

Minutes

Date: Friday 26 January 2001
Time: 10.00am to 12.35 pm
Venue: Deeside College, Connah's Quay

Attendance

Members

Ann Jones, Chair	Vale of Clwyd
Alison Halford	Delyn
Tom Middlehurst	Alyn and Deeside
Alun Pugh	Clwyd West
Rod Richards	North Wales
Peter Rogers	North Wales
Janet Ryder	North Wales
Karen Sinclair	Clwyd South
Dafydd Wigley	Caernarfon
<i>Conwy County Borough Council</i>	
Jane E Williams	Senior Youth and Community Officer
<i>Wrexham County Borough Council</i>	
Jim Humphreys	Principal Youth Officer
<i>Secretariat</i>	
Adrian Crompton	Committee Clerk
Howell Rees	Deputy Committee Clerk

Item 1: Introduction and apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Deeside College for their hospitality. Apologies had been received from Dafydd Elis Thomas, Ieuan Wyn Jones, Gareth Jones, Christine Humphreys and John Marek.

Item 2: Report back from previous meeting

2.1 At its meeting on 8 December the Committee agreed that a letter should be sent to Virgin Trains regarding the London to Holyhead service.

2.2 A reply, received that morning, is attached at annex 1. The reinstatement of the service, which would take effect from 29 January, was welcomed.

Item 3: Supporting Young People in Wales

3.1 The Chair welcomed Jane Williams and Jim Humphreys to the meeting. Jane Williams praised the Assembly for the initiatives it had introduced for young people in Wales since its inception. She then described the nature of youth services in Wales at present. Jim Humphreys said that *Extending Entitlement* was about young peoples' rights. He welcomed the model that had been adopted, which was structured around an entitlement for all young people to a range of services.

3.2 Jane Williams explained the different approach being adopted in England where it was proposed that all young people should have access to a personal adviser. Pilot projects were being set up but problems were already being encountered in recruiting enough advisers. She felt the model for youth services being adopted in Wales was better although it was important that this was properly funded. Some excellent work was being done and this good practice needed to be extended. Local authorities also needed to work more closely together. It was important for young people and those who work with them to have access to good quality information and *Extending Entitlement* had re-launched Young Voice/ Llais Ifanc. Jim Humphreys added that by September every school leaver would receive a free guide, access to a telephone helpline and the on-line site.

3.3 The Chair invited comments and questions from the Committee. The following points were raised.

3.4 *Extending Entitlement* was welcomed but it would not be easy to implement. Given the difference in service delivery between urban and rural areas how could a quality service be delivered across Wales?

3.5 *Extending Entitlement* raised many questions: what should be the strategic priorities and how could equal rights for rural and urban areas be ensured?

- Jane Williams said that young people from North Wales would be making short presentations to the Committee later in the meeting. Most young people, whether they lived in urban or rural areas, felt isolated and the priority was for improvements to communications and transport.

3.6 What plans were there to develop links for young people in North Wales across Europe?

- Jane Williams said that there were some opportunities for exchanges but these were piecemeal and should be developed further. The Committee noted that good work was being done in this field by the Welsh Youth Exchange Committee.

3.7 *Extending Entitlement* was an important, strategic document affecting all young people in Wales. The Assembly therefore needed to hear the views of young people themselves so that the services they needed were delivered. Success depended upon a wide range of organisations working in partnership.

3.8 Voluntary organisations did a great deal of youth work but where did they fit in with the vision of *Extending Entitlement* ? Would *Extending Entitlement* lead to more funding for youth services?

- Jane Williams said that the responsibility for co-ordinating services lay with local authorities. Existing good practice needed to be built on by sharing information. Jim Humphreys added that local authorities could not deliver youth services alone but relied on partnerships with the voluntary sector.

3.9 The role of personal advisers should not be played down because they could provide a useful service for young people who do not have support networks or know where to go to get advice.

3.10 It was difficult to recruit youth leaders and so there was a need to pay them more and provide better training. The introduction of a vetting system for staff employed to work with young people had cost implications for voluntary organisations that were causing widespread concern;

- Jim Humphreys agreed that recruitment was a problem but funding had been provided for a review of youth service training. Grants to voluntary bodies were being increased. The Committee noted that the cost of vetting was a Home Office responsibility. The issue had been raised with the Secretary of State for Wales who would continue to press the issue with the Home Office.

3.11 The Chair then invited comments and questions from the public. The following points were raised.

3.12 Barry Latham, Chief Executive, North Wales Residential and Nursing Homes Association said that *Extending Entitlement* raised issues of lifelong learning and training. A better fit was needed between the skills needed by employers and the training available. He had experienced difficulty in gaining private sector representation on a Community Consortium for Education and Training (CCET) and was concerned that the voice of employers was not being heard;

- the Committee noted that CCETs must consider the full range of interests, including the voice of business and that the Minister for Lifelong Learning would ensure that happened.

3.13 Joyce M'Caw, Chief Executive of Careers Plus, said that she was a member of the advisory group on *Extending Entitlement* . She felt that the document was about partnerships and the challenge for local authorities was to involve all the organisations that worked with young people. She emphasised the importance of Careers Companies in such partnerships.

3.14 Dafydd Rhys of Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru said that employers' input was crucial. A

national structure of qualifications was needed, reflecting the needs of the Welsh economy rather than UK priorities. A related issue was the provision of further education options for those taught through the medium of Welsh.

3.15 Enid Williams, Youth Officer for Meirionydd and Dwyfor said that it was very difficult to attract, and retain, youth workers in rural areas. A better package of pay and resources was needed. She said it was important to take the comments of young people on *Children and Young People – A Framework for Partnership* seriously. She was disappointed that Assembly Members had not attended the recent meeting about Young Voice/Llais Ifanc;

- a number of Members said they had wanted to attend the meeting. However it had been arranged in Cardiff on a Friday. That was not a good day because it was one of the few times when Members could catch up on work in their constituencies.

3.16 Geraint Roberts, Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council, said that voluntary organisations were not a cheap option and the sector needed funding to do its work.

3.17 David Saunders, Youth Officer for Denbighshire County Council, expressed concern about the difference in funding levels between England and Wales.

3.18 Carl Ollin, British Deaf Association, told the Committee that the education system was failing young deaf people. He had attended university and had wanted to become a youth worker but the practical difficulties he faced as a deaf person meant he had not been able to complete his course. Young deaf people were put off work because the benefits lost often left them worse off.

3.19 Eva Fielding-Jackson, British Deaf Association, said that lottery money had been secured to set up a project for young deaf people and that had improved provision. However better access to youth services for young deaf people was needed, especially in North Wales;

- the Committee noted the existence of an active cross party Assembly group on hearing difficulties. The group was aware of the difficulties faced by young deaf people and was exploring many issues.

3.20 Alex Litherland, Community Autos Rhyl, stated that funding was the bottom line for voluntary organisations and that needed good administration. Often the goal posts for funding were moved which made planning difficult. Voluntary bodies that could not secure funding to grow often did not survive.

3.21 David St George, Celtic Dimensions, said that access to information technology (IT) was important. The cost of IT led to an increasing social divide. A priority for the Assembly should be improving access to IT for young people in rural areas.

3.22 The Chair then welcomed three youth groups from Flintshire, Conwy and Wrexham to the meeting.

Each group made a short presentation about the issues that affected young people. The texts of the presentations are at annexes 2, 3 and 4.

3.23 The Chair then invited further comments and questions from the public. The following points were raised.

3.24 A member of the public congratulated the youth groups on the quality of their presentations. He suggested that their contribution supported the argument for the voting age to be reduced.

3.25 Eifion Williams from Denbighshire Social Exclusion Unit also praised the quality of the presentations. He added that *Extending Entitlement* should be about extending services to all young people with priority given to those with the greatest need.

3.26 Marie Prosser, a student at Deeside College raised the subject of student grants. She said that students had difficulty in accessing services and had to work to fund their studies;

- the Committee noted that student hardship was of great concern to the Assembly and that a task force had been established.

3.27 A student at Deeside College said that more funding was needed to educate young people about sex and drugs. She felt that young people had to be shocked about the effects of drug use.

3.28 A lady from Anglesey said that policies needed to be developed to promote the Welsh language.

- the Committee noted that the Assembly was committed to working bilingually. The long term future of the language lay in the education system.

3.29 Tomos Morgan, a pupil in Llangefni Comprehensive School, said he represented the views of the young people of the town to Llangefni Town Council. It was very important to put views of young people across. He asked if the Assembly had any plans to give more power to young people.

3.30 Ffion Miles, Wales Council for the Blind asked why the agenda and papers for the meeting were not available in braille. She hoped that, in the future, they would be available in an accessible format to enable young people with visual impairments to gain access to the work of the Assembly. The Chair said she would try to address this at future meetings.

3.31 Janet Allen, a student at Deeside College, called on the Assembly to encourage young mothers back into education and out of the poverty trap.

3.32 The Chair invited further comments from the Committee. The following points were made;

- transport had been raised as an issue for young people living in rural and urban areas. It was suggested that youth services in rural areas could be improved by providing transport to facilities that would otherwise be underused;
- the quality of the presentations was praised but it was noted that all those making the presentation were girls;
- support was expressed for the suggestion to lower the voting age. It was also important for young people's voice to be heard and the example provided by Tomos Morgan from Llangefni was welcomed;
- the proposal made by the youth group from Flintshire to educate young people about dealing with money should be followed up in the Assembly;
- the need for better access to services for young people with disabilities would also be taken back to the Assembly;
- surprise was expressed about the lack of leisure resources in the area highlighted in the presentation by Flintshire. There was a need to look at provision and offer alternatives;
- teenage pregnancies were of great concern. Britain had the highest rate in Europe. The answer was not to make moral judgements but to provide a range of services including education, contraception and the morning after pill.

3.33 The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions, especially those from young people. The discussion would be summarised and fed into the consultation. (A copy of the letter sent by the Chair to the Minister for Education and Lifelong learning is at annex 5).

Item 4: Minutes of the 8 December meeting

4.1 The Committee adopted the minutes of the meeting of 8 December.

4.2 The Chair proposed that business for the next three meetings would be as follows:

- on 23 March the Committee would meet at Abergele Leisure Centre. There would be two items for discussion; developing the ICT infrastructure of North Wales and a session inviting members of the public to contribute to the Assembly's review of procedure;
- on 11 May the Committee would meet at Canolfan Ucheldre in Holyhead when the main topic for discussion would be transport;
- on 6 July the Committee would meet in Rhyl Town Hall when the main topic for discussion would be housing.

4.3 The Chair asked Members to contact the committee clerk if they had any other suggestions for future business.

4.4 The Chair closed the meeting, thanking Deeside College for their hospitality.

Letter from the Chief Executive, Virgin Trains

25 January 2001

Ann Jones
Chair, North Wales Regional Committee
The National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Your office has brought to my attention your letter of 19 December about Virgin Trains' services between Holyhead and Euston.

While I fully understand the strong feelings about this particular issue, the good news is we are restoring the entire North Wales service to and from London from Monday 29 January.

We really did hate having to withdraw the through trains, and stated all along that at the very first opportunity we would reintroduce the services as soon as Railtrack restored the track capacity. Unfortunately the numerous speed restrictions across the network meant we have been restricted to the number of trains we are able to run out of London.

We realise other operators have been able to restore services rather more quickly, but the restoration of the North Wales services is taking place five weeks earlier than we had feared. This is due to Railtrack's success in getting all four tracks open again between Euston and Watford, together with the completion of the Willesden re-signalling project.

Your committee members may also be interested to know that we have just appointed Fiona Shaw to look after the interests of Virgin's customers in North Wales, and she will be directly responsible for all our activities on the route from trains to stations and customer information.

Thank you for writing and I hope that this information is helpful.

CHRIS GREEN

Presentation by Rebecca Bebington Jones and Katrina Heath from Flintshire Youth Service

ISSUES OF CONCERN AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE AGE 16+ IN FLINTSHIRE

- Transport
- Leisure
- Health
- Education
- Career
- Crime

We want to be valued and respected like adults by adults.

We are this country's future help us to get it right.

TRANSPORT

Expensive - We are expected to pay as adults as we have no recognised student card. Infrequent buses which are often late or cancelled leaving us vulnerable. Limited destinations which in turn limits our choices and opportunities.

This leads to:

Boredom - The inability to get to where we want to go without parental taxi

Limited employment opportunities. Both part time and full time leaving young people unemployed and a lot of time on their hands and nothing to fill the gap

No Leisure Facilities

No money + no transport = no leisure

LEISURE

One cinema in the County

Films not up to date, and it is out of the way to most of the county's 16-18 year olds.

Ice Rink

Expensive and used by people from far a field who are able to pay.

There should be concessions for local youths.

The Tiv

Not somewhere I would use, (it has a reputation and so do the users of this establishment.) Again out of the way unless the parental taxi is used.

Youth Centres/Clubs

Organised and structured programme, but the age range is so vast that the interests of 16-18 year olds, are not that of 11 year olds, and with limited staffing (which is part time) tends to be a place one goes occasionally when you need to feel safe or need a chat with a worker with whom you have a good relationship.

Dee in the Park

This was like a breath of fresh air on May Bank Holiday Monday. An outdoor free rock concert in Wepre Park which attracted 3000+ people of all ages. Out thanks to the Youth and Community Service for footing the bill. But we need these opportunities more than once a year.

What we need:

Youth Cafes/Youth Information shops set in town centres, run by non judgmental youth workers who are able to offer information for us to make informed choices in our lives, whilst offering a place to chill out in a warm, safe non-threatening environment, which is subsidised and therefore not out of our price range.

HEALTH

As stated above, Information Points to assist young people with issues affecting their lives. Health Clinics specifically for young people at times that are more realistic for young people i.e. not school hours.

Young people have a great deal of stress in their lives and need a safe environment to unwind.

Young people are stereotyped with alcohol and drug taking and would like to break this. A Youth Café could be a place where drug and alcohol counsellors could meet young people informally, especially young people at risk of abusing, or who are involved, whilst keeping them in their peer groups.

EDUCATION

Young people are under pressure to achieve at school due to the league tables that schools are in. This pressure needs a place to enable release to be sought outside the school environment.

Rewards for 16 - 18 year olds who continue to study. Young people are striving for independence and being forced to be dependent on families, whilst friends who are working are more independent.

Some young people are forced to return to education through lack of job opportunities, however this means mixed abilities in classes.

More opportunities are needed to learn life skills and independent living skills for the lower achievers to enable them to gain independence for themselves.

CAREER

Enhanced opportunities for REAL work experience not just being used as a tea person or dogs body.

The minimum wage age is 18 and this leaves the 16-18 year olds open to be used, and in some cases dismissed at 18 for a younger, cheaper person to take their place.

Young people need an opportunity to be valued as an employee and given suitable training and apprenticeship with permanent posts at the end of that training.

CRIME

We are tired of being stereotyped as drinkers and drug takers who thieve to support their habit.

The media state that a large portion of crime is done by youth of today and instantly we are all criminals. The fact of the matter is that maybe a large proportion of crime is youth related, but it is committed by the minority.

Young people are to the greater extent good citizens, who also feel unsafe on our streets and would value a Police presence. However the Police presence needs to have an element of permanency where by relationships could be built in the Community with the Police.

Presentation by Llinos Haf Edwards, Miriam Dafydd Chilton, Elizabeth Fear and Ceri Rimmer from Llangernyw Youth Centre

A Challenge for the Assembly

From the young people of Conwy

- Introduction and Transport – Ceri Angharad Rimmer
- Facilities – Elizabeth Fear
- Sex and Alcohol – Llinos Edwards
- Education and Language – Mirain Dafydd
- "Etifeddiaeth" (Heritage) by Gerallt Lloyd Owen – All the above

Introduction and Transport

Llangernyw is not just a small village, as it is surrounded by a vast area of agricultural land, and much of the population live outside the village itself. There are one thousand one hundred and thirty eight residents in the Llangernyw area, and most of them live some distance from the centre of the village. As a result, their homes are not served by public transport.

That brings us to our first topic, which is transport. Llangernyw is located between two commercial centres, Llanrwst and Abergele. Llanrwst is seven miles to the south-west and Abergele fifteen miles to the north-east. A bus service runs through the village every hour and a half. This bus travels to Llansannan, then on to Llanfair Tal Haiarn before reaching Abergele. Another bus sets off from Llanrwst, going on to Llanddoged, then Pandy Tudur before reaching Llangernyw. It then goes on to Gwytherin before returning to Llanrwst. In our opinion, this is wholly insufficient and Llangernyw needs a far better bus service. A direct bus service is needed, both to Llanrwst and to Abergele. The last bus leaves Llanrwst for Llangernyw at 6.20pm. The service should run later than that. If our suggestions were implemented we are confident that this would encourage people to make much more use of the buses. Compared to the system in Abergele, where buses run to nearby towns every ten minutes, the local system is a disgrace. It's high time someone in authority did something about the transport situation in rural areas.

Sex

The number of teenage pregnancies in this country is far higher than in any other European country. I

believe that the sex education we receive is partly to blame for this. These lessons don't start in earnest until the first year of secondary school, by which time young people are into their adolescence. Most will be worried about the physical, mental and emotional changes that they are undergoing. I believe that sex education should be discussed much earlier, possibly in year 4 of primary school when the children are seven or eight years old. This would give individuals more opportunity to prepare for the future, and understand how best to avoid becoming teenage parents.

This country also has the highest legal age of consent in Europe. The age of consent here is sixteen, whilst in countries like Spain it is twelve. I believe that this too is partly to blame for the number of teenage pregnancies.

Sex should be a subject that can be discussed openly and without embarrassment. Without it, none of us would be here. Therefore, young people in this county should be given the information that could help them avoid mistakes that could wreck their lives.

Alcohol

I believe that alcohol and sex go hand in hand, and this affects teenagers since a number of young people in Wales go out with the express intention of drinking alcohol.

Young people should be given more information about the effects of alcohol, because seeing friends who are drunk can prove to be a frightening experience.

Despite this, I believe that the legal drinking age should be lowered from eighteen to seventeen at least, since many people of my age go out with the intention of drinking under age. It's easy enough to forge your date of birth on an identity card and dress up in order to look older. Many of these people go out in order to challenge the law, which just makes going out more exciting.

This also gives teenagers the opportunity to socialise and meet new and interesting people, and to meet young people who are a little older than themselves and would not normally turn in the same social circles.

In my opinion, this gives young people the confidence to go out and make new friends, and this confidence may be of use to them in later life.

Young people's use of alcohol is more often than not portrayed in a negative light, but positive aspects, such as the social skills and confidence gained, should also be highlighted.

Facilities

I don't feel that there are sufficient facilities specifically for young people, such as leisure centres, cinemas, discos and pop concerts. Although we could arrange our own sporting events and gigs, we

don't have an adequate location. Neither do we have any resources, and money is an added problem. It's too far to travel to discos, and also too expensive, e.g. a disco is held in Betws-y-Coed, but a taxi there costs £24, and there is only room for three people in a taxi.

The provision of better facilities would prevent so many young people from wandering the streets, turning to smoking, taking drugs or drinking alcohol, simply for something to do, or to have some fun. This is absurd, as they could be safely participating in sports or listening to music rather than wandering the streets or going to pubs.

Education and Language

As young people, we feel very pressurised to do well in our school work. Although this can motivate us to do our best, it can also be a great burden, and many children worry far too much about some subjects - Mathematics and Science in particular.

We feel that there are some subjects that won't be of use to us after we leave school, and some elements within certain subjects which are less relevant e.g. the Tudor period in history.

We would also benefit from studying some different subjects. As far as history is concerned I would like more lessons specifically on Wales and the influential people in our history. At the moment most of my knowledge of this country stems from what I've read in books, or discussed with my parents.

I also believe strongly that we should have lessons on how to handle money. This is something that we'd all appreciate in years to come. I don't have a clue about mortgages or interest rates. So many people get into debt these days, and it would be useful to have some idea of how to deal with money successfully.

We're now expected to do three A levels and two AS levels, instead of the previous three A levels. I believe that this is too much work; the burden is heavy enough as it is. We should be given the choice to take only three A levels if we wish. In our school, when we reach the sixth form, we're expected to attend key skills lessons taught through the medium of English. Welsh is the language of our homes, and the language in which we receive our education. Therefore we should have the right to continue our education through the medium of Welsh.

This brings me to my second point, namely, the status of the Welsh language in our society today. We have a strong Welsh community in Llangernyw, but having been to other places, it is evident that it commands little respect, and that we are shown little respect for speaking it. We don't have to travel far to be mocked because of the fact that we speak Welsh. I once went to Mac Donalds in Llandudno for a meal with some friends. We placed the order in English, out of courtesy to the staff, and went to sit at one of the tables. A group of girls from the town were sitting at a nearby table and when they heard us speaking they began to bleat like sheep.

People look to the leaders of their country for leadership. If the Assembly respected the Welsh language,

and used it with pride in their proceedings, it would raise the profile of the Welsh language both in Wales and world-wide. The language makes us special and different.

Two of my friends taking part in this presentation have learnt Welsh. Both show us what can be achieved, not only because they speak the language, but because they have shown that it's possible to live and think as Welsh speakers despite it being their second language. The Assembly's challenge is to become worthy of these young Welsh people's commitment. You are our leaders - take your responsibility seriously.

Etifeddiaeth

Cawsom wlad i'w chadw,
Darn o dir yn dyst
ein bod wedi mynnu byw.

Cawsom genedl o genhedlaeth
i genhedlaeth ac anadlu
ein hanes ni ein hunain.

A chawsom iaith, er na cheisiem hi,
Oherwydd ei hias oedd yn y pridd eisioes
a'i grym aniddig ar y mynyddoedd.
Troesom ein tir yn yn simneiau tân
a phlannu coed a pheilonau cadarn
lle nad oedd llyn.

Troesom ein cenedl i genhedlu
estroniaid heb ystyr i'w hanes,
gwymon o ddynion heb ddal
tro 'r trai.

A throesom iaith yr oesau
yn iaith ein cywilydd ni.

Ystyriwch; a oes dihareb
a ddwed y gwirionedd hwn:
Gwerth cynnydd yw gwarth cenedl
a'i heddw yw ei hangau hi.

Presentation by Jenna Smith, Kayliegh Howen, Claire Hughes, Becky Hughes, Esther Hughes, Josie Hough and Karla Jones of Wrexham Youth Forum

ISSUES AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE

- Transport
- Culture
- Victims of Crime
- Leisure Opportunities
- Homelessness
- Drugs
- Pregnancy
- Peer Pressure
- Bullying
- Depression/Mental Health Issues
- Religion
- Sex
- Appearance
- Low Confidence and Self Esteem

SERVICES AND PEOPLE THAT HELP YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THESE ISSUES

- Education Service
- Youth Service
- Social Services
- Health Service
- Personal Services
- Police Authority
- Counsellors
- Parents, Friends and Peers

WHAT SERVICES SHOULD BE DOING

- Consulting with young people so that services provided address young peoples needs.
- Be sign post services giving young people options and professional advice.
- Provide more relevant information for young people and wider community.

- Provide free phone numbers for young people to contact services they require.
 - Provide more education relevant to the needs of young people which are identified by young people
 - More formal opportunities for young people such as youth clubs.
 - More Youth Clubs including:
 - More staff
 - Better buildings
 - More resources and equipment
-

Annex 5

Image10.gif (53365 bytes)

Jane Davidson AM
Minister for Education and Life-long
Learning
National Assembly for Wales

**Pwyllgor Rhanbarth y Gogledd
North Wales Regional Committee**

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

14 February 2001

North Wales Regional Committee – Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales

At its meeting on Friday 26 January the North Wales Regional Committee considered the development of the Assembly's policy on supporting young people set out in *Extending Entitlement*. Over 140 members of the public attended to give their views and several clear messages emerged that I should like to pass on to you. I hope that these can be fed into the consultation process.

The Committee was particularly pleased to hear the views of many young people and we hope that young people will be directly involved in the development of Assembly policies on youth support services. In particular, the Committee received short presentations from three youth groups who outlined their main concerns. These included:

- the cost and availability of public transport;
- the lack of leisure facilities;
- the need for better information on health and career issues;
- the need for more opportunities to learn life skills;
- a call for more support for the Welsh language; and
- a concern that young people are stereotyped as drinkers and drug takers.

The point was also made that young people need more information on managing money and the Committee felt this deserves further consideration.

A number of other points were made during subsequent discussion including the need to:

- improve access and services for young people with disabilities;
 - support young people with disabilities who want to work but are discouraged from doing so by loss of benefits;
 - ensure that young people in rural and urban areas have access to the same quality and range of services;
 - offer an adequate package of pay and resources to recruit and retain youth workers;
 - assist voluntary bodies with the costs of vetting staff who work with children and young people.
- It was felt that the Assembly should do what it can to persuade the Home Office to meet these costs;
- assist students facing financial difficulties whilst studying.

The minutes of the meeting are attached for information. I am copying this letter to Jane Hutt, Cynog Dafis and Kirsty Williams.

Yours sincerely

Ann Jones
Chair, North Wales Regional Committee