

**National Assembly for Wales Communities and Culture Committee Inquiry into ‘The Welsh Assembly Government’s Funding of Voluntary Sector Organisations in Wales’:
Update by the Welsh Assembly Government November 2009**

Recommendation	Comments	Status
<p>1. The Welsh Assembly Government, local authorities and other public bodies should treat the Third Sector as a strategic partner, when planning, commissioning and delivering public services.</p>	<p>The Third Sector remains a key strategic partner in the planning, commissioning and delivery of public services. This is recognized in both ‘Delivering Beyond Boundaries’ and ‘The Third Dimension: A Strategic Action Plan for the Voluntary Sector Scheme’. It is further evidenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a voluntary sector representative on each of the 22 local service boards. The Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery confirmed his support for the Third Sector being be an equal partner on LSBs in the LSB route-map issued in September 2008. • The LSB team supported a development event in the spring for the County Voluntary Council (CVC) representatives to help them share learning on how to maximise their impact in the LSB context. • The Making the Connections team have been assisting the WCVA to develop an ESF Priority 4 proposal to develop the voluntary sector capacity to support and engage with LSBs. The proposal is now at the business case stage. • The Welsh Assembly Government has further strengthened the role of the Third Sector in community planning via the Local Government (Wales) Measure. This places a legal duty on local authorities and their partners to seek the involvement of Third Sector organisations in the community planning process. The National Assembly for Wales passed the Measure in April 2009 and the provisions on community planning will come into force on January 1st 2010. Welsh Assembly Government is currently consulting on statutory community planning guidance which explains the system in more detail, including the duty to seek the Third Sector’s involvement. • Third Sector representatives are members of all the Wales Spatial Plan groups, at officer and Ministerial level. In order to more effectively promote the voice of the equalities agenda in the Area groups, Wales Spatial Plan is funding a full time equalities co-ordinator post through WCVA. • Over the course of 2009, the focus of the co-ordinator has been on developing a sustainable and accountable method for equalities input into the Spatial Plan for all stakeholders in the process. This has been applied as a pilot in two spatial plan areas - North East Wales and South East Wales, via a methodology developed through discussions with key stakeholders in the Spatial Plan, the Equalities and Human Rights Coalition and generalist Third Sector. The priority is to develop a sustainable and accountable equalities constituency in the regions, providing equalities input into the Spatial Plan, with the aim of developing these into regional equalities networks. 	<p>Ongoing</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The co-ordinator is currently developing and organising a workshop for spring 2010 - Developing Equalities Infrastructure in Wales. This workshop will provide opportunity for equalities representatives, the Coalition and equalities constituencies across Wales to explore models for effective input into local and regional structures to deliver citizen centred public services, including regional equalities networks. This event will feed directly into the Spatial Plan process. • The Co-ordinator has used a mapping approach as a key tool for identifying regional equalities stakeholders and possible representatives using WCVA's All Wales Third Sector Database to identify the equalities groups in each Spatial Plan area. <p>This has been completed in the North East and South East. The mapping for the other spatial areas began in October and will be finalised at the workshops across the regions (December - January).</p>	
<p>2. The Wales Council for Voluntary Action should review existing procedures for monitoring the performance of County Voluntary Councils; to include both quantitative and qualitative measures. The Wales Council for Voluntary Action should then review the performance of County Voluntary Councils against these criteria on a rolling programme.</p> <p>The review should be completed by April 2010.</p>	<p>Service standards and performance measures have been prepared and agreed between the Welsh Assembly Government and the WCVA, identifying the services to be provided at national, regional and local levels, and who will provide them. They include both quantitative and qualitative measures.</p> <p>WCVA co-ordinates service and performance monitoring, reporting and performance improvements through collaborative working with the CVCs and volunteer centres. In addition to this an independent review is undertaken by WCVA's Risk and Performance Analyst in conjunction with the Welsh Assembly Government's Internal Audit Service.</p> <p>Currently, arrangements are in place for six-monthly monitoring and reporting which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A review of service standards and performance against targets ○ A review of service patterns to identify areas of best practice and potential improvements ○ An independent audit of the service and performance of the organisations which make up the partnership. ○ Biannual review meetings with the Welsh Assembly Government to discuss performance and priorities. <p>Officials met with the WCVA in October 2009 and agreed updated, simplified and more meaningful specifications to be introduced in April 2010.</p> <p>Additionally, a sub-group has been established to look at further collaborative working, comprising representatives from WCVA, the CVCs and Volunteer centres. Their report on collaboration and improving efficiencies to be included on agenda for the December 2009 Partnership Agreement review meeting.</p>	Ongoing
<p>3. County Voluntary Councils should review their arrangements for publicising their services; with a view to developing links with smaller organisations and providing practical support; for example, in helping to complete application forms. This review</p>	<p>The County Voluntary Councils provide and regularly promote an accessible and accurate range of locally available support services to enhance the development and effectiveness of voluntary and community action. This includes assisting in the development of locally determined and agreed voluntary sector initiatives.</p> <p>Through partnership and collaborative working the CVCs are continually looking for ways to</p>	Ongoing

<p>should be completed by March 2009.</p>	<p>improve and enhance their services and their support for local organisations. Together with Volunteer centres and the WCVA, they are currently working on a joint publicity leaflet to further promote the services available.</p>	
<p>4. The Welsh Assembly Government should sponsor four pilot projects in rural and urban areas, possibly using County Voluntary Councils, to provide training and practical support to help smaller organisations become more self-sufficient. The private sector should be encouraged to help; either by providing sponsorship or lending staff with specific skills for short-term secondments. The first two pilot projects should be up and running by March 2009.</p>	<p>The WCVA is currently undertaking similar work via Sustainable Funding Cymru (SFC). This provides practical advice and guidance to organisations that want to develop an entrepreneurial outlook to funding in order to achieve long-term financial sustainability through income diversification. It offers guidance on the various income sources available to the sector and the approaches and skills required to adopt, manage, and maintain these sources. SFC also provides case studies of organisations already working towards sustainability, sources of further help, regular news updates on SFC, and details of relevant training and events. This includes a number of rural projects. The www.sustainablefundingcymru.org.uk website will be frequently updated and organisations will have the opportunity to join an e-mailing list to receive a free monthly newsletter.</p> <p>We consider that the outcomes of Sustainable Funding Cymru should be evaluated before any further pilot projects are initiated. This is likely to be at the end of 2009/10.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>5. The Welsh Assembly Government should commission the Wales Council for Voluntary Action to develop and maintain a central portal providing information on funding; to include a searchable database of funding streams; including advice on applying for grants and how to become more self-sufficient by identifying opportunities to diversify funding. This portal should be web-based and well publicised; with links to local authorities, County Voluntary Councils and private sector organisations.</p> <p>This portal should be operational by March 2009.</p>	<p>In May 2009 WCVA launched the <i>Wales Third Sector Funding Portal</i> - a one-stop shop for funding advice and opportunities which can be accessed by visiting WCVA's Sustainable Funding Cymru website - www.sustainablefundingcymru.org.uk/fundingportal</p> <p>The funding portal provides access to a searchable database of UK funding opportunities, advice and support on raising funds and tips on how to diversify funding. The funding portal is a brand new resource for Third Sector organisations in Wales and has been funded by the Welsh Assembly Government.</p> <p>There are details of various funding and finance options available to the sector, including grants, giving, loan finance and earning income through contracts and trading. There is also the latest information on funding and tendering opportunities and where to find further help and support.</p> <p>Following its launch in May 2009 the funding portal has had significant impact on website traffic and the number of enquiries received for WCVA's Sustainable Funding Cymru (SFC) website (host of the funding portal). A brief overview of the data is given below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of visits quadrupled from 2,105 to 8,234 during the first three months after the launch. • The average number of visitors each month is now 4,500, more than double than before the launch of the funding portal. • Pages viewed have increased 40% from 7,593 to 10,509. • Number of downloads have also increased by 70% from 1,428 to 2,427. • The funding portal regularly appears in the top five most viewed sections of the SFC 	<p>Completed</p>

	<p>website. Most popular titles were 'funding search', 'funding sources' and 'funding updates'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of enquiries received by WCVA's funding advice team has seen a marked increase since the launch of the funding portal. • Basic funding searches using GRANTnet on the funding portal has increased from an average of 20 per month to 80 searches per month. <p>Welsh Assembly Government funding of £33,345 has recently been agreed for the portal up to December 2010.</p>	
<p>6. The Welsh Assembly Government should review its funding criteria; with the aim of increasing core funding for established projects, whilst recognising the need to encourage innovation. This review should be completed by December 2008.</p>	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government's IDEAS Team has recently initiated a study on grant funding which includes best practice guidance on grants management. Third Sector Unit officials have input into this.</p> <p>The Welsh Assembly Government acknowledges that it should be approving grants which enable the voluntary sector to undertake work which will help meet the Welsh Assembly Government's wider strategic objectives set out in One Wales. This includes those grant schemes which are outsourced.</p> <p>Following discussions on this issue at the Third Sector Partnership Council meeting in March 2009 the independent consultancy firm Old Bell 3 Ltd was commissioned to undertake a study into funding for the Third Sector. This research is now nearing completion and the emerging findings were presented to the Third Sector Partnership Council on 5th November. The Welsh Assembly Government will consider the report before entering into discussions with the Third Sector on future funding patterns/models e.g. core, grant, contract. The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government suggested that it may be beneficial to bring in additional expertise from the financial sector to work in partnership with third sector representatives on a working group to be convened to investigate potential funding models.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>7. The Welsh Assembly Government should endorse and support the Community Foundation in Wales as an appropriate vehicle to steward, and maximise the value of, unclaimed assets and dormant and inactive funds from varied sources. The purpose would be for the Foundation to create endowment funds to provide a sustainable long-term, independent source of funding for the Third Sector; with the added value of the Foundation leveraging in additional private sector funds (businesses, individuals and trusts) to enhance this investment in local community groups, projects and charities across Wales.</p>	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government currently funds the Community Foundation in Wales (CFiW) via its Third Sector Infrastructure Fund. The amounts are £61,500 in 2009/10 and £63,037 in 2010/11. In return, CFiW will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain its total endowed funds at a level which reflects growth; • Increase the number of pass-through schemes under management; • Increase the number of grants made; • double the size of its Endowment from £1 million to £2 million; and • increase by £500,000 its pass-through funds over the period (on top of its existing target to achieve £1 million of pass-through funds each year). <p>As part of this CFiW is endeavouring to raise its profile amongst all local authorities, with the aim of them transferring their dormant funds to CFiW. A pilot project is being run in Newport and the early signs are that it is successful. As part of this an awareness raising event was held in Newport in September 2008 at which 3 other local authorities attended. £100,000 of dormant Newport accounts has already been added to CFiW's endowed funds. Work is ongoing regarding encouraging other local authorities in Wales to do likewise.</p>	<p>Completed</p>

	<p>The Heritage Minister took account of the responses to the public consultation on a Dormant Accounts scheme for Wales, prior to finalising his proposals for the Scheme. This involved an assessment of whether at least part of the monies available should be used to establish an endowment fund (or funds). However, after due consideration, the Minister decided not to pursue this option, in part due to the current uncertainties in the financial markets. Final proposals on the spending priorities for Wales, and the distribution mechanisms, were approved by the Cabinet on 19th October; the next stage will be to seek the National Assembly's approval for a draft Order to confirm the proposed spending purposes - a plenary debate is expected to take place in April 2010. The two strands confirmed are "supporting children and young people" and "tackling climate change."</p>	
<p>8. The Welsh Assembly Government should monitor the extent to which three-year funding is becoming the norm, in accordance with the funding code of practice; and identify types of projects where longer term funding might be more appropriate. A report on this monitoring exercise should be published by March 2009.</p>	<p>The Third Sector Partnership Council's Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee commissions a yearly compliance exercise, monitoring Welsh Assembly Government Departments' adherence to the Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector. The issue of 3 year funding is a key element of this. The 2007/8 exercise revealed, as have previous exercises, that longer term funding is becoming the norm and that genuine cases of non-compliance with the Code of Practice for Funding are very few. The 2008/9 monitoring exercise has just taken place and the responses are being collated with a report to be prepared for consideration at the Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee meeting in January 2010.</p>	Ongoing
<p>9. The Welsh Assembly Government should review the various funding streams provided either directly or through its agents, to identify the scope for consolidation; and to assess whether the balance between revenue and capital funding achieves the most efficient use of resources. This review should be completed by March 2009.</p>	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government routinely carries out reviews of its grant schemes to ensure clarity, ease of access and value for money. Additionally the Strategic Action Plan requires each Welsh Assembly Government Department to work with the Third Sector to clarify the actions it will take in response to the Strategic Action Plan.</p> <p>The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government has established a regular 'Third Sector Group' meeting to promote more joined-up working between Welsh Assembly Government Departments on Third Sector issues. It comprises the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Chair), Directors of all 'policy' Departments and other senior officials responsible for key work areas affecting the Third Sector. It is expected that Third Sector Group members will promote that the regular review of departmental funding streams will be fundamental to Departmental Action Plans.</p>	Ongoing
<p>10. The Welsh Assembly Government should commission the Wales Council for Voluntary Action to review the means of providing funding to organisations providing an all-Wales service, to obviate the need for multiple grant applications. This review should be completed by December 2009.</p>	<p>The WCVA has recently submitted a report on their findings to officials who are considering its contents. The report has also been copied to the consultants Old Bell3 Ltd in order that it can inform the work they are undertaking on reviewing funding patterns.</p>	Completed
<p>11. The Welsh Assembly Government should review its code of practice on funding, to enable Third Sector organisations to plan their activities more strategically. This review should be completed by December 2009.</p>	<p>The revised Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector was published in January 2009. It now includes chapters on procurement and full cost recovery, amongst other changes and updates necessitated by the Strategic Action Plan. Since publication a section on the Welsh Language has also been added. This has already been incorporated into the electronic/online version and an addendum page inserted in hard copies. The Code is a living document and the Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee consider revisions to the Code and is next due to meet in January</p>	Completed

	2010.	
12. The Welsh Assembly Government should commission the Wales Council for Voluntary Action to carry out a review of existing public sector codes of practice on funding the Third Sector; to identify and disseminate good practice by March 2009.	This is to be discussed at the Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee in January 2010.	Ongoing
13. All relevant public sector organisations (including local authorities, local health boards and other statutory funding bodies) should develop and implement codes of practice for funding the Third Sector (both the allocation of grants and the procurement of services) by December 2009. These should ensure that procurement procedures allow the Third Sector to compete for contracts on a comparable basis to those in the public and private sectors; and should take account of full cost recovery. The Welsh Assembly Government should issue guidance and monitor the implementation of this recommendation.	<p>As part of the 2008/9 Compliance Exercise the questionnaires were sent to Assembly Government Sponsored Bodies for the first time. As mentioned earlier the responses are being collated with a report to be prepared for consideration at the Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee meeting in January 2010.</p> <p>Additionally officials have prepared a presentation on the Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector which was rolled out at the WCVA summer regional policy events. These were well received and it is planned to further extend these to Assembly Government Sponsored Bodies and Local Health Boards.</p>	Ongoing
<p>14. The Welsh Assembly Government should commission the Wales Council for Voluntary Action to review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All application forms, to ensure that the language is clear and easy to understand, with a minimum use of jargon. • Application procedures, with a view to tailoring the process to the size of grant applied for, and also to reducing bureaucracy by making use of information already supplied. For example, applications to renew a grant should need to include only changes that had occurred since the original application. • All application forms to ensure that they contain information on how applications are to be processed; for example, assessment criteria, time until a decision will be made, and a simple flowchart illustrating the whole application process. 	<p>WCVA is currently gathering information from Welsh Assembly Government officials, including examples of applications, assessments, funding outcomes, timelines and monitoring and reporting requirements for each scheme. They will shortly be meeting with officials to discuss the practical application of protocols, both written and un-written. WCVA will then produce a detailed analysis and suggested revisions for each grant scheme, along with templates for setting up future schemes, and guidance for grants assessors.</p> <p>WCVA has commenced investigation into proposals for passporting, including: hardware requirements (e.g. scanner), storage, software requirements and systems. Once complete the WCVA will trial the proposal with a representative sample of WCVA administered grants.</p> <p>This process has proved more difficult than originally envisaged and officials will shortly be meeting with the WCVA to discuss progress and determine the way forward.</p>	Ongoing

<p>It is important that the application process is transparent, with an opportunity for feedback. These reviews should be completed by March 2009.</p>		
<p>15. The Welsh Assembly Government should publish information on the availability and allocation of European Union funding regularly; this should be disseminated via the Welsh European Funding Office and the web-based information portal. This information should be published quarterly, starting in August 2008.</p>	<p>Guidance on 'Applying for European funding' section has been available on the WEFO website (www.wefo.wales.gov.uk) since October 2007. This information is regularly updated and guides potential project sponsors through a step-by-step process to apply for funds under the Convergence and Regional Competitiveness programmes 2007-2013. This website section includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on project ideas (to support collaborative planning and discussion of project proposals) • how to request to submit an 'Expression of Interest' as part of the application process • tendering opportunities for organisations to deliver project activities for approved projects. <p>Guidance on Third Sector Access to European Funding was published and posted on the website in November 2008.</p> <p>Information about the projects approved to date (including the EU funds committed) and the Expressions of Interest submitted, can be found at the following link. http://wefo.wales.gov.uk/programmes/progress/?lang=en</p> <p>Further improvements to the website will be made as part of WEFO's ongoing review of website content.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>16: The Welsh European Funding Office should establish an advice centre to assist Third Sector organisations in their applications for European Union funding. This should be established by March 2009.</p>	<p>The Third Sector European Team (3-SET), supported by £1.5m EU Technical Assistance grant, have been operational since Autumn 2008. The WCVA coordinates the 3-SET at national level and provides services tailored to the interests of Third Sector organisations across the Convergence (West Wales and the Valleys) and Regional Competitiveness and Employment (East Wales) areas.</p> <p>The 3-SET team works collaboratively with and complements the support provided by the local SET Outreach Workers and DCELLS by providing dedicated expertise at a national level to enable Third Sector organisations to contribute to the delivery of the programmes.</p> <p>As at 31 October 2009, the 2007-2013 Structural Funds programmes are supporting nineteen projects led by the Third Sector, representing a total project cost of £114 million; EU funding of nearly £60 million. Approved projects include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wales Cooperative Centre's £7 million (ERDF grant £3.6 million) Social Enterprise Support project, which will support new and existing social enterprises in the Convergence area. • WCVA's £30 million (£16m ESF grant) Gateway project, which will support activities aimed at assisting people furthest from the labour market develop skills, motivation and confidence to help them progress into employment. <p>A further 30 Third Sector project proposals are currently under assessment, with more</p>	<p>Completed</p>

	announcements to be made shortly.	
17. When the Dormant Accounts Scheme has been established, the Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that Wales receives an appropriate share and that a significant amount is directed towards the Third Sector.	<p>The 'Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Act' received Royal Assent in November 2008. HM Treasury has determined that the proceeds from dormant bank and building society accounts made available to the scheme will be divided between the devolved administrations in line with the principles of the Barnett Formula.</p> <p>The wording of the legislation says that they scheme should be aimed 'primarily' at the Third Sector and the Minister for Heritage has endorsed this approach. The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) will be administering the Scheme, and is fully aware of the views of Welsh Ministers and the expectations placed upon them by HM Treasury.</p> <p>It is hoped that the Dormant Accounts Scheme for Wales can be launched during the second half of 2010. This is subject to (a) the passage of the relevant secondary legislation (see response to recommendation 7) and (b) to the Reclaim Fund' - the central (UK) mechanism for passing the dormant accounts money from the banks and building societies to Big Lottery Fund, being put in place.</p>	Ongoing
18. The Welsh Assembly Government should hold discussions with the BIG Lottery and other National Lottery distributors; with a view to learning from them how to simplify funding procedures and disseminate good practice. These discussions should be held by December 2008.	<p>There are currently four Lottery distributors within Wales: the Arts Council of Wales, the Big Lottery Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Sports Council for Wales. All of the distributors have been working on application processes in the last few years with a view to simplifying access. Much of this work was generated by the 'Consultation on National Lottery money for Arts and Film, Heritage and Sport from 2009' held in 2005. BIG have also taken on the role of disseminator of best practice. Welsh Assembly Government officials regularly meet with BIG to exchange information. The launch of the Community Asset Transfer fund being a recent example of this.</p> <p>Officials will suggest that the issue of how the Welsh Assembly Government might share experience and best practice should be discussed at the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government's next 6-monthly meeting with Big Lottery Fund.</p>	Ongoing
19: The Welsh Assembly Government should review its staff procedures to maintain accessible channels of communication between relevant departments and the Third Sector; for example, to ensure that knowledge of contacts and background is shared when relevant officials leave or take up a new post. This applies also to the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, County Voluntary Councils, local authorities and local health boards. This review should be completed by January 2009.	<p>The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government has established a regular 'Third Sector Group' meeting to promote more joined-up working between Welsh Assembly Government Departments on Third Sector issues. The proposed Group will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinate delivery of the '<i>The Third Dimension</i>', the Welsh Assembly Government's strategic action plan for the Third Sector. • monitor Departments' progress in developing and implementing supporting actions to 'The Third Dimension'. • share information on latest developments within the Third Sector and on the Welsh Assembly Government's engagement with the sector. • strengthen Departments' awareness of and compliance with the <i>Third Sector Scheme</i> and the <i>Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector</i>. • facilitate more joined-up working between departments on cross-cutting issues involving the Third Sector. <p>It comprises the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Chair), Directors of all 'policy'</p>	Ongoing

	<p>Departments and other senior officials responsible for key work areas affecting the Third Sector.</p> <p>The Third Sector Group met for the first time on 3rd December 2008. A key topic of discussion at the inaugural meeting was issues surrounding Commissioning and Procurement Practice within the Welsh Assembly Government and beyond, and how to enable the Third Sector to bid and compete for contracts where commission of contracts rather than grant awards are offered.</p> <p>The Third Sector Group continues to meet with its third meeting targeted in the New Year.</p> <p>In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government's Third Sector Unit (TSU) is developing a training awareness course "Working with the Third Sector", aimed at all Assembly officials who have regular dealings with the sector.</p>	
<p>20. The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that Third Sector organisations, including the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, are aware of the Welsh Assembly Government's Code of Practice on Complaints.</p>	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government's Code of Practice on Complaints allows for consideration of complaints relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maladministration; • service failure; • failure to meet our Welsh Language Scheme; and • failing to provide information requested under the Code of Practice on Public Access to Information <p>The Code will not consider complaints about a decision which has not involved maladministration, in other words the Code cannot be used to complain about a decision just because the customer does not agree with it.</p> <p>The Code is available on the Welsh Assembly Government's website, or a hard copy can be requested from the Welsh Assembly Government's Complaints Unit. The Unit operates a public complaints line (029 2080 1378) and an email complaints inbox (complaints@wales.gsi.gov.uk).</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>21. The Welsh Assembly Government should hold regular equality training sessions for members of staff responsible for communicating with and supporting Third Sector organisations.</p>	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government's Human Resources Equality and Diversity Team deliver equality training 'hot-shot sessions' for staff from all departments.</p> <p>All departments are responsible for ensuring that their staff are provided with equalities training which is specific, tailored and relevant to their own service. Divisions are asked to address this recommendation as part of their work to develop supporting actions to 'The Third Dimension' (action 6a within the Third Dimension's Action Plan).</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>22. The Welsh Assembly Government should collate statistics on the number of grant applications processed through the medium of Welsh, both by its own staff and external agencies; and ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to meet anticipated future demand; including staff recruitment and training. This review should be completed to allow sufficient funding to be allocated in the next National Assembly</p>	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government's Third Sector Unit (TSU) is developing a training awareness course "Working with the Third Sector" and will incorporate awareness of this recommendation into the programme. It will then be incumbent on the relevant Welsh Assembly Government departments to incorporate into their Departmental Action Plans.</p> <p>Each Welsh Assembly Government department should have an up to date, departmental Welsh Language Action Plan (WLAP), and departments have been requested to incorporate the requirements of this recommendation into these Plans. It is the responsibility of each department to keep these WLAPs and figures up to date annually. Progress on the individual WLAPs will be monitored annually by the Welsh Assembly Government Welsh Language Unit and</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>budget round.</p>	<p>the Welsh Language Board.</p> <p>Each department must also submit a Departmental Bilingual Skills Strategy annually. The purpose of the strategy is to ascertain how much bilingual resource should be allocated (and in which posts) in each department. It is the responsibility of each department to keep these up to date annually.</p> <p>Over the Summer 2009, the Welsh Language Board (WLB) also undertook a pilot audit with several Welsh Assembly Government departments, on the use of Welsh in managing grants. The purpose of this pilot was to ascertain how effectively organisations implement language grant conditions, in line with previously issued WLB guidance. The report on this audit's findings is expected later in 2010.</p> <p>Furthermore, detailed work is currently being undertaken on mainstreaming the Welsh language within the Welsh Assembly Government, as a result of the Welsh Language Unit's successful bid for additional resources, earlier this year, under the 'Enabling Government' umbrella. This work will help inform the preparation of our next Welsh Language Scheme which is to be in place by December 2010.</p> <p>A section on Welsh Language compliance has also recently been incorporated into the Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector.</p>	
<p>23. The Welsh Assembly Government should review monitoring and evaluation procedures; with the objective of making them more appropriate to the size of grant and more focused on measuring outcomes rather than activity. The review should be completed and revised guidance issued by December 2009.</p>	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government welcomes the recommendation to review monitoring and evaluation procedures for grants to the Third Sector. A proposed review and provision of guidance will now be incorporated within a wider review of all Welsh Assembly Government evaluation practice being led by the Social Research Division in the Department of the First Minister and Cabinet. This will be beneficial by linking monitoring and evaluation of grants to Third Sector organisations within a strategic framework for evaluating Welsh Assembly Government policies and programmes. This review will be completed by July 2010 and will respond to the issues raised in the Communities and Culture Committee's report. These include issues relating to burden, proportionality and the need for evaluation to be outcome focused - all of which are pertinent to a broader consideration of evaluation practice in the Welsh Assembly Government.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>24. The Welsh Assembly Government, local authorities and other funding bodies should include 'gender budgeting' as a specific issue in their codes of practice and in their monitoring procedures. This should be achieved by March 2009.</p>	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government Finance Department is currently going through a change programme regarding the way that financial systems and budgets are set, monitored and managed. This is a far reaching project which aims to enable continuous improvement in the way the finance function operates across all departments and supports policy delivery.</p> <p>The design specification includes the facility to report on cross-cutting policy initiatives, including both gender budgeting and children's budgeting. However, it needs to be recognised that developments such as gender budgeting need to be built in at the policy development stage and potentially brought out as part of the annual Resource Allocation Exercise (RAE) process. The next phase of the change programme will deal with budget setting and the identification of outputs and outcomes, and gender budgeting could be just one more feature of this</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	development. The earliest date for progressing this is likely to be 2010.	
<p>25. The Welsh Assembly Government should review the marketing and branding of Third Sector funding; and produce a strategy to raise public awareness of the source, allocation and outcomes of such funding. This strategy should be produced by January 2010.</p>	<p>As part of the media campaign "Give a Little - Gain a Lot" Welsh Assembly Government officials worked with the sector to develop an all-Wales brand which is now being used within the sector as a single identifier. CVCs and Volunteer centres will use the brand and logo as part of all future promotional activity designed to engage with and facilitate volunteering and voluntary action. The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government has seen and approved the design, promotion and use of this all-Wales brand.</p> <p>The Welsh Assembly Government continues to review the ways in which existing sources of information, such as the Guide to Welsh Assembly Government Third Sector Grants, and the Annual Report on the Voluntary (Third) Sector Scheme can be made more user-friendly to the general public, and promoted more widely.</p> <p>The Guide to Welsh Assembly Government Third Sector Grants is available in hard copy and online. The Third Sector pages on the Welsh Assembly Government's website already include links to the websites of other potential funders and officials are exploring ways of publicising these sources of information more widely, and of making them more accessible.</p>	Ongoing