the sites in the stewardship of National Museum Wales and to most of Cadw's sites, you would see immediately that that in itself has meant that the number of people visiting our museums has increased enormously over the period that this policy has been in place. That, certainly, has literally opened the doors to many people who might not otherwise have had the opportunity.

[17] Byddwn hefyd yn cyfeirio at y gwaith mae Cadw yn ei wneud ar rai o'i safleoedd o safbwynt pobl sy'n dioddef o wahanol fathau o anabledd. Ceir enghreifftiau da iawn o hyn, megis y bont newydd yng nghastell Caernarfon, sy'n golygu bod pobl sydd ag anabledd corfforol bellach yn gallu cael mynediad rhwydd i'r castell yn lle eu

I would also refer to the work that Cadw is doing on some sites with regard to people with various types of disability. There are good examples of this, such as the new bridge in Caernarfon castle, which means that people with a physical disability can now have easy access to the castle rather than having to climb the stairs. Cadw is also

bod yn gorfod dringo'r grisiau. Mae Cadw hefyd yn gwneud gwaith yng Nghastell Rhaglan o safbwynt defnyddio technoleg fodern. Mae gwaith hefyd yng Nghastell Coch sy'n golygu fod pobl sy'n dioddef o anabledau gweld yn gallu defnyddio sgriniau cyffwrdd, ac yn y blaen. Felly, mae enghreifftiau unigol da iawn lle mae gwahanol fesurau wedi eu cymryd i geisio ymateb i'r diffygion hyn. Fodd bynnag, y gwir amdani yw fod angen gwneud llawer mwy mewn mwy o safleoedd er mwyn sicrhau gwell mynediad. Cefais gyfarfod yn ddiweddar gyda RNID Cymru, ac er ei fod yn cydnabod fod camau breision wedi cael eu cymryd mewn rhai safleoedd, nid yw hynny'n wir yn gyffredinol. Un o'r cwynion a wnaethpwyd oedd nad oes archwiliad cyflawn o safleoedd ar draws Cymru—yr oedd hyn yn cyfeirio'n bennaf at leoliadau fel theatrau, ac yn y blaen—sy'n dweud beth yw ansawdd y ddarpariaeth ar gyfer pobl sy'n dioddef o anabled clyw. Mae hwnnw'n wendid y dylid mynd i'r afael ag ef yn ystod y blynyddoedd nesaf.

[18] **David Lloyd:** Diolch am hynny. Yr ydym wedi clywed cryn dipyn o dystiolaeth yn ymwneud ag adolygiad buddsoddi'r cyngor celfyddydau, ac mae tystion i'r ymchwiliad wedi dweud y bydd yn cael 'effaith ddramatig' ar gyfranogiad yn y celfyddydau, ac y bydd yn 'difreinio calon ac enaid Cymru'. A yw'r feirniadaeth honno'n deg, gan gofio ei bod wedi'i lleisio gan bobl sydd ar hyn o bryd yn gweithio yn y celfyddydau ar lawr gwlad ac mewn cymunedau yng Nghymru?

[19] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mae'r egwyddor hyd braich mae'r cyngor celfyddydau yn gweithredu o'i fewn yn un yr wyf yn ei gefnogi. Mae'n rhaid ichi ddeall nad wyf yn ymwneud o gwbl â phenderfyniadau unigol y cyngor, ac mai mater i'r cyngor yw cyfiawnhau'r penderfyniadau unigol hynny gerbron pwyllgorau fel hwn. O safbwynt y broses, dechreuwyd y broses hon gan fy rhagflaenydd, oherwydd bod cred—a oedd yn cael ei rhannu yn gyffredinol ar y pryd—fod y patrwm ariannu a oedd yn bodoli ar y pryd angen ei adolygu a'i foderneiddio. Hefyd, oherwydd y cynnydd dros y blynyddoedd yn nifer y cyrff a oedd yn cael eu hariannu, yr oedd sefyllfa wedi ei chyrraedd lle y gellid

undertaking work in Raglan castle with regard to the use of modern technology. Work is also being undertaken in Castell Coch that means that people with visual impairments can use touch screens, and so on. Therefore, there are good individual examples where various measures have been taken to try to respond to these deficiencies. However, it is true to say that much more work needs to be undertaken in more sites to ensure better access. I had a meeting recently with RNID Cymru, and although it acknowledged that great strides have been taken in some sites, that is not true in general. One of the complaints made was that there is no complete audit of sites across Wales—this was mainly in reference to theatres, and so on—indicating the quality of provision for people with a hearing impairment. That is a weakness that must be addressed in the coming years.

**David Lloyd:** Thank you for that. We have heard quite a lot of evidence about the arts council's investment review, and witnesses to the inquiry have said that it will have a 'dramatic impact' on participation in the arts, and that it will 'disenfranchise the heart and soul of Wales'. Are those criticisms fair, bearing in mind that they have been voiced by people currently working in the arts at grass-roots level and within communities in Wales?

**Alun Ffred Jones:** The arm's-length principle under which the arts council operates is one that I support. You must understand that I am not involved at all in the council's individual decisions, and that it is a matter for the council to justify those individual decisions before committees such as this. With regard to the process, this process was initiated by my predecessor, because there was a belief—that was generally shared at the time—that the funding pattern that existed at that time needed to be reviewed and modernised. In addition, because of the increase over the years in the number of organisations being funded, a situation has been reached in which it could

dweud nad oeddem yn ariannu yn briodol ddim un o'r cyrff yn iawn a bod angen adolygiad i weld a oedd modd cael patrwm cynaliadwy i'r dyfodol. Yr oedd hynny cyn inni wybod am yr hyn sydd wedi digwydd o ran gwariant cyhoeddus.

9.10 a.m.

[20] Felly, nid penderfyniad yn wyneb hynny ydoedd, ond penderfyniad i geisio cael patrwm cynaliadwy i'r dyfodol. I'r graddau yr wyf i wedi bod yn ymwneud â'r broses—ac yr wyf wedi cael cyfle i drafod gyda chadeirydd a phrif weithredwr cyngor y celfyddydau—mae wedi bod yn un agored. Cafwyd 18 mis o waith paratoi, gan cynnwys paratoi dogfennau cyhoeddus. Ar y pryd, ni chlywais unrhyw leisiau yn dweud bod y broses yn un annheg. Yn anochel, byddai pobl yn cael eu siomi ar ddiwedd y broses, oherwydd yr oedd yn ddealedig y byddai llai o gyrff yn cael eu hariannu, neu nid oedd diben mynd drwy'r broses.

[21] Deallaf yr hyn sy'n cael ei ddweud, a'r siom a fynegwyd gan amryw o'r cyrff sydd wedi cael eu siomi ac sydd wedi colli, neu a fydd yn colli, arian refeniw. Fodd bynnag, nid oes gennyf reswm i gredu bod y broses ei hun yn ffaeledig. Credaf mai pedair apêl sydd wedi cael eu gwneud. Credaf hefyd fod archwilwyr annibynnol cyngor y celfyddydau wedi dweud eu bod yn fodlon â'r broses.

[22] Felly, nid wyf am geisio cyfiawnhau'r penderfyniadau unigol hynny, ac nid fy lle i yw gwneud hynny. Gwn fod aelodau o'r pwyllgor hwn wedi mynegi anfodlonrwydd ac ansicrwydd, a byddaf yn ymateb iddynt. Byddaf hefyd yn codi'r mater pan fyddaf yn cyfarfod cadeirydd a phrif weithredwr cyngor y celfyddydau yr wythnos nesaf.

[23] **Eleanor Burnham:** Mae diffygion ar draws gogledd Cymru. Mae sefyllfa Theatr Gwynedd yn dangos bod trafndiaeth yn hanfodol; yr ydym wedi derbyn tystiolaeth i'r un perwyl. A allwch wneud unrhyw beth i annog gwell trafndiaeth gyhoeddus os yw pobl yn gorfod teithio ymhellach i fwynhau'r celfyddydau nag y maent ar hyn o bryd?

be said that we were not funding any of those bodies properly and that a review was needed to see whether a sustainable pattern for the future could be established. That was before we knew what was to happen with public expenditure.

Therefore, it was not a decision taken in the light of that, but a decision taken to try to achieve a sustainable pattern for the future. As far as I have been involved with it—and I have had the opportunity to discuss this with the chair and chief executive of the arts council—it has been an open process. There were 18 months of preparatory work, including preparing public documents. At the time, I did not hear anybody raise their voice to say that this process was unfair. Inevitably, people were going to be disappointed at the end of the process, because it was understood that fewer bodies would be funded, or there would have been no point in going through the process.

I understand what is being said, and the disappointment expressed by many of the organisations that have been disappointed and have lost, or stand to lose, revenue funding. However, I have no reason to believe that the process itself is deficient. I believe that four appeals have been made. I also believe that the arts council's independent auditors have stated that they are content with the process.

Therefore, I will not try to justify those individual decisions, nor is it not my place to do so. I know that members of this committee have expressed dissatisfaction and uncertainty, and I will respond to them. I will also raise the issue when I meet the chair and the chief executive of the arts council next week.

**Eleanor Burnham:** There are gaps across north Wales. The situation at Theatr Gwynedd shows that transport is crucial; we have received evidence to that effect. Can you do something to ensure better public transport if people have to travel further to enjoy the arts than they have to at present?

[24] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Nid oes gennyf ddyllanwad uniongyrchol ar drafnidiaeth gyhoeddus. Fodd bynnag, mae'n fater sy'n rhwystr i bobl gael mynediad i ddiwyddiadau celfyddydol o wahanol fathau. Ar y llaw arall, mae cynlluniau gan gyngor y celfyddydau sy'n caniatáu cefnogaeth ariannol i grwpiau ddod i weld digwyddiadau.

[25] Mae enghreifftiau da o'r cynlluniau hyn. Clywais am un yn ddiweddar yn Rhondda Cynon Taf—o dan gynllun E3, fe gredaf. Mae'r cynllun hwn yn rhoi mynediad i wahanol fathau o weithgareddau i bobl ifanc ar ôl oriau ysgol, yn yr ysgolion. Credaf ei fod yn gweithredu drwy'r rhan fwyaf o ysgolion Rhondda Cynon Taf, ond mae'r ysgol yr oedd cyfeiriad penodol ato yn y Porth. Ar ôl i'r diwrnod ysgol orffen, mae trafnidiaeth gyhoeddus yn rhad ac am ddim tan 8 p.m. i blant a phobl ifanc er mwyn iddynt allu mynychu gwahanol fathau o weithgareddau. Dyna un enghraifft, mewn un ardal yn unig. Nid yw'r cynllun hwnnw'n gweithredu yn y rhan fwyaf o Gymru, wrth gwrs, ond mae'n enghraifft dda o drefniant o'r fath.

[26] **Eleanor Burnham:** Diolch am gael gofyn y cwestiwn atodol hwnnw, Gadeirydd.

[27] Yn eich llythyr cylch gwaith i gyngor y celfyddydau ar gyfer 2009-10, cyfeiriwch at adolygu trefniadau cyllido'r cyngor. Cyfeiriwch hefyd at y nod o

[28] 'greu sector celfyddydau bywiog a dynamig, sy'n fwy abl i gynnig gweithgarwch celfyddydol o'r radd flaenaf i gynulleidfaoedd a chyfranogwyr ledled Cymru'.

[29] Yn y cyd-destun hwnnw, mae'r llythyr cylch gwaith yn cyfeirio at gelfyddydau o'r radd flaenaf, ond hwyrach nad yw'n sôn am greu mwy o gyfleoedd nac am ehangu cyfranogiad cymunedol. A yw eich cyfarwyddiadau yn golygu bod yr adolygiad buddsoddi wedi rhoi gormod o bwyslais ar gelfyddyd o'r radd flaenaf, ynteu a ydych yn fodlon bod hygyrchedd a chyfranogiad wedi cael sylw digonol yn yr adolygiad? Yr ydym yn cyfeirio at y materion

**Alun Ffred Jones:** I have no direct influence over public transport. However, it is an issue that can be a barrier to people from accessing arts events of various kinds. On the other hand, the arts council has plans in place that allow financial support for various groups to attend events.

There are some good examples of these plans. I heard of one recently in Rhondda Cynon Taf—under the E3 scheme, I believe. This scheme provides access to various kinds of activities in schools for young people outside of school hours. I believe that it is operating in the majority of schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf, but the school that was specifically referred to is in Porth. At the end of the school day, public transport is free of charge until 8 p.m. for children and young people so that they can access various kinds of activities. That is just one example from one area. That scheme does not operate throughout most of Wales, of course, but it is a good example of such an arrangement.

**Eleanor Burnham:** Thank you for allowing that supplementary question, Chair.

In your remit letter to the arts council for 2009-10, you refer to reviewing the council's funding arrangements. You also refer to the aim of securing

'a vibrant and dynamic arts sector, better able to bring the highest quality arts activity to audiences and participants across Wales'.

In that context, the remit letter refers to arts of the highest quality, but it perhaps does not mention creating more opportunities and widening community participation. Has your direction led to the investment review placing too great an emphasis on arts of the highest quality, or are you satisfied that access and participation have been adequately addressed in the review? We are referring to these community issues and the community groups that have given evidence that they will be



cymunedol hyn a'r grwpiau cymunedol sydd wedi rhoi tystiolaeth y byddant ar eu colled yn fawr.

[30] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Yn fy llythyr at gyngor y celfyddydau y llynedd, cyfeiriais yn benodol at ehangu mynediad a chyfranogiad mewn celfyddydau o'r radd flaenaf, yn arbennig mewn ardaloedd difreintiedig. Yr oedd cyfeiriad penodol yn y llythyr y llynedd at hynny. Eleni, mae cyfeiriad yn y llythyr at greu cyfleoedd i bobl nad ydynt mewn addysg, hyfforddiant na gwaith. Mae'r cynllun uchelgeisiol Cyrraedd y Nod yn ceisio ymateb i'r union grŵp hwnnw o bobl ac y mae'n gynllun sydd yn cael cymorth ariannol Ewropeaidd gwerth £10 miliwn yn gyfan gwbl, a chredaf fod 40—os nad mwy—o brosiectau o dan y pennawd hwnnw.

[31] **Eleanor Burnham:** Mae hynny'n croes-ddweud y dystiolaeth a gawsom gan y grwpiau hyn sydd yn pryderu'n fawr am eu dyfodol. Mae dau grŵp yn y de-ddwyrain wedi dweud y byddant yn gorfod cau. Sut ydych yn cysoni'r hyn yr ydych yn ei ddweud wrthym â'r hyn a ddywedodd y tystion wrthym?

[32] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Nid croes-ddweud ydyw. Yr hyn a ddywedaf yw bod y cyngor y celfyddydau yn cynnal y cynllun Cyrraedd y Nod sy'n ymwneud â phobl sydd dan hyfforddiant. Nid yw hynny'n dweud nad yw'r gosodiad arall yn wir. Enghraifft ydyw o gyngor y celfyddydau yn cydweithredu â grwpiau o bobl sydd yn amlwg o dan anfantais.

[33] Mae'n siŵr eich bod yn ymwybodol o'r ffaith bod cyngor y celfyddydau hefyd yn cefnogi nifer o grwpiau cymunedol megis Valleys Kids, er enghraifft, ac mae enghreifftiau eraill o grwpiau cymunedol sydd yn cael cefnogaeth. Fel y dywedais, nid wyf yma i gyfiawnhau penderfyniadau unigol; bydd yn rhaid ichi wneud hynny gyda phrif weithredwr a chadeirydd cyngor y celfyddydau. Y sicr, mae llythyr y llynedd yn sôn yn glir iawn am ehangu cyfranogiad a mynediad i ddigwyddiadau celfyddydol. Fel y dywedais, mae llythyr eleni yn cyfeirio'n arbennig at grwpiau anodd eu cyrraedd nad ydynt fel arfer yn cael cyfle i gyfranogi mewn gweithgareddau o'r fath.

significantly worse off because of this.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** In last year's remit letter to the arts council, I made specific reference to expanding access to and participation in the highest quality arts, particularly in disadvantaged areas. There was a specific reference to that issue in last year's remit letter. This year, the letter includes a reference to creating opportunities for people who are not in education, employment or training. The ambitious Reach the Heights scheme seeks to address that very group of people and it is a scheme that is supported by European funding worth £10 million in total, and I think that 40 projects—if not more—come under that heading.

**Eleanor Burnham:** That contradicts the evidence that we have received from these groups that are very concerned about their future. Two groups from the south-east have said that they will have to close. How do you reconcile what you are telling us with what the witnesses have told us?

**Alun Ffred Jones:** There is no contradiction. All I am saying is that the arts council is implementing the Reach the Heights scheme, which deals with people who are in training. That is not to say that the other statement is untrue. This is just an example of the arts council working with specific groups of clearly disadvantaged people.

I am sure that you are aware of the fact that the arts council also supports a number of community groups, such as Valleys Kids for example, and there are other examples of community groups that receive support. As I have said, I am not here to justify individual decisions; you will have to do that with the chief executive and the chair of the arts council. Certainly, last year's letter very clearly makes reference to widening participation in and access to a range of arts activities. As I have said, this year's letter makes particular reference to those hard-to-reach groups that do not usually have the opportunity to participate in such activities.

[34] **Sandy Mewies:** I will now bring Lynne Neagle in with a supplementary question, which she kindly requested through the Chair. I ask Members who wish to ask supplementary questions to go through the Chair.

[35] **Lynne Neagle:** In your remit letter, you bring to the arts council's attention its duties under the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010, but you go on to state that this is not intended to place an onerous burden on the arts council. Given that many of us would hope that the children and families Measure would protect access for some of our most deprived communities, could you explain that position, because surely, either there is a duty on the arts council or there is not?

[36] **Alun Ffred Jones:** As I understand it, there is a duty on the arts council within its own remit to provide access to the arts from all parts of society. It is in the arts council's founding charter and statute that it has a purpose

[37] 'to increase the accessibility of the arts to the public'.

[38] If that is in its original statute, it is clear that we do not have to re-state it each year—it is there and it is part of its remit.

[39] **Mark Isherwood:** Some witnesses have described the arts council's decision to concentrate funds on front-line delivery rather than on the activities of agency, umbrella and service organisations as a mistake. What do you believe the implications of this decision will be for access and participation?

9.20 a.m.

[40] **Alun Ffred Jones:** In general, given the state of public finances at the moment, I would support that in principle. Again, I am not making any comment on individual decisions, but putting money to the front line is important. The support that has been given to the 71 organisations following the recent review will place duties on them to ensure that they are playing their full part in increasing access and participation in the arts. That is a given, and that has been discussed with the arts council in our meetings.

[41] **Lynne Neagle:** You referred earlier to the process undertaken by the arts council. As you know, I have written to you in some detail about my concerns about the process. In responding to Dai earlier, you said that you were content with the process and that you felt that it has been transparent. Can you say a bit more about that? Given that the arts council does not appear to be able to demonstrate why it funded some organisations and not others, how can you say the process is transparent?

[42] **Alun Ffred Jones:** The process itself was set up under my predecessor because there was a perception that the funding structure had become stuck and was immovable. There was no room for manoeuvre or, indeed, to provide enough funding for innovation. That was the rationale behind the process. There were 18 months of preparatory work, a number of documents were produced, and there was a great deal of consultation with the arts community on the rationale and the criteria that the arts council would apply during the process. During that period, I was not aware—and in the meetings that I have had with numerous bodies and organisations within the arts community I was not aware—that anyone was dissatisfied with the process. Inevitably, when the result of that process came out and it was clearly understood that fewer organisations would be receiving funding, some were obviously disappointed. I am not making any judgments about the individual decisions.

[43] So, with regard to the process up to that point, I was not aware of any glaring

omission or defect in the process. The decisions themselves are a matter of discussion, and I will be raising the matters that you have raised with me about the individual decisions you have referred to in theatre and education. However, I also think that it is incumbent on the arts council to show how it intends to provide what it refers to as exciting magical experiences for young people in general and perhaps in specific areas.

[44] **Lynne Neagle:** Can I come back on that, Chair?

[45] **Sandy Mewies:** I think that the Minister has gone a long way towards answering this, but yes, go on.

[46] **Lynne Neagle:** I understand the rationale and that there will be winners and losers and that some will be unhappy. However, should the arts council not be in a position to answer questions about why some organisations were successful and some were not at a time when we are all meant to be justifying how we spend public money?

[47] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I understand that the chief executive has been before the committee. No doubt you can call him back if you want to. You have been able to question him, and if you are dissatisfied with his answers, I am sure that you will express that in your report.

[48] **Sandy Mewies:** Indeed. Thank you.

[49] **Mohammad Asghar:** Minister, my questions will be on transition funding. They are fairly straightforward. Do you share the concerns of those organisations not selected to be in the arts council's new portfolio about uncertainties regarding the arts council's transition funding and future budget plans?

[50] **Alun Ffred Jones:** They may be able to apply for lottery funding. Indeed, there is an expectation that the lottery will become the source of funding for festivals. Transitional funding is designed to provide assistance for companies' development of new business models. The arts council is currently discussing the applications made for this funding. No doubt, I will be briefed on this in my meeting with it next week. That there is uncertainty is almost a given, and there is a great deal of concern among individual organisations. However, we will have to see how it pans out over the next few months before we can decide on its success or otherwise.

[51] **Joyce Watson:** Good morning, Minister. I am going to ask you a question about the Welsh Government's budget priorities. Do you consider that the arts sector could withstand the pressure of future budget cuts? Will the outcome of the recent UK Government comprehensive spending review or the next Welsh Government budget have any impact on that?

[52] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I am not in a position to make a statement on future budgets, of course.

[53] **Joyce Watson:** I thought that would be your answer.

[54] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Inevitably, the pressure on public spending will come through to the cultural sector in general and to the arts. We will be able to decide whether this is serious in a few weeks' time when we see the figures. Inevitably, this will bring pressures to bear. We must remember that local government is an important source of funding for cultural activity in general, and sometimes for the arts in particular. Inevitably, any pressures on local government will feed through to this sector as well, particularly as it is not a statutory duty, other than in respect of libraries, which will remain the case, of course. So, I suppose that my

answer is 'yes'. I think that it will have some bearing and will create some difficulties, no doubt.

[55] However, I have held a summit of various cultural organisations and emphasised that this is the time for co-operation, to see whether we can do some things better and some things that might even result in some savings to preserve the cultural activities that are so valued in our communities and by individuals. I have been pressing hard on these different organisations to look for chances to work together to maximise opportunities. At the moment, there is a great deal of goodwill and it is to be hoped that we will have some practical examples in the coming year. There are examples of individual local authorities trying to work together to create structures that may bring benefits, especially in providing experiences for young people. That may bring results in the coming years, but, inevitably, if there is less money, there will be some difficulties. Perhaps we are already seeing those.

[56] **Sandy Mewies:** Before we move on, could the committee have a note on the summit, including a list of who was there? If there is any progress or any decisions made—although there will probably not be—before we do our report, could we have a note on that as well?

[57] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Yes, certainly.

[58] **Joyce Watson:** Earlier, you mentioned lottery funding being available and being a main source of funding for some cultural and artistic activities. We all know that there has been a diversion of lottery funding away from Wales because of the Olympic Games. What are the current and future implications for the arts in Wales as those funds are diverted to the Olympic Games?

9.30 a.m.

[59] **Alun Ffred Jones:** The good news is that, although that has had an impact on the amount of money available, that impact has been cushioned to an extent by increased sales. Looking beyond 2012, one would expect more money to come on-stream, and that will be very important, especially for capital expenditure, looking ahead. It is obvious that that has had an impact, but we hope that there are opportunities coming over the horizon.

[60] **Eleanor Burnham:** Yn ôl Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru, mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn gallu rhoi arian i'r celfyddydau drwy sawl adran wahanol, er enghraifft yr Adran dros Blant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau. Yn ôl cyngor y celfyddydau, byddai'n gallu gweithio'n fwy effeithiol gyda Llywodraeth Cymru pe bai ganddo well syniad o ble mae'r holl wariant ar y celfyddydau yn mynd. Beth yw'ch ymateb i'r honiad hwnnw?

**Eleanor Burnham:** According to the Arts Council of Wales, expenditure on the arts can be awarded by many departments within the Welsh Government, such as the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills. According to the arts council, it would be able to work more effectively with the Welsh Government if it had a more complete view of where all the expenditure on the arts goes. What is your response to that claim?

[61] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mae gan y prif weithredwr bwynt, ac mae arian yn cael ei wario, wrth gwrs. Nid ydym yn gwybod beth yw cyfraniad llawn llywodraeth leol, er enghraifft. Yr hyn a wyddom yw bod y gwariant yn anwastad iawn ar draws Cymru. Mae un cyngor yn gwario £70,000 y flwyddyn ac mae un arall yn gwario £7 miliwn y flwyddyn, ac mae'r gwahaniaethau

**Alun Ffred Jones:** The chief executive has a point, and money is being spent, of course. We do not know the full contribution of local government, for example. What we do know is that expenditure is very unevenly spread throughout Wales. One council spends £70,000 a year and another spends £7 million, and those differences are staggering, to tell the truth.

hynny yn syfrdanol, a dweud y gwir.

[62] O safbwynt gwariant yr adran addysg, yr adran iechyd i raddau llai, ac efallai yr uned digwyddiadau mawr ar yr ymylon, mae rheswm da dros geisio dod â'r ffigurau hyn at ei gilydd i weld beth yw'r effaith. Dywedodd y prif weithredwr y byddem wedyn yn gallu manteisio'n well ar rai cyfleoedd. Mae'r bwrdd strategaeth yn cyfarfod, ac yr oedd cynrychiolaeth o'r adran addysg yn y cyfarfod diwethaf. Bydd dealltwriaeth well yn datblygu o ystyried y cyfraniad pwysig y mae addysg yn ei wneud yn y maes hwn o fewn ysgolion a rhai o'r rhaglenni y maent yn eu hyrwyddo. Bydd dealltwriaeth well o hynny yn bwysig iawn wrth edrych ymlaen o safbwynt datblygu cyfleoedd i bobl ifanc o fewn ysgolion, neu mewn gweithgareddau sydd wedi'u canoli o gwmpas ysgolion—a cholegau hefyd efallai.

In respect of the expenditure of DCELLS, the health department to a lesser extent, and perhaps the major events unit on the periphery, there is a strong rationale for bringing all those figures together to see what their impact is. The chief executive said that we could then make better use of some opportunities. The strategy board is meeting, and there was representation from DCELLS at the last meeting. A better understanding will develop given the important contribution that education makes in this area within schools and some of the programmes that schools promote. We will get a better understanding of that as we look to the future and develop opportunities for young people within schools, or in activities that are centred around schools—and perhaps colleges, too.

[63] **Sandy Mewies:** Part of that question came about because of the unfortunate juxtaposition of the announcement for money for the final and then the fact that it was not going to be held. In view of that, do you have any further comment? You have answered the question, but is there anything further that you would like to say on that?

[64] **Alun Ffred Jones:** The situation with the Faenol is almost a red herring. It is much more important that we establish which activities are taking place within other departments that are broadly cultural in scope and that make a valuable contribution. Education is certainly one of those departments, and we are now strengthening the links between the education department and the arts council, which is a good thing.

[65] **Sandy Mewies:** It is useful for us to have the response to what I think was also a part of that question.

[66] **Joyce Watson:** When the arts council gave oral evidence to this committee, it stressed that the one thing that was budget-neutral and would have a huge impact was around year-end flexibility and the ability to offer three-year funding. It said that it is currently on an annual year-by-year cycle and, if circumstances change, and it was unable to offer all the funds by the end of the year, it would have to surrender them back to the Welsh Assembly Government. It claims that if it had the ability to offer three-year funding to organisations, rather than the current annual year-by-year cycle, it would be hugely beneficial and would have a significant impact on the arts. Do you agree, or are you content with the current annual arrangements?

[67] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Perhaps John Howells could help me out here.

[68] **Mr Howells:** We are investigating whether we can allocate three-year funding deals as part of the decisions on the budgets, which are being taken as we speak. It has always been the desire to give organisations a longer period in which to plan sensibly. The issue with end-year flexibility is a technical matter to do with rules set by the Treasury in London. Those rules currently impact on us by giving us very little flexibility; in fact, in future, they will provide even less flexibility to allow organisations to carry money over from one year to the next. However, we are in discussion with the arts council and with all the other arm's-length

bodies that we fund to see whether we can find creative ways of overcoming this difficulty, particularly now, when we are facing a squeeze on budgets, which makes the issues of flexibility even more important than they have been in the past. However, we are not helped by rules being invented elsewhere.

[69] **Mark Isherwood:** Some witnesses expressed concern that the investment review may impact disproportionately on certain geographical areas. They cited theatre in education in south-east Wales and in Powys, for example. How can you, as Minister, ensure a fair spread in the provision of cultural activities throughout different geographical areas of Wales, reflecting issues of rurality and sparsity?

[70] **Alun Ffred Jones:** This issue crops up regularly in my meetings with the arts council—and, indeed, with all the other bodies that are involved in the cultural field. We should remember that culture is much broader than the arts, although the arts are, of course, important. So, it is an issue that is raised regularly and it is pertinent to the situation in Wales, given our geography and the spread of the population. That is why it is important that we have venues in all parts of Wales. If you look at the support that has been given over the past 10 years to develop some of these venues right across Wales, you will see that there has been an attempt to ensure that there are venues available reasonably close to people.

[71] It is particularly incumbent on national bodies and organisations operating in Wales to ensure that they play their part in taking the arts to the people. The concentration of activity around Cardiff and other centres of population is inevitable, but it is vital that these national organisations realise their obligations to Wales as a whole. I will be emphasising that to the arts council as part of its investment review and the ongoing funding of these organisations in future.

[72] **Mark Isherwood:** How will that be monitored and regulated? Will you be overseeing the arts council's function so that it is not simply a commitment to deliver, but a commitment to monitor delivery on that commitment?

[73] **Alun Ffred Jones:** My biannual meetings and the arts strategy board meetings are vehicles through which I can make my views known and ask for information. We constantly monitor the work of all our arm's-length bodies, and if we are dissatisfied, it is my duty to make my views known.

9.40 a.m.

[74] **Mohammad Asghar:** Interlinking the cultural activities of various nationalities is very important, especially in south-east Wales. We have had the massive Valleywood studios project, but we are not benefiting from it, unfortunately. Meanwhile, there are multicultural activities based in the Cardiff, Newport and Swansea, which can be utilised financially and from which benefit can be derived. Have you done anything in relation to that?

[75] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Not specifically. However, the arts council and other organisations are very aware and supportive of cultural activity within ethnic minorities. That is referred to specifically in the support programmes of these organisations.

[76] **Lynne Neagle:** Many witnesses have expressed concern about the arts council's decision to abandon its theatre in education programme before developing a new arts and young people strategy. Do you share those concerns, and have you had any discussions with the arts council or the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning about any gaps in provision that will now exist?

[77] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I have not discussed theatre in education with the Minister for

education. As I have said before during private discussions with some of you, theatre in education is a peculiar animal in one sense, in that only half our local authorities deem it important enough to give it any financial support. That then begs the question of how important they regard it within the field of education.

[78] Your point about having a policy in place on addressing the needs of young people and on how to reach them is very valid. It is incumbent on the arts council to come forward with its ideas as soon as possible. On the other hand, if you look at the work of the English-language National Theatre Wales over the past 12 months, you will see that it has had a deliberate policy of putting on all sorts of exciting and different shows in all parts of Wales, and it has also taken those shows to communities that normally would not have that sort of experience. Therefore, there is a realisation that we need to be inventive in the way that we try to engage young people. Perhaps we should not get too hung up on the idea that theatre in education is the only way to engage the interest of young people, or that theatre in education always provides interesting and challenging material. Excellent work is being done by many theatre in education groups, but I suggest that this is not the only answer. I am sure that the arts council will bring forward ideas in the coming months and years.

[79] **Sandy Mewies:** Dai, I believe that you are going to take us on to the issue of local authorities.

[80] **David Lloyd:** Yr ydych yn cydnabod yn eich tystiolaeth ysgrifenedig bod 'amrywiaeth enfawr' i'w gweld yn ymrwymiad awdurdodau lleol i wneud y celfyddydau'n hygyrch ac yn yr effaith a gaiff eu gwaith yn hynny o beth. A ydych chi'n credu bod yr amrywiaeth honno'n dderbyniol, ac a ydych chi'n cymryd unrhyw gamau i roi sylw i'r mater hwn?

**David Lloyd:** You acknowledge in your written evidence that there is 'a huge variation' in the commitment of local authorities in providing access to the arts and the impact that their work has in that sense. Do you believe that that variation is acceptable, and are you taking any steps to address this issue?

[81] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Ni chredaf fod yr amrywiaeth honno yn dderbyniol. Yr wyf wedi dyfynnu ffigurau sy'n dangos bod un awdurdod lleol yn gwario £70,000 y flwyddyn a'r llall yn gwario £7 miliwn. Yn amlwg, felly, mae'r hyn a gynigir gan ardaloedd yn amrywio'n fawr, ac efallai fod yr amrywiaeth honno'n annerbyniol. Mae gennym bwerau yn awr, yn sgil Gorchymyn Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru (Cymhwysedd Deddfwriaethol) (Diwylliant a meysydd eraill) 2009, i greu rhyw fath o ddyletswydd ar awdurdodau lleol. Nid wyf yn sicr y byddai'r awdurdodau'n gwerthfawrogi hynny yn yr hinsawdd ariannol bresennol. Yr ydym yn cynnal trafodaethau cyson ag awdurdodau lleol i weld pa fath o ddyletswyddau y gellid ei rhoi byddai'n sicrhau bod darpariaeth ddigonol o fewn ffiniau awdurdodau lleol. Credaf hefyd ei fod yn bwysig bod awdurdodau lleol yn edrych y tu hwnt i'w ffiniau eu hunain at safbwynt rhanbarthol, fel y maent yn ei wneud ar hyn o bryd yn eu trafodaethau.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** I do not believe that that variation is acceptable. I have quoted some figures that show that one local authority spends £70,000 a year and another spends £7 million. It is evident, therefore, that what is offered varies greatly according to area, and perhaps that variation is unacceptable. We now have powers, under the National Assembly for Wales (Legislative Competence) (Culture and other fields) Order 2009, to create some kind of duty on local authorities. I am not sure that those local authorities would appreciate that in the current financial climate. We are holding regular discussions with local authorities to see what kinds of duties could be given that would ensure that there was sufficient provision within local authority boundaries. I also believe that it is important that local authorities look beyond their own boundaries to regional co-operation, as they do at present in their discussions. It would be better for some of the provision to be delivered regionally rather than at local government

Byddai'n well pe bai peth o'r ddarpariaeth yn cael ei ddarparu yn rhanbarthol yn hytrach nag ar lefel llywodraeth leol sydd, yn aml iawn, yn ardaloedd bychan iawn. Mae'r trafodaethau hyn yn digwydd ac mae'n bwysig inni gael mwy o gysondeb heb glymu dwylo awdurdodau lleol yn ormodol.

[82] **David Lloyd:** Yr ydych yn dweud, felly, bod yr arf, sef Mesur, yn mynd i osod dyletswydd statudol i hyrwyddo diwylliant ar awdurdodau lleol. A fydd yr arf, neu'r bygythiad, yn aros yn y cefndir tra bod gwelliant yn parhau yn y cyfamser?

[83] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Yn y tymor byr, nid ydym yn bwriadu cyflwyno Mesur arfaethedig. Mae trafodaeth yn digwydd o fewn llywodraeth leol ynglŷn ag ai dyma'r ffordd orau i wneud hwn. Credaf mai penderfyniad ar gyfer Llywodraeth newydd fydd hynny. Bydd yn rhaid i unrhyw Lywodraeth fod yn sensitif i'r amgylchiadau ariannol presennol.

[84] **David Lloyd:** A ydych yn gweld bod gwelliant yn awr, yn y cyfamser, heb ichi orfod mynd i lawr y llwybr statudol a gorfodi rhyw fath o hyrwyddo?

[85] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Nid oes gennyf dystiolaeth bendant y naill ffordd neu'r llall. Mae'n amlwg, os edrychwch, er enghraifft, ar y gwariant ar lyfrgelloedd a'r ffordd y mae llyfrgelloedd wedi adfywio rhai trefi neu roi cyfleoedd ychwanegol i ysgolion neu grwpiau cymunedol i'w defnyddio mewn ffordd fwy creadigol, gwelwch fod cynnydd ar draws Cymru. Byddaf yn mynd i Faesteg yn hwyrach y bore yma i weld llyfrgell sydd wedi ei lleoli mewn canolfan hamdden. Dyna'r math o feddwl creadigol sy'n digwydd mewn llawer o awdurdodau lleol bellach ac mae angen mwy ohono oherwydd yr hinsawdd ariannol a hefyd er mwyn cynyddu'r cyfle i bobl eu defnyddio a manteisio ar ddigwyddiadau yn y maes celfyddydol.

[86] **David Lloyd:** Pa bryderon sydd gennych, yn yr hinsawdd ariannol sydd ohoni, bydd gweithgareddau awdurdodau lleol sy'n ddewisol—hynny yw, y rheiny nad ydynt yn statudol—yn cael eu torri?

level, which very often consists of very small areas. These discussions are taking place and it is important that we get greater consistency without tying the hands of local authorities excessively.

**David Lloyd:** You are saying, therefore, that the weapon, namely a Measure, would place a statutory duty on local authorities to promote culture. Will that weapon, or the threat, remain in the background while there is an improvement in the meantime?

**Alun Ffred Jones:** In the short term, we do not intend to introduce a proposed Measure. There is discussion within local government about whether this is the best way to do this. I think that that will be a decision for a new Government. Any Government will have to be sensitive to the current financial circumstances.

**David Lloyd:** Do you believe that there is an improvement now, in the meantime, without you having to go down the statutory route and enforcing some kind of promotion?

**Alun Ffred Jones:** I have no concrete evidence either way. It is clear, if you look, for example, at the expenditure on libraries and the way in which libraries have revived some towns or provided additional opportunities for schools or community groups to use them in more creative ways, you will see that there has been progress across Wales. I am going to Maesteg later this morning to see a library that has been located in a leisure centre. That is the kind of creative thinking that now goes on in many local authorities and we need more of it because of the financial climate and also in order to increase the opportunity for people to use them and to take advantage of the arts events that are taking place.

**David Lloyd:** What concerns do you have, in the current financial climate, that the activities of local authorities that are optional—that is, non-statutory—will be cut?



[87] **Sandy Mewies:** Thank you, Dai; I know that Joyce would like to ask a couple of supplementary questions.

[88] **Joyce Watson:** To come back to the point about not forcing local government to spend money where it might not otherwise spend it—and that might be the arts—I am sure that you must be aware, Minister, that we operate the Welsh bacalaureate in schools in Wales and that part of that is about being involved in the community. I have seen an excellent example of using the Welsh bacalaureate creatively in Ysgol Ardudwy in Harlech, which worked with Arriva Trains Wales and transformed the station, involving young people in art. Rather than reinventing the wheel, Minister, can we not use the wheels that we already have on the wagon? The Welsh bacalaureate might be a real opportunity, as has been demonstrated in Harlech, to present a real invitation and an opportunity to young people to use the arts in their communities alongside others. Would you have a look at that possibility? The case that I have mentioned was virtually cost-neutral.

[89] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Yes. The links that have been forged with the education department might be useful. We will take that matter up in our discussions over the coming months.

9.50 a.m.

[90] **Mohammad Asghar:** You refer in your written evidence to the links between heritage and the arts and state that a heritage and the arts summit was recently held at Caerphilly castle. Can you elaborate on how you see these two sectors working together to benefit public access, and were there any notable outcomes to the summit that you held in October?

[91] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I will give you a note on that summit as well, since we have prepared one and we are looking at some outcomes from that summit. The idea here is that we should be using our built heritage in a much more creative way. Apart from the summit itself, there was a *son et lumière* show at Caerphilly castle, which was partly historical in nature, but very exciting and very well received by the local community. It also included involvement by over 100 young people from the surrounding schools in a dramatic presentation. By using venues such as castles, stately homes or industrial buildings, and so on, we can not only enrich the experiences of young people, but also bring communities into those areas and give a sense of ownership over those places. That was a practical example of using an old castle in a creative manner, and I think that we will be doing far more of that in the future. There are already discussions about how we can link the arts and the built heritage in more creative ways that will be of real benefit to local communities, and also to the tourism industry.

[92] **Sandy Mewies:** Eleanor, I think that you are now moving on to the very important part of this inquiry about how access to the arts is given to people with any sort of disability.

[93] **Eleanor Burnham:** The Minister has already alluded to what Cadw is doing in Caernarfon castle.

[94] Fodd bynnag, a ydych yn credu bod digon o gyfleodd i bobl anabl a'r holl sector celfyddydau i leisio'u barn am ddarpariaeth gelfyddydol, yn enwedig drwy fwrdd strategaeth y celfyddydau? Pa gamau ydych chi'n eu cymryd i sicrhau fod cyrff celfyddydol yn dilyn yr holl ganllawiau a'r ddeddfwriaeth berthnasol yn y maes hwn? Hefyd, nid ydym yn gwybod llawer am y

However, do you consider that there is sufficient opportunity for disabled people and the whole of the arts sector to have their voice heard in relation to arts provision, in particular through the arts strategy board? What steps are you taking to ensure that cultural bodies follow all guidance and legislation in this area? We also do not know much about this board. When and how often

bwrdd hwn. Pa bryd a pha mor aml y mae'n cyfarfod? does it meet?

[95] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mae bwrdd strategaeth y celfyddydau yn cyfarfod o leiaf ddwywaith y flwyddyn.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** The arts strategy board meets at least twice a year.

[96] **Eleanor Burnham:** A ydych yn cyflwyno adroddiad o ganlyniad i unrhyw un yn benodol? A fyddai'n bosibl inni gael nodyn ar hyn?

**Eleanor Burnham:** Do you provide a report to anyone in particular as a result? Could we have a note on this?

[97] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Cewch nodyn â chroeso os ydych yn dymuno hynny. Mae adroddiadau'r cyfarfod yn agored i'r cyhoedd beth bynnag, ond os yr ydych am gael sylwadau penodol yr wyf yn siŵr y gallem baratoi hynny.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** You are welcome to have a note if you should wish it. The reports of the meetings are accessible to the public in any case, but if you wish to have specific comments I am sure that we can prepare some.

[98] Yr wyf yn cyfarfod â grwpiau fel y Sefydliad Cenedlaethol Brenhinol Pobl Fyddar a Thwm eu Clyw yn gyson ac yn rhoi cyfle iddynt fynegi eu sylwadau. Yr oedd yr RNID yn anhapus gyda'r ddarpariaeth mewn rhai lleoliadau celfyddydol yng Nghymru ac mae honno'n feirniadaeth y mae'n rhaid inni ei chymryd o ddifrif. Er bod y rhan fwyaf o'r adeiladau hynny yng ngofal ymddiriedolaethau lleol neu lywodraeth leol, felly nid oes gennyf afael uniongyrchol arnynt, mae'r sylw yn un teg. Mae ymdrech wedi cael ei wneud dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf i geisio ymateb i'r gofynion gwahanol gan wahanol grwpiau sydd yn cynrychioli pobl â gwahanol fathau o anableddau. Mae gwaith wedi digwydd ar Lys yr Esgob yn Nhyddewi, sydd newydd ennill gwobr Ewropeaidd, er mwyn gwella mynediad i'r safle hwnnw. Fodd bynnag, un enghraifft yw honno ymhlith nifer lle mae gwaith da yn digwydd.

I meet with groups such as the Royal National Institute for Deaf People regularly to give them an opportunity to express their views. The RNID was unhappy with the provision in some arts locations in Wales and that is a criticism that we must take seriously. Although most of those buildings are under the stewardship of local trusts or local government, therefore I have no direct control over them, the comment is a fair one. Attempts have been made over the past few years to try to respond to the different needs of different groups that represent people with different types of disabilities. Work has been undertaken on the Bishop's Palace at St David's, which has just won a European award, in order to improve access to the site. However, that is only one example among many where good work is being undertaken.

[99] **Sandy Mewies:** Thank you for that. The final question in this session is still on disabled people. Witnesses have given evidence that there is no up-to-date list of venues that are accessible for those with disabilities. If that is the case, people do not know where they can access schemes or where schemes exist, and if new venues come on-stream, that is not always publicised. Do you think that monitoring accessibility for disabled people should be a key focus for the arts council's under its annual remit letter?

[100] **Alun Ffred Jones:** If you are referring to arts venues, most of them are under the control of local authorities, or sometimes individual trusts. So, it would be very difficult for the arts council to monitor all those venues, because it supports them only partially by giving them money, and sometimes it does not. So, I am not sure whether the arts council is the best vehicle—perhaps the Welsh Local Government Association would be a better monitoring vehicle. I do not doubt the need for such an audit to be undertaken. Any new building should

be fully compatible with the legislation, and part and parcel of receiving a grant to renovate a building should be the need for them to show due regard to all the legislation that is in place in relation to disability access. Some venues, such as castles, were not built with disability in mind. *[Laughter.]*

[101] **Sandy Mewies:** Funnily enough.

[102] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Access was not the prime purpose of building them—it was the opposite, in fact. So, there are practical difficulties in some areas, where you simply cannot get people in and out in a decent fashion. There is a good example in Caernarfon, where a bold decision was taken to create the ramp up to the castle. It is not to everyone's taste but, crucially, you can now regularly see people pushing prams and wheelchairs up that ramp, and it has been a great boon. That is too rare an example, but there are opportunities, and we should make that kind of preparation wherever we can.

[103] **Sandy Mewies:** Would you agree with organisations such as the Royal National Institute of Blind People Cymru, which says that there should be an explicit requirement on organisations that receive funding to state in their annual report how accessibility criteria have been met and actively promoted?

[104] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Certainly.

[105] **Sandy Mewies:** Thank you for coming today. As you probably know, we have a launch event after this meeting, so it was important for us to get through all the questions, and we got through them very well indeed. Thank you for your written paper. You will be sent a transcript of the evidence that you have given, to be checked for accuracy.

[106] For the record, we have received apologies from Alun Davies and Bethan Jenkins. I should have said that at the beginning of the meeting, but I was busily trying to arrange substitutions for questions at the same time.

10.00 a.m.

[107] From National Museum Wales, I welcome David Anderson, director general, Paul Loveluck, chair, Michael Tooby, director of learning programmes and development, and Robin Gwyn, director of communications. Thank you for your paper, which everyone will have read. We have some questions to ask you about the paper. I will be asking people to keep strictly to the timetable, as this committee has a launch event following this meeting. I will bring in as many supplementary questions as I possibly can and give you the time, but I will have to move people on and they will have to be very aware of time.

[108] I will ask the first question. You say quite accurately that difficult times are ahead and you have been working to ensure that you and the Assembly Government are united in doing everything you can to ensure that the free entry policy to museums, which is extremely valued as you know, is maintained. Do you consider the free entry policy to be at risk, and, if so, could you highlight the financial implications of maintaining the policy and the potential risk that it faces?

[109] **Mr Loveluck:** Thank you, Chair. I will bring in David Anderson very shortly, but I just wanted to say that he has been with us all of three weeks. However, he is a very fast learner and he will formally lead our deputation. I will take that question. We were encouraged by the forthright statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his budget statement, that even he attaches great importance to free entry. It has, undoubtedly, been a tremendous success. It is going to be a difficult time ahead. We have been planning for it; we have been prudent over the last 10 years, during which time the Welsh Assembly Government

has given us very good support to mend the roof in good time, which we have done, literally, and we have made considerable improvements in the fabric of our estate. However, we anticipate that with difficult budget settlements over the next few years, we will have to take some very difficult decisions, but we would very much hope that they would not affect free entry.

[110] **Mr Anderson:** I would just like to add that free entry has had a dramatic impact on the numbers attending national museum sites across Wales. In particular, it has helped us to expand very significantly the numbers of people from socioeconomic groups C2, D and E. About a decade ago, around less than 0.25 million people from those groups attended the sites each year. That has gone up now to over 0.5 million in those categories; in other words, that is about one in three of all the visitors to the sites. I have come from a London museum and the percentage of visitors from C2, D and E to the Victoria and Albert Museum, where I worked then, was somewhere in the region of 11 or 12 per cent. So, National Museum Wales is already achieving three times or more the levels of access to museum sites, collections and services than that major national museum. The same is true of many other major nationals in London. There is a significant difference and that is important, and we value it. It is a priority for the museum that we should achieve that level of reach.

[111] **Joyce Watson:** Good morning and welcome. You will have to be a very fast learner. You refer in your written evidence to the review of the Art Share Wales and the Sharing Treasures programmes. Will you expand on the reasons for the review and the opportunities and threats faced by these programmes?

[112] **Mr Tooby:** As you know, we work in parallel on two programmes—Sharing Treasures and Art Share Wales. Sharing Treasures is managed through CyMAL, and it was CyMAL's suggestion that it commission an independent review of the whole scheme, and we welcome that. It is five years since we last reviewed the scheme as a whole, as opposed to the projects that come through, and we are looking at some key issues. It is not intended to be a financial review, but more of a strategic review. So, we are looking at issues such as what lessons can be learnt from individual projects, what good practice can be shared between different partners, for example if we have worked in one place and another place could learn from that, and what benefits could be brought by bringing more strategic work between partners together, such as looking at how we prioritise between different sub-regions and so on. The report has not been received yet, but we have been inputting into the research and feeding information back. Our chief concern in our partnerships programmes, which have operated across Wales and which are principally intended to bring objects, services, activity and access to geographical locations that are relatively distant from our site, relates to the capacity of the venues themselves. They are principally local-authority-led venues, which will obviously be under pressure in the future, but they are also arts-council-funded venues, such as Ruthin Craft Centre, Oriel Mostyn and Oriel Davies, all of which have undertaken fantastic projects with us recently. We are concerned about sharing with them the expression of need for capacity in those regions of Wales.

[113] **Joyce Watson:** In your letter to us you say that venues might be unable to access the Sharing Treasures programme because of the requirement to be an accredited museum, library or archive, but that that is an area that is being considered as part of CyMAL's review of the scheme. Can you explain a little more about that issue and how you hope that you might be able to address it?

[114] **Mr Tooby:** It is an interesting technical issue that I feel we will face in a variety of arenas as we look more collaboratively at how we deliver services on the ground. For example, CyMAL can only fund registered museums, libraries and archives. That requires those places to have collections. So, how can we get funding for projects in places such as Oriel y Parc, which is a visitor information centre in St David's? It does not have a collection,

and so it cannot be registered. How can we deliver services through festivals that may not be building-based, as we did in Swansea? How can we deliver through things such as craft centres that combine commercial activity with exhibitions, such as that in Ruthin? It is looking at some of those technicalities, which on one level are bureaucratic niceties, but on another level may really impact on delivering meaningful activity on the ground.

[115] **Mr Loveluck:** The evidence submitted by the Minister shows that, of the 160 places in Wales that hold collections, 87 of them are accredited. So, over half are accredited.

[116] **Sandy Mewies:** When you are undertaking the review of the Sharing Treasures programme in particular, Mr Loveluck and Mr Tooby, how about treasures that are not in Wales? I am thinking particularly of the Mold gold cape—if I go back to my constituency without having mentioned it I will probably be hanged, drawn and quartered. [*Laughter.*] I understand perfectly that one issue with artefacts of that kind is the difficulties regarding insurance and security. Will your review be looking into that?

[117] **Mr Tooby:** It will, yes. We can act as a broker between Wales, England, Scotland, Ireland and the wider international community. The Mold cape is a fantastically good example, as we are working in partnership with the British Museum as peer national organisations. The British Museum can bring us in and ask how it can work with Wrexham museum, which hosted the Mold cape most recently, and ask about the level of security there, how it can work with the museum's curators and its locally-based interpretation people to make sure that we get the best balance between caring for this incredibly high-value, high-profile object and taking it to a place where the audience will find it really meaningful. That is how we are often brought in by organisations outside Wales to help assist that kind of project. In fact, we are about to work with the Tate on a similar scheme whereby two of our partners, Oriel Mostyn and the Glynn Vivian gallery in Swansea, will become partners of the Tate in collaboration with us.

[118] **Sandy Mewies:** Thank you for that, that is very interesting.

10.10 a.m.

[119] **Mohammad Asghar:** You provide details about a large number of programmes aimed at spreading the benefits of the museum beyond its sites. Are there areas where you consider that there is a weakness in the provision from National Museum Wales that you would like to address?

[120] **Mr Anderson:** National Museum Wales, in comparison with other national museums in the United Kingdom, is exceptional, first, in the degree to which it has a spread of sites across the country, and, secondly, in the extent of its loans of artefacts to other sites, which, in turn, enable access in their local communities, and Mike has hinted at this. However, it is perhaps worth just giving some more data on that. Currently, I think that 130 sites across Wales have loans from the national museum, and there are over 3,000 objects on display in those different sites. That is part of a wider loan programme that also includes other United Kingdom institutions, as well as international institutions. Therefore, the museum is taking Wales outside of the boundaries of Wales, as well as going to different areas within Wales.

[121] We also operate a number of programmes of activities working directly with communities, not just with objects. For example, this time last year we held a Diwali event, which will be held again this weekend, in the national museum in Cardiff. It attracted 2,500 people last year. It is based on a much more extensive network of activities, contacts and community links. These sorts of projects cannot be successful unless those relationships have been established, and they are based on mutuality.

[122] We are very keen to participate in strategic projects in different parts of the country. For example, just two days ago I signed a memorandum of understanding with Wrexham to put a formal basis to the commitment to collaborate with the museums and the local authority there. We have been invited by a consortium of three local authorities, Visit Wales, and the museums in the north-east Wales area to help to support their tourism and heritage developments, which will involve us giving support on the collection side, but also, very importantly, and with strong encouragement from CyMAL, providing guidance and support on the learning side. There are many layers of collaboration. The question of whether it is sufficient is always a very interesting one. Inevitably, there will always be more that one could wish to do. As the Minister said in his presentation earlier, we want to look at the ways in which collaboration between different organisations, including national organisations, can help to extend access and inclusion even further.

[123] I was at a meeting of the heritage and environment group last week where different options for collaboration were being discussed and taken forward, including the tourism initiative that I have just mentioned. I also had a meeting this week with Cadw to see whether there are ways in which we can synchronise our audience development plans.

[124] **Sandy Mewies:** I was about to ask a question on something that will come up later, but could you expand a little further on the collaboration between the authorities in north-east Wales that you have just mentioned?

[125] **Mr Tooby:** One of the things on which we have been working with local authorities is establishing what happens when—as is the case in north-east Wales—you have closely linked, very locally focused local authorities, who are also custodians of organisations that have a regional reach. One thinks of Bodelwyddan castle, Ruthin Craft Centre, Wrexham museum and other locations. When we are working in those areas, we need a strategic approach to our priorities and we really benefit when those sub-regions and regions have a strategic view of how working with us will take them forward in working with their communities and working with their approach to heritage and culture. So, we have been facilitating meetings between those local authorities, and taking part in work with CyMAL as to how to facilitate those kinds of strategic discussions. That has led to co-operation within the region and the sub-region, as well as a better use of our resource in those localities.

[126] **Mark Isherwood:** Your paper refers to visitor profile surveys, audience development action plans, marketing strategies targeted at key audiences, and engagement with groups that are not as strongly represented in your visitor profile as you would like. Can you expand on the research that you undertake to identify groups of visitors to National Museum Wales with regard to equality strands—social grouping, age, gender, ethnicity and so on?

[127] **Mr Gwyn:** We have conducted visitor surveys since the introduction of free entry, so that we can monitor its impact. That survey was conducted annually up to 2006, but we have now gone to more of a two-year cycle, because we have a lot of data about our current and loyal visitors. We have also conducted two or three major pieces of research with non-visitors, which relate again to the impact of free entry. We commissioned the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries at the University of Leicester, which is the expert in the field, to conduct research with non-visitors in 2002. It came back with many findings, which were not so much to do with barriers to accessing national museums, but museums in general. Those barriers centred on perceptions—many people still think that museums are dull, boring and dusty. Some barriers were to do with geography, and others were to do with confidence and interest. However, the main thing that came through in that major piece of work in 2002-03 was that we, and the museum sector in Wales in general, needed to be more family friendly. There was a perception, certainly among C2, D and E families, that museums were not for them, and what they were looking for was a warm and welcoming environment.

[128] So, we carried out that research at that time, and we have implemented many initiatives to try to address those issues. For example, we have conducted family-friendly audits, we have created family-learning resources, and we have mapped the local community groups in the areas relating to each of our seven sites to see what we could do to build up links. We followed up that work in 2008 to see whether there were still major barriers with regard to the usage of the national museums, and one thing that became clear was that there was a fairly low awareness of free entry in some areas of Wales, which was quite surprising to us. In the Cardiff area, 66 per cent of the population are aware of free entry, but, in the rest of Wales, only 44 per cent are aware. So, half the people of Wales are still not aware that access is free, so we need to get that message across. The last two or three marketing campaigns that we have had over the past few years have reiterated the importance of free entry.

[129] The other major piece of work that we have carried out recently, in 2009, was a major visitor profiling survey. That looked at the needs of our current visitors and has fed into audience development action plans, which have also taken on board the findings of the two other pieces of research that I referred to, which were to do with non-visitors. So, we now have audience development action plans being implemented for all of our seven sites, which centre on improving not only marketing and communication, because you have to tell visitors and non-visitors that you exist, but the quality of the visitor experience, which is crucial. So, the actions centre on improving communications and marketing and also on general recommendations to do with the visitor experience, orientation and interpretation.

[130] **Mark Isherwood:** You mentioned geography, and, this summer, I brought my family down from north Wales to your Cardiff site, and it was the moving mammoth that did it for them. *[Laughter.]*

[131] Correct me if I am wrong, but my understanding is that of your seven sites, six of them are accessible to people resident in this area, being within about two hours' travel time, whereas if you live in north Wales, only one site is accessible within around two hours' travel time. So, given the purpose of this inquiry, which is looking at cultural and arts activities across Wales, how can we redress that geographic anomaly, which creates barriers to access for many people in many parts of Wales?

10.20 a.m.

[132] **Mr Gwyn:** First, you are right that the museums are clustered in south-east Wales, particularly the major museums. However, they are clustered in the areas where the bulk of the population in south Wales lives. In north Wales, we have one site at Llanberis, but we do not have a physical location in north-east Wales, where there is a critical mass of population. So, once again, that is a weakness in our physical presence. However, Mike has just dealt with some of those issues, and he can elaborate on the partnership work that we do. So, we acknowledge that. If you live in Holyhead the fact that entry to St Fagan's is free is not going to be the reason why you would visit. You would need to have the financial resources to get to Cardiff.

[133] So, it is an issue, and one of the things that we are doing to address that—in partnership with other organisations, such as the National Library of Wales and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales—is developing the people's collection project, which is about increasing access to collections online so that, wherever you live in Wales or beyond, you will be able to access and interact with collections and even to upload your own content, memories and pictures to do with your experiences of your area and your family to contribute to the people's collection. In our view, that is a major piece of work that we are very glad to be involved with. It preceded the recession in many ways, but now that we are into the austerity era it is an example of good practice, whereby organisations

have come together within the sector to provide more effective provision with fewer resources.

[134] **Eleanor Burnham:** I am very concerned. I am very happy that you are doing all of this online stuff, but you just referred to the people in Holyhead who may not have the wherewithal to go anywhere, for example. How can we do more? Earlier, the Minister mentioned the castle in Caernarfon. Are there not more partnerships that you could create to provide activities, because that is what excites kids? I know that online activities excite kids, but we want to get them off their you-know-whats, because we want them to experience things in the flesh.

[135] **Mr Anderson:** I take your point. It is most valuable if one looks at the integration of all the different facilities across the country. I suspect that a model whereby National Museum Wales had 30 or 40 sites in Wales would probably not be one that anyone would particularly welcome. The key thing is to build on the relationship between the National Museum Wales and the other partners that can develop the sort of services that you are describing. Arguably, in museums generally in the United Kingdom, Wales included, there is immense potential for more activity-based work on the sites. There is quite a lot of research that shows that visitors are very different in what they want to experience when they come to museums. Some want a calm and contemplative experience, some want to be hands-on and to roll up their sleeves and do something active, and some like to engage in activities that are more emotionally engaging and more social. One of the challenges for museums is to provide for all of these different ways of engaging with our collections and displays.

[136] One thing that has come out of the museum strategy is that there probably needs to be more collaboration between all of the different museums on skills development so that, if you are a very small museum, provision of those activities does not rely on your having a specialist education officer, for example, and instead one curator has had some help and training on how to run some activities at certain times during the year. However, there is no question that, when it comes to looking at long-term participation in culture, making provision for a variety of ways in which people like to access culture is essential. We have done a great deal of work on our own sites across the country on renewing our displays. As many of you are probably aware, next year, we will complete the process of redisplaying the art collections on the upper floor of the National Museum Wales in Cathays park. However, a huge investment has also been made in the industrial sites across Wales, and that has transformed the kind of experience that visitors can get when they go to those sites. It has made them much more participatory. The Sunday before last, I went to Llanberis and took part in a demonstration of slate splitting, which was fantastic. The member of staff who was doing it engaged the audience right from the beginning of the process. He invited a member of the audience to come up and have a go at splitting a slate, and he had them all eating out of his hand by the end of the half-hour. Everybody who left that experience felt that they had understood something more about the technology and had also emotionally engaged in the experience. So, you do not have to be an education person to do this; lots of other staff can, too.

[137] **Sandy Mewies:** Could we keep the next question brief, please? That was a supplementary question before the principal question.

[138] **Eleanor Burnham:** Yn eich tystiolaeth, yr ydych yn cyfeirio at bobl nad ydynt yn ymwelwyr nad oes modd ichi eu denu ar hyn o bryd. Sut yr ydych chi am wella'r sefyllfa hon? Hefyd, a allwch chi ddiffinio beth a olygir gan hynny, a rhoi eglurhad byr inni? **Eleanor Burnham:** In your evidence, you refer to non-visitors who you are having trouble attracting at the moment. How are you going to improve this situation? In addition, could you define what you mean by non-visitors, and give us a brief explanation?



[139] **Mr Anderson:** I will pass this over to Mike in a moment, because he has been doing a lot of work in this area. In defining non-visitors, we would say that the term refers to any group that is underrepresented compared with the profile for the area, region or nation, whichever is most appropriate. There are several groups that would fall into that category. We mentioned C2, D and E socioeconomic groups, for example. One would also identify black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, where there is a significant population. In Cardiff, for example, that is another group. There are also age profile gaps. In fact, according to National Museum Wales's profile, we seem to be good at getting older adults in and do not seem to be significantly out of kilter in that regard. A lot of work is being done, and I will pass you over to Mike to talk about that and about some of the possibilities in this area.

[140] **Mr Tooby:** I will mention one thing that we are trying to do. If we take really raw information about the geographic location of schools and how many schools have been to our site, we can turn the question around and ask, 'What can we provide in schools that is meaningful, activity based, continuous and sustainable?' For example, the Spring Bulbs for Schools initiative is a thoroughly grounded study in biodiversity, climate change and the way in which specimens in nature evolve through climate change. Some 42 per cent of the schools that take part in that project are in what we term as 'north Wales', and about 60 per cent of the schools are more than an hour's drive away from where the collections that that project is grounded in are based. In that way, we can identify a specific non-visiting group and ask how we can take our work and make it meaningful to them?

[141] **David Lloyd:** Hoffwn ymhelaethu ar thema ysgolion. Un o'r rhwystrau sy'n wynebu ymwelwyr, ac ysgolion yn benodol, yw'r gost o gyrraedd safleoedd yr amgueddfa genedlaethol. Yr ydych yn sôn yn eich papur am bosibilrwydd o gael cynllun cymhorthdal cyfyngedig i alluogi ysgolion i dalu costau'r drafnidiaeth i'ch safleoedd. A hoffech ymhelaethu ar hynny, gan roi ychydig o fanylion?

**David Lloyd:** I would like to expand on the schools theme. One of the barriers facing visitors, and schools specifically, is the cost of travelling to national museum sites. In your paper, you mention the possibility of offering a limited subsidy scheme to enable schools to overcome the costs of transportation to your sites. Would you like to expand on that, and give us some more details?

[142] **Mr Tooby:** We have been experimenting, in cases where we have external funding, with embedding that element of project costs in the projects. It is stating the obvious, is it not? If we can build that into a project, it will be one barrier that has been overcome. I am bound to say that the challenge will be how to do that without generating external funding. That is where we will really be challenged in the future, as there is a perception that that kind of thing is additionality, while we think of it as fundamental. We can make a case to the funding agencies that that kind of thing is a crucial part of projects, and we have to keep making that case assertively, based on the evidence that we have. We are also trying to turn the question around by asking what alternative resource dimensions are available if we can deliver projects locally, particularly in partnership with local authority-led organisations. Wrexham Museum is a fantastic example.

10.30 a.m.

[143] **Lynne Neagle:** I want to commend the museum's work with families, children and young people, which is first class. Linked to that, you have referred in your evidence to the fact that you are trying to address the perception that culture is not for the likes of some groups. Can you say a bit more about that? In addition, I know that there are plans to reconfigure some of the sites in Wales. What assurances can you offer that that will not lead to a situation in which the museum in Cardiff, for example, is a much more elitist place displaying only art, rather than the haven for children that many of us know it to be at the

moment?

[144] **Mr Anderson:** First, I can give an assurance that I would regard it as a failure on my part if the museum in Cathays park were to be regarded as an elitist institution and did not continue to appeal to a broad range of audiences, including families. I have a particular commitment to ensuring that children get access to culture, because it is quite clear from the research that engagement and active participation in culture as a child is a key determinant of life engagement with culture. If we miss that opportunity with children at that first stage, we will probably have lost them forever. One of the tragedies of cultural participation in Britain altogether is the degree to which this cycle of losing children has gone on from generation to generation. About 50 per cent of our visitors are already family groups, and another 10 per cent would be as well, dependent on how you measure it, through school groups and so on. Already, children are the key audience for the museum at Cathays park, as well as elsewhere. We want to build on that, not the other way around.

[145] **Mr Tooby:** I will just add one point. The refurbishment at Cathays park, which David mentioned, includes £300,000 of investment in 'learning spaces', as we call them technically, improving the already fantastic facilities there. So, you will be seeing those come on-stream in the spring, and we would be delighted to show you them.

[146] **Sandy Mewies:** I move on now to the important issue of access for disabled people. Dai, you have the first question on this. We are getting short of time now.

[147] **David Lloyd:** Yr ydych yn cyfeirio yn eich papur at eich gwaith i sicrhau nad yw mynediad ymarferol yn rhwystr i'ch safleoedd nac i'ch gweithgareddau. A allwch ymhelaethu ar sut yr ydych yn gweithio i gynyddu cyfleoedd i bobl anabl?

**David Lloyd:** You refer in your paper to the work that you do to ensure that physical access is not a barrier to your sites or your activities. Can you expand on how you work to increase the opportunities available for disabled people?

[148] **Mr Anderson:** I will mention just one thing. At Big Pit, we have the capacity to take people in wheelchairs down into the pits and ensure that they have the same experience as other visitors. It might seem that that would be the most inaccessible of all sites and facilities, but we have made a major effort to make that possible. We can also offer a tour for people who have aural impairments, and we are working with both the Royal National Institute for Deaf People and the Royal National Institute of Blind People to make our sites as accessible as possible.

[149] **Mr Tooby:** We were gratified that the RNIB submission to this committee mentioned our work of training volunteer guides. That is an example of what I hope characterises our work with people who have physical and different access needs: we ask them what their needs are. We would never have come up with the idea of training volunteers to bring people to sites. It was those people's suggestion and that is the key to how we approach the issue.

[150] **Mark Isherwood:** You mentioned Big Pit. If you are not already aware, you may want to engage with Llay Miners' Welfare Institute near Wrexham, which is developing a museum on site.

[151] **Mr Tooby:** The Big Pit team is in dialogue with it.

[152] **Mark Isherwood:** Excellent. What, if any, disability awareness training do you undertake with your staff?

[153] **Mr Tooby:** We have a comprehensive programme of training. It ranges from the induction of new staff right through to refreshers and focused training. We try to encourage

individuals to take up training. For example, there is a small network of people who are learning how to sign within the organisation. It is like the previous discussion: it is a question of how much is enough and how much is sufficient. Inevitably, the answer is that we can always do a lot more. We are concerned to maintain funding for that sort of focused and specialist work.

[154] **Mark Isherwood:** I would argue that how much depends on how effective it is and how systemic and cultural it becomes. That is a performance management issue that should not cost anything, as it should be integrated into staff management more broadly. So, how do you ensure that? Broadly, how do you engage, if at all, with disability groups, whether disability access fora or whatever?

[155] **Mr Tooby:** I have two different answers, in that case. First, on the internal culture issue, we have a system of using what we call ‘diversity advocates’, who are drawn from across our sites and across functions. They work as a network within the organisation to lead internal cultural issues, debates and training, often doing peer-to-peer training. It is they who often generate external contact, training and advice.

[156] That brings me to your second question. We have had standing groups of advisory representatives from different areas. We have moved on from that to form specific groups to look either at specific projects or specific sites, depending on the issue. So, we do not have a standing fixed-representation consultative external group; we have a bank of contacts that we maintain, and we will bring them together as a group for projects. For example, we are currently bringing them together to look at our early stage plans for the redevelopment of St Fagan’s. We brought a group together to advise us on how to work with Muslim communities in south-east Wales. However, we do not ask all those people to meet as a standing group all the time.

[157] **Mark Isherwood:** Might I suggest that it would be helpful to engage disability access groups directly in the training? Perhaps you could also mystery-shop the disability access group.

[158] **Mr Tooby:** Yes, we have done that through audits.

[159] **Sandy Mewies:** One thing that I am particularly keen to ask about is access for wheelchair users to the national museum and gallery in Cardiff, because we have heard concerns about this; in fact, we were told that it is terrible. We were told that wheelchair users have to be let in by a member of staff through a gate that is otherwise locked. They have to travel along dark corridors that are cluttered with boxes and brooms and then go up in a tiny lift. The whole thing then has to be done in reverse when they leave. The gallery may be free of charge but, for a wheelchair user or someone who cannot use the steps, the visit is quite stressful. I accept what you have just said, which sounds very good, but it is an old building, which is one of the problems. First, are you aware of that? Are you looking at the issue? How can you deal with the constraints of old buildings to make them more accessible to disabled people?

[160] **Mr Tooby:** We were aware of that comment. That is what happens when our brand-new lift up to the front steps breaks down, which it did while it was still under warranty. We have a state-of-the-art lift up to the front door, which is only two or three years old, so the system referred to is what happens should that lift be out of action. Given that it is exposed to the elements, because it has to be outside the listed building footprint, it has broken down on occasion, I will be honest. So, that person must have come on one of those occasional days when that has happened. You can see the lift. It is on the right at the front of the museum. We are not complacent. We constantly test whether what we are saying actually works, and the mystery shopper is one example of that. It is a massive constraint working with a very out-of-

date grade I listed building. Whenever we have improved the building, we have tried to look at that. For example, the new refurbishment includes a new lift up to the galleries that we are referring to.

[161] **Sandy Mewies:** I am glad that you have answered that specific point. Thank you for your paper, which is extremely interesting, and for your evidence today. Welcome to you, David Anderson. I am sure that you are going to have a marvellous time in Wales.

[162] **Mr Anderson:** I already am.

[163] **Sandy Mewies:** We will send you a transcript of the evidence you have given today, which can be corrected for factual accuracy. Thank you for coming.

10.40 a.m.

### **Papurau i'w Nodi Papers to Note**

[164] **Sandy Mewies:** We have a considerable number of papers to note: additional information from Gwent Theatre, Disability Arts Wales, Tŷ Cerdd, the Arts Council of Wales and Voluntary Arts Wales, and the minutes of the previous meeting. Are Members happy to note them all? I see that they are.

[165] I thank Members for their contribution to this meeting. The next meeting of the Communities and Culture Committee will be held next week, on 10 November, when will begin taking evidence for our inquiry into the private rented housing sector. I also wanted to remind you all about the Plenary debate on making the most of major sporting events, but the date for that may be changed. I draw the meeting to a close, but I ask Members to remain as I want to make a comment in private and we will then go to the media briefing room to launch the committee's report on financial inclusion and the impact of financial education.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 10.41 a.m.  
The meeting ended at 10.41 a.m.*