

Date: Wednesday 19 June 2002
Venue: Committee Room 2, National Assembly for Wales
Title: Welsh Assembly Government's Second Annual Report on the Voluntary Sector Scheme

Purpose

1. The Committee is asked to note the contents of the Welsh Assembly Government's 2nd Annual Report of the Voluntary Sector Scheme.

Summary

2. The Welsh Assembly Government's 2nd Annual Report provides an overview of progress in relation to implementation of the Voluntary Sector Scheme during the financial year 2001/2002. It details how the Assembly and its partners are taking forward the requirements of the Scheme in relevant policy areas. The report also assesses progress against the Voluntary Sector Scheme Action Plan.

Timing

3. A Plenary debate on the report is scheduled for 11th July. Once the report has been endorsed, and amended as necessary, it will be published on the Assembly website. A printed copy will also be produced and distributed widely.

Background

4. The First Annual Report on the Scheme reported on its implementation, the key developments resulting from it, and the progress against the implementation action plan made in that first year. The report referred to the laying of foundations and promised to provide greater detail on the Scheme's implementation across all Assembly policy area. The Second Annual Report sets out to deliver this.

5. A copy of the Report is at Annex 1.

Cross Cutting Themes

6. The Voluntary sector is one of the three main planks that underpin Assembly policy.

Recommendation

7. The Committee is invited to note the content and format of the Welsh Assembly Government's Second Annual Report on the Voluntary Sector Scheme.

Jane Hutt
Minister for Health & Social Services

Voluntary Sector Scheme
Second Annual Report

Foreword by First Minister

Foreword from the First Minister– to be drafted when contents of the report are finalised.

Draft Summary statement from Tom Jones

The voluntary sector in Wales welcomes the progress that has been made in implementing the Voluntary Sector Scheme over the past year. There have been important outcomes that will have a real impact on the sector.

Most significantly, the first edition of the Code of Practice for Funding the Voluntary Sector has been published, setting out the principles of Assembly funding for voluntary organisations together with practical guidance. Within the coming year, I hope that we will see not only the Assembly, but also all ASPB's and local authorities implementing these principles.

The Voluntary Sector Partnership Council meetings continue to be highly valued in enabling steady dialogue between the Assembly and the voluntary sector on issues of mutual concern and in monitoring the effective implementation of the Scheme. One such issue on which we have worked together productively is the role of UK voluntary organisations in Wales, especially in the light of devolution.

The twice-yearly ministerial meetings provide a valuable opportunity for dialogue between each Assembly Minister and the sector, reflecting the commitment to working with the voluntary sector across all parts of the Assembly. There have been some positive outcomes to date and I hope to see these continue to develop and strengthen in the coming year.

Two years after the Assembly published its Voluntary Sector Scheme significant progress has been made. We have built strong foundations and are slowly beginning to see the fruits of this work. However, much work is still to be done before the Scheme is fully implemented and the voluntary sector will continue to work to ensure progress is maintained.

Tom Jones

Chair

WCVA

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INTRODUCTION

This is the second report on the Welsh Assembly Government's Voluntary Sector Scheme and covers the financial year from 1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002.

The First Annual Report on the Scheme reported on its implementation, the key developments resulting from it, and the progress against the implementation action plan made in that first year. It also detailed work in hand and action to be taken to achieve this. The report referred to the laying of foundations and promised to provide greater detail on the Scheme's implementation across all Assembly policy areas.

Much progress has been made – the Code of Practice for Funding the Voluntary Sector has been published, the twice yearly meetings with ministers have been fruitful, and dialogue between the Welsh Assembly Government and the voluntary sector has grown. The Scheme itself has been the subject of much interest and has been used as an example of how the voluntary sector can be recognised, valued and included in Government business effectively. The Assembly ensures that the Scheme is referred to in UK response documents such as in the *“Questionnaire for the Evaluation of the Implementation of Recommendation n°R(94) on the Promotion of a Voluntary Service in Europe”*.

Queries have been received from other parts of the UK, Europe and further afield regarding the Scheme and its implementation. In March 2002 Norma Barry, Director of the Assembly Communities Directorate and Phil Jarrold, Deputy Chief Executive of the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), were invited to Canada to discuss the Welsh Assembly Government's relationship with the voluntary sector in Wales and to advise Canadian government officials on the creation of their own scheme.

VOLUNTARY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

The Scheme requires the Voluntary Sector Partnership Council (VSPC) to meet “at least twice in a calendar year”. In fact, during the reporting period covered in this report, three meetings have taken place although four meetings of the VSPC were held in the calendar year 2001 - one having been held in March 2001 and reported on in the first annual report:

23 rd June 2001	Princess Gwennlian Centre, Kidwelly
19 th October 2001	Community Centre, Colwyn Bay
14 th December 2001	Welsh Assembly for Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff

These meetings have been attended by an encouraging number of members of the public, especially at the North Wales meeting in October. The VSPC has decided that, wherever practical, meetings should be held in public buildings external to the Assembly, or in community centres, which should make the meetings more accessible to the public.

A full record of VSPC meetings is available at:

www.wales.gov.uk/themesvoluntarysector/content/partnershipcouncil/meetings

TWICE YEARLY MINISTERIAL MEETINGS

The Ministerial meetings are a key part of the Scheme as they allow the voluntary sector and Assembly to ensure that the Scheme is implemented across the Assembly. The success of the Ministerial meetings can be seen as a litmus test of the extent to which working with the voluntary sector has been mainstreamed across the Assembly.

The requirement under the scheme is for meetings with each Minister to take place at least twice in a calendar year – this was achieved in 2001 except for the March meeting with the Minister for Rural Affairs and Assembly Business, which was cancelled due to the foot and mouth crisis.

During the period covered in this report the following meetings have been held:

Minister for Education and Life-Long Learning	15th October
Minister for Environment	29th November
Minister for Finance, Local Government & Communities	1st November
Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language	29th November
Minister for Health & Social Services	9th October
Minister for Rural Affairs and Assembly Business	15 th November
Minister for Economic Development	6th December

Over the past year there have been a number of positive outcomes from these meetings. They have been valued by the voluntary sector as an opportunity for regular dialogue with Ministers and an opportunity to share information and contacts and contribute to policy development. This report reflects on the key areas where this has occurred but specific outcomes include:

- voluntary sector involvement on the Education for Sustainable Development panel;
- the Assembly's Building Strong Bridges project, proposing increased voluntary sector involvement in health;
- Ministerial endorsement for the principle of asset based development as an effective tool for the regeneration of communities in Wales;
- establishment of a Community First Trust Fund;

Whilst the effectiveness of meetings has increased over the last year, the majority of agenda items were proposed by the voluntary sector. Consequently, the Action Plan for the Scheme has been amended (copy at page XX) and the Assembly officials responsible for each Ministerial meeting are now required to prepare a report to each meeting demonstrating how the principles and commitments of the scheme have been implemented within the Minister's areas of responsibility.

A full record of Ministerial meetings is available at

www.wales.gov.uk/themesvoluntarysector/ministers

VOLUNTARY SECTOR SCHEME ACTION PLAN

The VSPC has continued to monitor implementation of the Scheme. There has been significant progress; for example, a detailed Action Plan to implement the Scheme was passed in December 2001. It has also discussed several issues of key concern to both the voluntary sector and the Assembly and made recommendations upon which the Assembly has acted. Examples of these are the actions taken regarding the Giving Campaign and the future of UK Voluntary Organisation based in Wales (details below).

The Action Plan is divided into five main sections and progress against each section is shown below:

- **Partnership and Proofing policies**

Guidance on policy development and participation has been produced on a beta-site on the Assembly's Intranet site. This has been trialled and a version of it will be launched on the Assembly's Internet site. The consultation section will then go before VSPC members for comment. These comments will inform the revision of the site before it goes "live".

- **Draft Policy Appraisal Guidance**

The Assembly has been developing its Policy Integration Tool since last year. The tool aims to ensure that staff developing policy have a simple mechanism to help them work their way through the key issues and Assembly commitments that they need to take into account. It includes commitments to the voluntary sector and volunteering. The tool is being piloted across several Divisions and will then be put to the voluntary sector for consultation. Roll out of the final version is planned for early autumn 2002.

- **Consultation**

A suite of IT tools, designed to be more user-friendly and incorporating comprehensive front-end guidance for staff is currently being developed. It is intended to link in to the Policy Integration Tool. This suite of tools comprises the consultation template and consultees database originally envisaged, but has also been extended to include an events database and archiving and forward look facilities. Following the award of a tender for production a consultation process on the use of the tools will be undertaken.

Roll out was originally planned for March 2002 but this has been delayed due to both a revision and an extension of the range of products available (which should result in more useful tools for external users and officials).

- **Dialogue and Co-operation**

A meeting of the Assembly Voluntary Sector Liaison network was held in Spring 2001. The Assembly is currently considering ways of reinvigorating this internal network to make it much more effective and a role-awareness seminar is planned for autumn 2002.

Examples of where the Assembly and the sector have benefited from dialogue and consultation are as follows:

- Cadw: Welsh Historic Buildings held discussions with the voluntary sector which proved invaluable in its preparation of a booklet on access for disabled people to historic buildings;
- Health and Well-Being Strategy and Planning Team (HSPT) has involved the voluntary sector in all aspects of the review of the NHS in Wales. The sector has had representation on all the 10 Task and Finish Groups. The NHS Plan recognises the important role the sector has to play in supporting health and well being and has, as a result, increased the sectors representation on Local Health Boards to 2. In response to issues raised through the consultation process HSPT has been tasked with undertaking a special project at the request of the Minister for Health and Social Care to *' identify opportunities to strengthen partnership working between the voluntary sector and the NHS in supporting health and well being at national and local levels'*
- The report of the Advisory Group on a Strategy for Older People in Wales will make recommendations to the Welsh Assembly Government on planning for an ageing population and creating a better society for older people. The voluntary sector was fully involved in the development of the report through membership of the Advisory Group. Age Alliance Wales, Alzheimer's Society, Age Concern Cymru, Wales Pensioners and the National Old Age Pensioners Association of Wales were all represented on the group. Additionally, Age Concern Cymru worked in close partnership with the Assembly to complete an extensive consultation programme (including a major conference and focus groups in all areas of Wales) involving the direct participation of over 1,000 people;

- The WEFO Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Team strategy document makes specific reference to the inclusion of the voluntary sector in its consultation processes, and representatives from the WCVA participated in the first consultative seminar held in December 2001. The voluntary sector is also represented on each of the 3 Structural Fund and 4 Community Initiative programme monitoring committees. Likewise the Objective 1 programme also has a Monitoring Sub-Group that has voluntary sector representation;
- The Sports Council for Wales (SCW) work closely with the public and voluntary sectors to achieve the objectives set out in their strategy “ Young People First”. Within their programme of service delivery the (SCW) deal with the voluntary sector on a daily basis. They work on the principles of partnership, decentralisation and subsidiarity, and seek to assist and support voluntary groups at a local level;
- The Assembly NHS Public Health Division has built up contacts with the HIV voluntary sector, enabling 360% feedback. It is represented on the All Wales Reference Group on HIV/AIDS and is currently, along with the voluntary group Positive Tongue, involved in developing an Action Plan for HIV work in Wales.
- The voluntary sector is included in the New Deal Partnerships and is extensively involved in the voluntary sector option. The WCVA is also a member of the Future Skills Wales Steering Group.
- Housing Directorate has regular contact with many voluntary sector representatives such as Welsh Women's Aid, Shelter Cymru, Welsh Tenants Federation and Tenant Participation Advisory Service who all have membership of the National Consultative Forum on

Housing in Wales. Information is fed back via their respective networks.

- Following one of the most comprehensive consultation processes undertaken by a public body in Wales, The National Council - ELWA's Corporate Strategy Plan has been produced. It recognises the valuable contribution that the voluntary sector can make towards the creation of Wales as a learning country, and aims to continue to develop partnership arrangements to ensure that expertise from community based and voluntary organisations is utilised.
- In the case of children and young people's policy areas covering Strategic Frameworks, planning partnerships, participation in decision-making and, Children's Commissioner Regulations, the Assembly Children and Families Division have a consultation database of 1,300 names including the relevant voluntary sector organisations at national, county and local levels, in addition to voluntary groups representing or including those with particular identities and disabilities.
- Planning Division consulted the voluntary sector when developing strategies such as "Draft Planning Policy Wales", "Minerals Technical Advice Note", "Telecommunications and Planning Obligations". The sector was also fully consulted regarding the framework for the administration of the proposed Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund for Wales. The WCVA will also sit on the Fund's Advisory Panel. There is also encouragement to participate in policy development fora, such as the Land Use Planning Forum which advised the Minister for Environment on the review of planning policy guidance, resulting in the forthcoming publication of 'Planning Policy Wales' (PPW).

- Youth Policy Team run a scheme supporting the national youth work infrastructure in Wales. This is administered by the Wales Youth Agency with whom they work closely to ensure that they are aware of the latest information relating to the Voluntary Sector Scheme. Youth Policy Team has reviewed their own scheme twice in the last two years, because policies for young people have been evolving at a fast pace.
- Countryside Division's interacts with the voluntary sector through Environment Wales, the Environment Development Fund and the Wales Wildlife and Countryside Link. They are in regular dialogue regarding variety of issues. They attend meetings of the Environment Wales steering group, offer advice on Assembly matters and to provide guidance in the strategic direction of the grant scheme.
- The Communities Directorate Urban Unit consulted with WCVA before inviting bids for Local Regeneration Funding, including review of guidance and forms. Some WCVA suggestions were included in the final guidance to applicants. They maintain continuous links with Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Groundworks Trust & grant recipients.
- The Rural Partnership for Wales was re-established subsequent to the creation of the Rural Policy Division in early 2001. The WCVA is a key member of the Partnership's Joint Secretariat, as well as the Partnership itself - alongside other voluntary sector colleagues from Wales Wildlife Link, Wales Rural Forum, Council for the Protection of Rural Wales, Institute of Rural Health, Wales Enterprise and the LEADER Network. Through this mechanism all Assembly policies are identified and the voluntary sector invited to express a view.

- At the onset of Foot and Mouth Disease in March 2001 the Assembly invited WCVA and other voluntary sector members of the Rural Partnership, plus Cytun, to join a Task and Finish Group to prepare a Rural Recovery Plan. WCVA now sit on the high level Monitoring Group as well as on the Partnership.
- Additionally the WCVA has been closely involved in preparation of the following policy developments:
 - the Wales Co-operative Centre's study into protecting rural retail outlets;
 - development of a major contract to gather evidence and recommend action to address migration of young people from rural communities in Wales – the Age Balanced Communities Study;
 - the Autumn 2001 seminar into the future of rural development in Wales alongside other voluntary sector bodies;
 - the LEADER+ Programme Monitoring Committee – the Wales LEADER Network, Wales Rural Forum and the Wales Wildlife Trust are also members
 - Farming Connect – as appropriate via the Wales Wildlife Link and CCW;
 - Farming Futures has engaged closely with the voluntary sector from inception to delivering the final strategy;
 - The CAP+ Reform Steering Group and 3 working groups.

- **Voluntary Sector Networks**

Effective networks are crucial to the success of the VSPC. Establishing and building stronger networks in order to work effectively as a Partnership Council has brought challenges. The VSPC has considered two papers in 2001-02 on how representatives from the voluntary sector are disseminating information to and collecting ideas from organisations within their areas of

interest. The development and working of the networks will continue to be monitored over the coming financial year.

- **Information and Understanding**

A study of partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors commenced during February 2002. The aim is to consider better ways of partnership working in Wales and the contract for this project has been awarded to Professor Stephen Martin at the Cardiff Business School within Cardiff University. The research teams are currently commencing the initial phase of the research project.

- **Funding the Voluntary Sector**

Much progress has been made this year in establishing baseline data on public sector funds allocated both directly and indirectly to the voluntary sector in Wales. This development has been welcomed by the sector. For 2000-01, the Assembly has put in place systems for tracking voluntary sector funding on:

- specific Assembly voluntary sector schemes;
- schemes administered by some intermediary bodies such as Environment Wales; and
- health authority allocation of funding to the voluntary sector.

For other areas the Assembly has introduced processes for gathering spending information and is currently collecting the information for 2001-02.

Assembly Divisional Funding to the Voluntary Sector:

<u>Division</u>	<u>Total Spent on Voluntary Sector 2001-02 (£000's)</u>
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Agriculture	
• Food & Farming Development Division	50
• Economic Policy Division	154
Communities Directorate	
• Urban Unit	2,038
• Substance Misuse Branch	352
• Communities and Social Inclusion Unit	6,725
• Voluntary Sector Branch	5,692
• Crime Reduction Unit	32
Education and Training	
• Schools Management Division	163
• Training & Education - Youth Policy Team	701
Environment, Transport, Planning, Housing	
• CADW: Welsh Historic Buildings	10
• Environmental Protection Division	246
• Countryside Division	727
• Transport Policy Division	133
• Housing Directorate	5,555
Health and Social Care	
• Primary & Community Health Division	32
• Health Promotion Division	194
• Public Health Protection Division	66
• Social Care Policy Division	5,653
Total	28,523

Health Authority Allocation – Voluntary Sector Funding

Health Authority	2001-02 £000's	Percentage of overall allocation (%)
Bro Taf	3.642	41
Gwent	1.613	18
Dyfed Powys	1.591	18
Morgannwg	0.765	9
North Wales	1.181	13
Total Allocation	8.792	100

Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies – Voluntary Sector Funding

NB: information still being collated and will be inserted in the final text

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ASPB	2001-02 (£000's)
ACCAC	0
Arts Council for Wales	10,817
Care Council	205
Countryside Council for Wales	876
ELWa	
Environmental Agency Wales	0
General Teacher Council	0
Wales Nursing Board	0
Higher Education Funding Council	0
Local Government Boundary Commission	0
National Museums and Galleries of Wales	959
National Library of Wales	0
Sports Council for Wales	6,888
Wales Tourist Board	210
Welsh Development Agency	
Welsh Language Board	2,873
Total Allocation	

Local Authority – Voluntary Sector Funding

The VSPC considered a report on local authority funding for voluntary organisations (1998/99) which was prepared from a joint Welsh Local Government Association/ WCVA research survey report. The survey provided valuable information and it is hoped that the collection of this data will now be standardised and become a routine exercise. This should reduce the costs and efforts involved for both local government and the voluntary sector.

- **Code of Practice for Funding for Voluntary Sector**

The publication of the Code of Practice was an important milestone achievement and was greatly welcomed by organisations seeking funding from the Assembly. It is a living document and mechanisms are now being put in place to ensure the voluntary sector and the Assembly work together to ensure it is up-dated and amended at regular intervals. It is available both in ring binder form and also via the Internet at:-

<http://www.wales.gov.uk/themesvoluntarysector/content/codeofpractice>

In the coming year, work will focus on developing agreements at local government level to ensure the principles outlined in the Code of Practice are implemented for local organisations.

Within the Assembly all Divisions have been advised that all voluntary sector grant schemes should adhere to the code. Additionally, all ASPB's were required to confirm that they too were applying the code to their grant schemes where they involved the voluntary sector. The responses indicate that the terms of the code are being applied consistently.

- **Volunteering**

Projects funded under the Wales: the Active Community initiatives have continued to progress well during the period of this report. Twelve projects are funded. A prime example of one project is the valuable work carried out by volunteering bureaux in disseminating information on possible volunteering opportunities.

The Wales Office for Research and Development has commissioned Beaufort Research Ltd to undertake a research study entitled "Exploring Involvement in Volunteering in Wales". The project has been examining rates of volunteering within both the adult and children/young people populations of Wales. This

research will inform the development of future policy and act as a baseline for assessment of volunteering activity in Wales in the future.

- **Community development**

The Guidance manual for Communities First Co-ordinators is currently being updated for issue in the financial year 2002-03. It is proposed to include streamlined criteria and a more standardised format for applications.

£10.3m was allocated in 2001-02 to a range of organisations to help prepare for Communities First (CF). £1.2 m was spent on preparatory funding. The Community Purposes budget (which includes CF, People in Communities and Sustainable Communities) totals £64.92m from 2001-02 to 2003-04. This will be reviewed in 2002-03. Examples of activities approved to date include the appointment of development workers, training for local people, travelling costs, local marketing activities, audits and office rental and equipment. So far, 36 Partnerships have either been formed or are nearly formed.

The Assembly is supporting a consortium of 8 organisations known as the Communities First Support Network. The Network comprises a number of voluntary organisations and provides professional advice and support to Partnerships as they are established and develop. In the main, it is developing training programmes, facilitating networking and providing advice on a range of issues including business development, financial planning and project development.

A Communications Strategy for the CF programme is being developed and will outline the Assembly's plans to promote the programme at the national and local level and will link to work proposed by key partners such as the CF Support Network.

MODERNISATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The relationship between local government and the voluntary sector is very important to the sector in Wales. The VSPC has therefore had regular discussions on the modernisation of local government. All local authorities have signed policy agreements with the Assembly, which include commitments to address the needs of different ethnic communities, as well as broader equality issues. The agreements also aim to develop the capacity of the voluntary sector to enable it to play a full part in the development and implementation of the community strategy.

WCVA and Wales Association of County Voluntary Councils have representatives on the working group overseeing implementation of community strategies policy - the Assembly and voluntary sector planned and delivered a series of seminars around Wales. WCVA also sat on the working group for the Wales Programme for Improvement and the Assembly has funded (and participated in) a conference for the voluntary sector and a voluntary sector guide to the Programme.

In both cases WCVA was also consulted on draft guidance to local authorities. This has resulted in:

- guidance which reflects the role of the voluntary sector and highlights its relevance to the Wales Programme for Improvement and its importance in preparing community strategies;
- guidance about local government policies tailored to the needs of voluntary organisations;
- a series of events which have been positively evaluated, in particular for bringing local government and voluntary sector interests together to discuss common issues;
- the sharing of good practice between organisations in different parts of Wales and beyond.

This issue will continue to be monitored by the VSPC in the coming year.

CAPACITY BUILDING

In recognition of the increased workload resulting from the challenges presented by increased partnership working in Wales, the Assembly has taken steps to build the capacity of the voluntary sector in Wales. This is being done in a number of ways:

- The first was to strengthen the capacity of County Voluntary Councils to engage in partnerships by increasing funds available to the Councils through the Local Voluntary Services Scheme (LVS scheme). For the first year of Capacity Building an additional £155k was allocated through the LVS scheme to make a total of just over £2m. For the 2002-2003 financial year, however the funding allocated to the LVS scheme has risen to £2.5m;
- The second was to increase the core grant to the WCVA by £70k in 2001-2002 since the organisation has responsibility for facilitating the voluntary sector representation on the VSPC. In 2001-2 there was an increase of £70k which is now included in the core grant to the organisation;
- The third strand of the approach to building partnership capacity at a national and a local level in Wales was to establish a Partnership Capacity Building Fund. This Fund is an acknowledgement of the time and commitment that member organisations of the VSPC give through their attendance of meetings both of the Council and their interactions with constituents. £85k was made available in 2001-2002. A further increase in funding has been agreed, in principle, for 2002-2003.

THE GIVING CAMPAIGN

The Giving Campaign is an independent national project supported by the voluntary sector and the UK government. It is capitalising on the new tax regime launched in the 2000 Budget to promote tax efficient giving including the adding of a 10% government supplement to payroll donations until 2003.

The campaign received the full backing at the VSPC meeting on 14 December. The Welsh Assembly Government Cabinet endorsed this action and the following action has been taken:

- an item drawing Welsh Assembly Government staff attention to the campaign was posted on the Assembly staff Intranet site. The initial take up has been encouraging;
- Assembly Heads of Divisions have been asked to pass on information regarding the Campaign to external bodies with whom they have contact;
- Arrangements made for the Caring/Sharing Campaign to talk to Assembly staff; and
- The WCVA is disseminating leaflets on behalf of the campaign.

UK VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS BASED IN WALES

One of the major challenges facing the sector has been the threatened and actual withdrawal of services from Wales by some UK Voluntary organisations operating in Wales.

Following a decision by the VSPC at the December 2001 meeting the Welsh Assembly Government and the Voluntary Sector are jointly participating in a working group tasked to address concerns.

As a result the Minister for Health and Social Services has invited a selection of Chief Executives of UK voluntary organisations working in Wales to a joint seminar with the WCVA to be held in June 2002. This will cover the implications of devolution for their current decision-making processes and accountability to Wales. The initial responses received have indicated that this initiative is being well received.

As a result of the seminar it is intended to draw up a voluntary code of principles that UK voluntary organisations working in Wales will be invited to adopt. This will provide a commitment to early consultation with funders, stakeholders and service users in Wales in advance of any decision to withdraw, reduce or significantly alter services for people in Wales.

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

At the VPSC meeting in June 2001, the Assembly and the voluntary sector agreed that the sector should be encouraged to engage in legislative issues. As a result of this, Andrew Davies, AM (then Minister for Assembly Business) and the WCVA held a joint seminar on subordinate legislation in March 2002. This was well attended by the voluntary sector and pointed the way forward for future development.

THE WAY FORWARD

Good progress has been made but we need to ensure that we build on what has been achieved so far.

The Assembly's Voluntary Sector Liaison Network is currently being re-launched. This will facilitate better information gathering/sharing and awareness of Scheme's requirements by all Assembly Divisions.

Although it is generally acknowledged that the effectiveness of the ministerial meetings has increased over the last year, it was felt that changes must be made. The Assembly officials responsible for each ministerial meeting will now prepare a report on each meeting demonstrating how the principles and commitments of the Scheme have been implemented within the Minister's area of responsibility. The VSPC will monitor these reports.

The Code of Practice for Funding the Voluntary Sector has been published. To build on this awareness seminars will be organised during the financial year 2002-03, both for Assembly and ASPB staff who provide grants to the voluntary sector, to ensure the commitments made are met. Additionally work will be undertaken in respect to developing agreements at local government level and to ensure that the Code's principles are implemented for local organisations.

Although the Assembly is introducing new processes for gathering spending information there are still areas for improvement, which should be addressed in the forthcoming year. In the next year the Assembly will refine its processes to provide more detailed information, for example on tracking information on indirect and direct funding for the black and ethnic minority voluntary sector.

There is a need to ensure that the processes of releasing funding information for the sector becomes more fluid and that information on all direct and indirect funding be provided for the VSPC to monitor.

The Assembly will continue to build on the progress made in the last year and, in partnership with the voluntary sector, will strive to raise the profile and value of volunteering and voluntary activity in the Principality.

ACTION PLAN 2001-02

Partnership and Proofing Policies

Scheme Commitment	Means of Delivery	Action
<p>Ensure early and continual sectoral engagement in policy development , avoid undesirable policy impact, and identify and encourage opportunities for voluntary sector organisations to lead on service provision where best placed (3.18 and 3.19)</p>	<p>Guidance for Assembly staff on policy development and participation to include:</p> <p>Routinely examining whether the voluntary sector could deliver any services to be provided by outside organisations</p> <p>Testing the impact of policy on the voluntary sector and volunteering</p>	<p>Invite views of sector on draft policy appraisal guidance Incorporate guidance into policy consultations</p> <p>Determine for which programmes the Assembly should provide the opportunity for the sector to bid to operate</p>
<p>Internal Liaison Group to ensure compliance with principles and commitments of the Scheme across the Assembly (3.21)</p>	<p>Implementation within relevant Assembly divisions/groups through Voluntary Sector Liaison Officers and co-ordinators for Ministerial meeting</p>	<p>Develop appropriate range of communication means to maintain high levels of awareness, information exchange and support where necessary;</p> <p>Review VSLO network</p> <p>Bring together co-ordinators for ministerial meetings</p> <p>Report to ministerial meetings on involvement of</p>

		voluntary sector
Consultation with a cross-section of sector on Scheme arrangements (3.22)	<p>Voluntary Sector Partnership Council</p> <p>Ministerial Meetings</p> <p>Direct links with organisations</p>	<p>Seek feedback through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSPC • Ministerial meetings • Voluntary Sector Liaison Officers • Collate information for Annual Report
Recommendations to improve assembly performance (3.23)	VSPC meetings	<p>Clarify status of VSPC recommendations</p> <p>Remit recommendations to relevant Ministers</p>
Resolve disputes (3.24)	VSPC as appropriate	

Dialogue and Co-operation

Scheme Commitment	Means of Delivery	Action
<p>Agree practical arrangements for dialogue at an operational: (3.6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information, concerns, views - Participation and consultation on new strategic programmes - Administrative arrangements for funding 	Various to meet circumstances	<p>Develop links with relevant Voluntary sector networks</p> <p>Collate information on ongoing relationships for Annual Report</p>

<p>Twice yearly meetings with Ministers (3.7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of Scheme - Level of consultation - Review past activity - Anticipate forthcoming issues - Consider resources - Contribute to budget planning round - Feed outcomes to committees and Partnership Council. 	<p>Structure established. Single Co-ordinator for each Assembly Minister liases with co-ordinators at WCVA o/b voluntary sector.</p> <p>Meeting arrangements and outcomes kept under review by VSPC</p>	<p>Meetings to take place April/May and Oct/Nov – Dates to be agreed at least 2 months in advance of meeting</p> <p>Papers to include report on involvement of voluntary sector in policy development/ implementation</p> <p>Produce meeting notes agreed with voluntary sector</p> <p>Committees discuss meeting notes</p>

Information and Understanding

Scheme Commitment	Means of Delivery	Action
Collect information on voluntary sector and its capacity (3.17)	<p>Collaborate on research /information gathering</p> <p>Identify opportunities for Joint Research</p>	<p>Arrange meeting between Assembly Officials and WCVA to determine information requirements for policy development</p> <p>Report to VSPC</p>
Provide information on Assembly and ASPB's (3.17)	Betterwales, Plan for Wales; Partnership Agreement; Annual Report; ASPB Corporate Plans; Annual	

	Reports; Assembly Internet site;	
Joint training (3.17) Joint events (3.17) Secondments, exchanges, shadows (3.17)	Various – to meet appropriate circumstances	Identify opportunities for joint action

Consultation

Scheme Commitment	Means of Delivery	Action
Set out agreed procedures for consultation	Produce a web- based consultation template (an internet-based consultation document that will provide consistency of approach and facilitate electronic responses)	Completion of information audit and draft technical specification Evaluate report and commission template production Pilot and evaluate template [use template on selected consultation exercises] Roll-out template [training for staff]
	Produce Central Consultation Database (for officials and consultees, to be updated by outside organisations to reflect their interests and contact and	Complete information audit and draft technical specification [Evaluate report and commission database production

	delivery details)	Roll out database
	Produce a Guidance for Assembly staff (including issues of consultation times, handling of responses, role of umbrella bodies in policy development and implementation and in facilitating consultation)	Produce draft Guidance Consult sector on Guidance (including issues of consultation times, role of umbrella bodies, handling of responses Produce Guidance

Funding the voluntary sector

Scheme Commitment	Means of Delivery	Action
Ensure that the voluntary sector has fair and reasonable access to public funds (2.12)	Implement Recommendations of Strategic Funding Review	Improve availability of information on spending Receive and consider report on local authority funding for voluntary organisations Provide annual statement of Assembly direct and indirect funding for sector in all policy areas
Ensure best practice in administration of Assembly grant schemes and those of agencies which administer funds on its behalf (2.13)	Application of Code of Practice for Funding the Voluntary Sector	Produce Code of Practice Disseminate Code of Practice (Internet;

		<p>Intranet; staff seminars; CEO letters)</p> <p>Maintain Code of Practice</p> <p>Report on implementation of Code of Practice</p> <p>Work with ASPBs to ensure wider implementation</p>
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Volunteering

Scheme Commitment	Means of Delivery	Action
<p>Improve access to volunteering for people from all sectors (5.2.1)</p> <p>Make it easier for people to participate in volunteering (5.2.2)</p> <p>Encourage the more effective involvement of volunteers (5.2.3)</p> <p>Improve the organisation and infrastructure of volunteering (5.2.4)</p>	<p>Wales: The Active Community Millennium Volunteers</p> <p>The principles are taken forward as part of the Assembly's policy development and programme implementation</p>	<p>Undertake Research to establish baseline information.</p> <p>Fund Projects which can inform future policy</p> <p>Made representation against the CRB's proposals to charge volunteers police checks</p> <p>Funded the production of a guide to managing volunteers safely</p> <p>Awarded £2.1m to improve volunteer bureaux services and funded the</p>

<p>Raise the status and improve the image of volunteering (5.2.5)</p>	<p>Develop long term strategy to build on Active Community</p>	<p>development of a volunteering website www.volunteering-wales.net</p> <p>Funded two IYV 2001 conferences and a volunteer awards programme</p> <p>Funded CIVICUS Fellowship</p> <p>Collate information for Annual Report</p>
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Community Development

Scheme Commitment	Means of Delivery	Action
<p>Community development forms part of mainstream programmes (6.7)</p> <p>A framework of support to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building for communities • Independent advice and services • Partnerships in which communities have major stake • Long term investment • Evaluation/dissemination • Support encourage social entrepreneurs (6.8) • Funding support including • Direct funding • Ensure local government support • Funding of intermediaries • Indirect funding via local government, ELWa, WDA, etc. • Sympathetic policy and practice across the assembly(6.9) • European Programmes for 2000- 	<p>The principles are taken forward as part of the Assembly's policy development and programme implementation. In particular through Communities First Programme</p>	<p>Issue Communities First Guidance</p> <p>Allocate funding:</p> <p>Preparatory Capacity Building Plan Community Action Plan</p> <p>Implement Communities First Support Fund</p> <p>Establish Monitoring and Evaluation Group</p>

<p>06 should prioritise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of community organisations • Support and development of enterprises in the social economy • Support for targeted initiatives to use mainstream services to enter training or employment (6.13) 	<p>National Economic Development Strategy</p> <p>European Funding Programmes</p> <p>Community Strategies</p> <p>Entrepreneurship Action Plan</p>	<p>Monitor implementation of Programmes</p> <p>Report on funding secured for voluntary sector projects</p> <p>-Objective 1 (priorities 3, 4 and 5)</p> <p>Objective 2 (priorities 2 and 3)</p> <p>Objective 3 (priority 2)</p>
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Voluntary Sector Partnership Council Membership

Voluntary Sector Representatives

<i>Main Representative</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Deputy</i>
Fran Targett	<i>Advice and advocacy</i>	
Claire Bryant	<i>Animal welfare</i>	
Lydia Bassett	<i>Art, culture and heritage</i>	Roger Fox
Catriona Williams	<i>Children and families</i>	
Gordon Gibson	<i>Community</i>	
Barbara Roberts	<i>Criminal justice</i>	Chris Arnold
Vanessa Webb	<i>Disability</i>	Rhian Davies
Graham Price	<i>Education and training</i>	
Janet Owen-Williams	<i>Employment</i>	Bob Hargreaves
Marc Welsh	<i>Environment</i>	Merfyn Williams
Patsy Richards	<i>Ethnic minorities</i>	Siobhan Haywood
Audrey Jones	<i>Gender</i>	
James Crowe	<i>Health and social care</i>	
John Puzey	<i>Housing</i>	Wendy Bourton
Ruth Hopkins	<i>Intermediaries</i>	
Keith Roberts	<i>International aid and emergency relief</i>	Stephen Thomas
Aled Edwards	<i>Religion</i>	
Wendy Williams	<i>Sport and recreation</i>	
Catrin Fletcher	<i>Volunteering</i>	Chris Hopkins
Veronica Wilson	<i>Youth</i>	
Tom Jones	WCVA	Rhiannon Bevan
Margaret Jervis	WCVA	Robert Hutchings
Graham Benfield	WCVA	Phil Jarrold

Assembly Members

Lorraine Barrett AM	Labour
Jane Davidson AM	Labour
Jane Hutt AM (Chair)	Labour
Brian Gibbons AM	Labour
Lynne Neagle AM	Labour
Pauline Jarman AM	Plaid Cymru
Helen Mary Jones AM	Plaid Cymru
Owen John Thomas AM	Plaid Cymru
William Graham AM	Conservative
David Melding AM	Conservative
Mick Bates AM	Liberal Democrat

Assembly Officials

Kate Cassidy
Matthew Quinn

Secretariat

Norma Barry
Alyn Williams
Jill Clements
Jenny McKinlay
Anthony Pugh
Irene Allen
Paul Dunhill

Background to the Scheme

1. Section 114 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 requires the Assembly to make a scheme setting out how it proposes, in the exercise of its functions, to promote the interests of relevant voluntary sector organisations as follows:

“114 – (1) The Assembly shall make a scheme setting out how it proposes, in the exercise of its functions, to promote the interests of relevant voluntary organisations.

(2) In this section “relevant voluntary organisations” means bodies (other than local authorities or other public bodies) whose activities –

(a) are carried on otherwise than for profit, and

(b) directly or indirectly benefit the whole or any part of Wales (whether or not they also benefit any other area)

(3) In determining the provision to be included in the Scheme the Assembly shall consider how it intends to exercise such of its functions as relate to matters affecting, or of concern to, relevant voluntary organisations.

(4) The Scheme shall specify –

(a) how the Assembly proposes to provide assistance to relevant voluntary organisations (whether by grants, loans,

guarantees or by other means),

(b) how the Assembly proposes to monitor the use made of any assistance provided by it to relevant voluntary organisations, and

How the Assembly proposes to consult relevant organisations about the exercise of such of its functions as relate to matters affecting, or of concern to, such organisations.

(5) The Assembly shall keep the scheme under review and in the year following each ordinary election (after the first) shall consider whether it should be remade or revised.

(6) The Assembly may not delegate the function of making, or remaking or revising, the scheme.

(7) The Assembly shall publish the scheme when first made and whenever subsequently remade and, if the scheme is revised without being remade, shall publish either the revisions or the scheme as revised (as it considers appropriate).

(8) The Assembly shall consult such relevant voluntary organisations as it considers appropriate before making, remaking or revising the scheme.

(9) After each financial year the Assembly shall publish a report of how its proposals as set out in the scheme were implemented in that financial year.

4. The Scheme is unique to Wales. There is no other such statutory Scheme elsewhere in the UK. It represents a major step in the way in which

the Assembly works with the voluntary sector in Wales. Other countries have expressed an interest in adopting a similar approach to that of the Scheme.

5. In developing the Scheme, the Assembly worked closely with the voluntary sector, drawing upon the work and negotiation that had informed the Compact between the Government and the voluntary sector in Wales, pre-dating the Assembly. Nevertheless the Scheme was a new development. It put the Assembly's commitments onto a statutory footing and proposed a number of innovations, such as the Voluntary Sector Partnership Council and twice yearly meetings with Ministers, which are intended to improve and mainstream dialogue between the voluntary sector and the policy makers and thus ensure that the views of the sector are considered at all levels of policy development and implementation.

6. The draft Scheme was subject to extensive consultation between 1 March and 24 May 2000 culminating in an Assembly plenary debate on 5 July 2000 when the National Assembly for Wales's Voluntary Sector Scheme was made with the full support of all political parties.