

# Cross-Party Group Minutes

## Meeting Minutes:

<b>Cross Party Group Title:</b>	<b>Cross Party Group on Wales International</b> <b>How can Wales take full advantage of the opportunities presented by the men's football team representing our nation on an international stage at the Qatar World Cup?</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Tuesday 05 July 2022 12:00 to 13:00
<b>Location:</b>	<a href="#">Zoom</a>

## In attendance:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
Heledd Fychan MS	(Chair)
Andy Jones	Co-founder & Organiser, FOCUS Wales
Betsan Jones,	Digital content specialist, Freelance
Brian Davies,	Chief Executive Officer, Sport Wales
Brooke Webb,	Communications officer, Heledd Fychan MS
Carmen Smith,	Chief of Staff, Plaid Cymru Senedd Group
Catrin Morris,	International Digital Communications Officer, Wales Arts International
David Warren,	Head of International Engagement, Welsh Government
Deborah Keyser,	Director, Tŷ Cerdd – Music Centre Wales
Eluned Hâf,	Director, Wales Arts International
Gareth Kear,	Director of Commercial, Hockey Wales / Hoci Cymru
Gavin Price,	Alliance Leader - UK / Europe, Sports Diplomacy Alliance
Hayley Richards,	Head of Programme Development & Policy, Welsh Centre for International Affairs
Jordan Griffiths,	Communications and Research Officer for Luke Fletcher MS
Professor Laura McAllister,	Professor of Public Policy and the Governance of Wales, Cardiff University
Lowri Jones,	Senior Partnerships Manager, Welsh Government
Matt Newman,	Chief Executive Officer, Run 4 Wales
Morgan Lloyd,	Creative Strategist, Livingston+Lloyd
Najma Hashi,	Change Maker Support, Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales



Neal Thompson,	Co-Owner, Focus Wales
Noel Mooney,	Chief Executive Officer, Football Association of Wales
Rhys Morgan,	Translator, Senedd
Rob Holt,	Deputy Director Tourism Development and Event Wales, Welsh Government
Roger Davies,	Development & Engagement (Sport), Swansea University
Shahinoor Alom,	Communications and Community Liaison Officer for John Griffiths MS, Senedd
Spencer John,	Former Rugby Player
Tim Hartley	Writer and Consultant
Tim Powell	
Wil Rees	Head of Parliamentary affairs and operations, Plaid Cymru
Zélie Flach,	European Officer, Wales Arts International
Jenny Scott,	Director - British Council Wales (Secretariat)
Mathilda Manley-Lewis,	Project Support Officer, British Council Wales
Natasha Nicholls,	Head of Arts, British Council Wales
Rebecca Wignall,	Arts Manager, British Council Wales

### Apologies:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>
David Anderson,	Director General, Amgueddfa Cymru
Elaine Canning,	Swansea University

### Summary of Meeting:

#### 1. Welcome from the Chair

The Chair welcomed everyone and congratulated the men's football team on qualifying for the FIFA World Cup in Qatar, highlighting what an incredible platform this gives Wales. Before opening the meeting up for comments and questions, the Chair invited Noel Mooney, Professor Laura McAllister and Eluned Hâf to make brief presentations on how Wales could take full advantage of the opportunities presented by the men's football team representing our nation on an international stage at the Qatar World Cup.

#### 2. Presentation by Noel Mooney, Chief Executive Officer, Football Association Wales (FAW)

**Opportunity:**

- Billions of eyes will be on Cymru – huge marketing potential.
- Wales needs to capitalise on this and think big.
- Every country in the world plays football.
- Football has the highest interest, viewing, and participation of all sports.

**What we need:**

- Clear strategy that is run across Visit Wales, Creative Wales, and Trade Wales.
- A project leader.
- Speed.
- For the FAW to be brought in as a partner with the Welsh Government to help deliver on trade, sustainability, wellbeing etc.
- Confirmation of how much government can provide in terms of funds and personnel.

**Legacy:**

- Improving grassroots facilities is important to keep the legacy going.
- Mission is for a Global Local Wales.
- Showcase a modern and self-confident Wales to the world, for example, on EDI, Welsh Language, sustainability, or wellness.
- For the FAW to be seen as the best football association in the world. To achieve this, we need Senedd and cross-party support.

**Current situation:**

- Had encouraging meetings with the Welsh Government last week – Jason Thomas led on this, along with the Economy Minister.
- Had a meeting with the UK ambassador – in terms of culture, we want to highlight EDI and we've got some plans around that for going to Qatar, which we can't reveal yet. We have to be tolerant of other cultures and listen, as well as use our platform for positive discussion.
- Receiving art which we can't coordinate – we need assistance from Creative Wales and for the Welsh Government to project manage this.

**3. Presentation by Professor Laura McAllister, Professor of Public Policy and the Governance of Wales, Cardiff University****Opportunity:**

- It would be a scandal if we didn't maximise this opportunity.
- Football reaches beyond the sport to every community and corner of Wales, which gives us an opportunity to leverage Wales' unique profile across the world.
- Football has an incredible global reach - half of the world's population over 4 watched the last World Cup final.
- We're playing against the USA (331 mil population) and Iran (86 mil population) – big markets to sell Wales to.

**What we need:**

- Clarity over objectives.
- Strategy.
- To move fast.
- A vision that suits football and brings the other sectors together.
- Ambassadors who can be in the room and work the room to Cymru's advantage.
- Resources: both financial and personnel.
- Leaders with agency and passion, who want to welcome the world to Wales.
- Coordination and partnership.
- UK Context: England were one of the first countries to qualify, and the UK Government and its various partners have already designed a programme to support them, and we should expect exactly the same for Wales, but with our branding and identity. The Welsh Government need to steer this.

**Return for Wales:**

- Sustainable growth of football.

- Support for women's team to qualify for next World Cup or EUROS.
- Good facilities/grassroots provision for children and people wherever they live.
- Other sectors such as higher education, trade, creative industries, tourism, and hospitality need to be clear what their expected return is and then we can work together to meet that.

The Chair noted that it should be a 'Team Cymru' approach rather than the FAW alone and that it would be interesting to explore cross-party and cross-sector asks to give the government that extra impetus. The report commissioned by the British Council highlighted how sports diplomacy can link up with arts and culture, which Eluned will now discuss.

#### 4. Eluned Hâf, Wales Arts International

Opportunity:

- Sports and arts align naturally, and in Wales more than any other place.
- Raise the profile of Wales and form new cultural relationships.
- We can tell a story about a small country with a large heart.
- Update old prejudices.
- Share our values with regards to future generations and wellbeing.
- Engender self-confidence.

Lessons learned from working with the Wales team in previous campaigns:

- Legacy is vital.
- Having an authentic Wales brand is important.
- Make it possible for other campaigns, including British, to get behind our campaign.
- Work across different sectors, e.g. tourism, business, hospitality.
- Lead with values and put them at the heart of the campaign.
- Relevant and well branded content can give players a boost and attract new visitors to Wales.
- Digital content has significant reach.

Eluned Hâf finished her presentation with a film about what arts can offer that was produced for the Celtic Connections festival with Brand Wales.

#### 5. Discussion and comments

Gavin Price: This should be seen as an investment for the future. We need to be clear of our ask of the UK Government. The Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand coming up and there are ambitions for free movement between these countries and the UK so are there opportunities to partner sport with different sectors?

Spencer John: Time is running out and by the end of next week we should have just three things we want to achieve and then execute them. They could be big things, e.g. secure x amount from the Middle East to develop grassroots football, but decisions need to be made. There is an issue with available accommodation in Qatar – could Welsh Government influence release of accommodation to Welsh and English fans?

Gavin Price: Our strategy doesn't just have to be in Qatar but could be in the US.

Hayley Richard: Could the key aims of the Welsh Government's International Strategy be used as a framework? For the third sector, the most important piece in that strategy is the globally responsible nation element - our values in terms of human, women's, migrant, and lgbtqia+ rights. Good to hear that the FAW has plans on that, but we need Team Wales to have similar plans and be joined up.

Laura McAllister: We can address some of the outdated images of our nation and show that we are a modern, outward looking, equality-driven, and sustainable-focused nation.

Noel Mooney: The Welsh language is very important for us. We've had good discussions about funding different fan zones in hospitality arenas to support the industry. I keep getting sent art so we need a body to take care of that, and we should be approaching artists to see what they want to contribute to this event. We need to look forward, and I'd like to see us hosting EUROS in 2028.

Gavin Price: Could we put a fan zone in the US and run events around that in terms of our values?

Tim Hartley: Fans are great ambassadors and they're a free resource.

Rob Holt: Welsh Government raised the accommodation issue with DCMS and when the Ambassador was over. Logistics is an issue in Qatar, so we need to look to US and international offices around the world. It will be great for the hospitality industry if fan zones happen, but the Welsh Government is not looking to fund them. We have a meeting this afternoon with GREAT campaign and will be looking at how we ensure the Welsh voice and values are part of that - also looking at what the UK Government has planned and how we can piggyback on that.

Eluned Hâf: GREAT campaign can be brilliant, but when it takes over can be really undermining, e.g. when Alun Wyn Jones was branded with the union jack.

Laura McAllister: In terms of the UK Government, we shouldn't be going with low expectations. Wales has every right to expect the same support that the English FA have had. We need to know what resources we will be getting from them.

Rob Holt: Last week these points were made with the Ambassador. We have good working relationships and England as well as Wales are waiting for confirmation on logistics. GREAT represents all four countries.

Noel Mooney: Agreed that the Ambassador had responded well to the messages raised.

## **6. Chair's roundup**

The Chair noted the urgency of the situation, particularly with the Senedd going into recess at the end of next week, and was keen to secure firm answers prior to that, noting that she would capture these sentiments and forward the main points to the Welsh Government. The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution and stated that it was clear that we need to learn from the past and ensure that Wales' distinct identity comes through. She mentioned there would be another CPG meeting before Cymru's appearance at the World Cup and that it would be useful to take some time out of that meeting for an update on where things are with regard to the World Cup.

