

MINUTES

“What could a new Children’s Act for Wales look like?”

Joint CPG Workshop – Children and Wales and Children in Our Care

Wednesday 30th April

10am – 11am, Conference Room A and Teams

Attendance:

Jane Dodds Ms, Helen Mary Jones Voices from Care, Sean O’Neil Children in Wales. Tomos Roberts-Young MSS, Phoebe Jenkins MSS, Mark Carter Barnados, Leo Holmes, Early Years Wales, Sharon Lovell NYAS, Mike Greenaway Play Wales, Cherri Bija Faith in Families, Suzanne Griffiths Adopt Cymru, Rhiannon Beaumont TGP Cymru, Sophie Carter Justice Innovation, Tammi Owen CUBE, Leo Holmes Early Years Wales, Cath Lewis Guide Dogs, Ash Lister Action for Children, Davina Carey-Evans Family Fund, Kerrie Gemmel Scouts, Catherine Rees Save the Children Wales,

Apologies:

Dave Williams Anuerin Bevan USH - Family and Therapies, Sue Faulkner Health Visitor, Sioned Williams MS, Caroline Walters RCSLT, Rachel Thomas, Children’s Commissioner for Wales, Amy Bainton Barnados, Sian Thomas Senedd Research, Rachel Beddoe Children in Wales, Prof Euan Hails, Aneurin Bevan UHB.

Introductions

Jane Dodds (JD) opens the conversation and asks for introductions. Introductions are given both virtually and around the table.

Work on the legislation

JD shared that there had been two further contributions from Actin for Children and Barnardo’s. JD asked Mark Carter to share there comments.

Mark Carter shared on behalf of Amy Bainton. They discussed discussing national play and the right to play included in early intervention. Another comment was around the provision of mental health care for care experienced children. And the last comment was around whether there could be a reference to the organisations involved could be changed to something like: ‘being informed by those involved, recognising that views may be different and that endorsement does not support all proposals’ – a specific wording.

JD and HMJ agreed to change this. JD goes to Mike Greenaway who has his hand up to talk about statutory right to play.

MC discussed the specific reference around concerns for barriers for local authorities about sufficient recourses for ensuring right to play. MG discussed resources and legislation from 2010 and how there’s a risk of these asks not following through because of recourse issues. He also shared that planning officers will plant trees the width of a football goal in specific areas.

JD liked the football goal information and said as a principle not to comment on resources. If its in program for government, resources would have to come into discussion.

HM shared that if it's a statutory requirement they have to find the resources.

JD said that the stage we are at now is finalising and asked if there were any changes to be made around statutory duty to play.

MG said he would like the wording to be changed to secure from provided, further details were shared, and this was agreed.

JD asked if there were any amendments needed to paragraph 8 and specifically asked Sharon Lovell.

MG acknowledged Mike's point on wording, but said that she did not agree, and that recent guidance will place a duty on authorities to provide youth work in Wales and that funding could still be accessed with the duty falling on local authority.

The issue of funding and statutory duty was then discussed by various members of the group. It was shared by several members of the CPG that there had been historical issues of access funding support from the National Lottery Grant if the things there were applying for were in statutory law. HMJ suggested that this issue was to be tackled during the next step, when it comes to writing legislation, to ensure that third-sector organisations will be minimally affected and still have access to funding.

JD asked Ash Lister about his suggestions.

Ash Lister shared that he would like to change the order of the points on 8, 9 and 10 and this was agreed.

JD went back to Barnardos to discuss their suggestion around mental health and changing the wording to acknowledge all children. It was discussed that all children are important and this was accepted, but that this specific bill was looking at these children. JD asked the group for their thoughts and said she didn't agree, no one said otherwise. This action was not agreed and the wording was to stay at home.

JD moved onto Ash Lister's next point on wording around interviews. This was discussed at length, looking at the current terminology around 'return to home' interviews, and discussing if this could be changed to conversations. It was discussed that although everyone agreed the sentiment behind the suggestion, to ensure that it fits with current legislation, it was accepted that this would stay the same. It was hoped that perhaps in guidance and best practice individuals use alternative language.

JD summarised the points, and agreed that this was the final copy, asking one last time for suggestions.

Sean O'Neil asked if the format of numbering could be altered to avoid any confusion of hierarchy of points, it was discussed and decided that it would remain to allow individuals quoting the text an easy way to distinguish between two points.

JD moved the discussion onto the launch date of the event and asked Phoebe Jenkins to share details.

PJ shared basic details at the moment (Wednesday 4th June, 11-1:30pm, Media Briefing Room) with finalised details to follow by the start of next week.

HM shared that the key audience is Senedd Members.

JD stressed to all in the room that we need the attendance of Senedd Members secured. Asked everyone in the room to contact Senedd Members, both [personally and through organisation.

Kerri Gremmel asked if young people could be invited. HM shared concerns over numbers but that they would let them know.

JD asked the room for donations towards the cost of printing and refreshments. If anyone was able to donate, it was asked if they could reach out to Phoebe Jenkins by Friday 9th May.

JD asked again for individuals and organisations to reach out to political parties. She stressed that this was not a political situation, but that involvement from all parties, including the Green Party and Reform, was key. It was asked that if anyone had connections with these parties to share them with Phoebe Jenkins who can reach out and formally invite, as they are not represented in the Senedd. JD stressed again that this is about getting it into those parties manifestos.

Cath Lewis asked about social media and a comms plan. The hashtag of #bilpobplentyn was agreed, and Jane's team, alongside Children in Wales and Voices from Care Cymru, were going to create one and share with the group.

JD also asked if anyone knew of any young people that would be happy to give a quote to be included in the report.

KG asked if it would be possible to meet with young people ahead of the bill to explain the act to them and what it would mean to them. HM agreed to do this and there was a discussion around it being filmed to be shared.

JD shared another brief outline of the Launch Date on June 4th, asking everyone to meet at the Senedd Steps at 11am for a photo.

Leo Holmes asked if a graphic would be produced for the comms side, and this was discussed.

Catherine Reese from Save The Children asked for their organisation to be included in the contributors list.

JD thanked everyone for their participation. HM made a special thanks to Jane's team for their hard work on this piece of work.