

**Cross-Parry Group Meeting**  
**Cross Party Group for Children and Families**  
**AGM**

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

12pm-1pm

Via Teams

**Attending**

Jane Dodds, MS – Chair

Ieuan Parry – MSS

Rachel Beddoe Children in Wales

Katie Jacobs – Social Care Wales

Tammi Owen – Cube Centre

Davina Carey-Evans – Family Fund

Darren Griffiths – RCPCH

Pippa Cotterill – RCSLT

Liz Gregory – Parent Infant Foundation

Dave Williams – NHS

Mark Carter – Barnardos

Rhiannon Beaumont-Walker – TPG Cymru

Cecile Gwilym - NSPCC

Johanna Robinson – Welsh Government

Kerrie Gemmill – Scouts Cymru

Kirsty Rees – Senedd

Jasmine Harris – Barnardos

**Apologies**

Ash Lister – Action for Children

Euan Hails - Adferiad

Rhian Croke-Chamberlain – Swansea University

Leo Holmes – Early Years Wales

Samantha Frith-Jones – AFKA Cymru

Sean O'Neill – Children in Wales

## 1. Welcome

Jane welcomed everyone to the meeting and AGM

## 2. AGM

Jane Dodds, MS was put forward to continue to chair the group. This was seconded by Cecile Gwilym. There were no objections to Jane continuing as chair of the group. Jane accepted nominations.

Children in Wales has agreed to continue as Secretariat of the group, this was seconded by Dave Williams and no objections were received.

The AGM was formally ended.

## 3. Looking Forward

JD reflected on the dissolution of the Cross Party Group as Senedd elections are being held in May next year. She noted that it would be useful to convene a meeting to reflect upon the journey of the group and to outline its legacy, producing a legacy report.

CG reflected on the work of the group on behalf of NSPCC. It was noted that the group has been a valuable forum, especially the focus on early years and poverty. It was noted that it may be likely that future meetings will want to return to these issues. CG has valued the engagement of everyone in the group and the work on Bil Pob Plentyn. Looking forward it would be useful to discuss issues such as children's budgeting. It can be difficult to identify how much money is spent on children in the Welsh Government budget and to know exactly what percentage is spent on children and families, so they are able to track gaps.

JD queried if the issue with children's budgeting is it written down anywhere for record.

**ACTION:** CG to send information to JD to ensure it is recorded going forward

Mark Carter, Barnardos, has found the forum helpful and it has been a strong group covering important areas. He noted he liked the idea of a legacy and two areas that Barnardos are focusing at moment, which may be useful going forward, are early intervention and prevention and children languishing in the neurodevelopment pathway. It was noted there is little support available while children and their families wait for assessment and the mental health and wellbeing of children and families is worsening rather than getting better.

JD picked up on early intervention and prevention and noted prevention links to every area of work.

Davina Carey-Evans noted that there are families eligible for the family fund and raised that Family Funds first coalition meeting will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> December, which will be led by parents and carers. DC-E invited members to join the collision and thanked Jane for her support.

**Action:** DC-E to forward details of the collision meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December to send out to members.

JD noted disabled children need for support and ensure services are available to them and to capture this for the legacy report.

Dave Williams, NHS Wales/Clinical Lead Mental Health, noted that a statement on the importance of the group to promote rights of the child needs to be put the legacy report. He

noted there is a need to consider the developmental stages of children and to consider a framework to encourage people to think about this. There is also a need for tracking budgets, especially to track the shrinking of call centre budgets in comparison with high end interventions. Differences in spending on prevention rather than intervention was mentioned, and diversity considerations to be considered also.

JD noted the preventative agenda is important to get in early to prevent emergencies. There is a need to demand a cabinet member for babies, children and young people

Dr Liz Gregory noted her appreciation of being part of the group and the opportunities and connections it offered. She agreed with focus on early intervention and prevention, especially a focus on the first 1000 days. She queried if the group should be called the cross-party group for babies, children and young people going forward. JD noted this was a good point to have cross-party group on babies, children and young people and will suggest this going forward.

Joanna Robinson, National Advisor for WADWASV, emphasised the need for holistic, cross-government approach rather than siloed services. They also highlighted prevention opportunities when working with families experience domestic abuse and noted separation between safeguarding and VAWDASV agendas missing opportunities. They suggested using Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) common recommendations as evidence base.

**Action:** Jane's office to write a letter to SUSR/Dawn Bowden MS requesting key recommendations from child practise reviews.

Kerrie Gemmill noted one thing to consider going forward is how to link with new national body and framework for youth work, which is still in development. This will be important vehicle and it is important to know who is going to own it going forward.

JD noted there had been a lot of work around youth work in the children in our care cross party group.

**Action:** JD to share legacy reports from the children in our care cross-party group

Tammi Owen noted the frustration for families going out of county and the lack of consistency in support services. It is important to look at good practice in support for families and have consistency pan Wales. She noted third sector concerns and that many may not be offering services in 2026 due to lack of funding

JD noted concerns over the lack of sustainable funding and there needs to be an opportunity to explore this framework.

Philippa Cotteril noted from a speech, language and communication perspective prevention and early intervention are crucial for those with communication difficulties.

JD referenced a report noting 60% of individuals in the criminal justice system have speech and language difficulties.

DG, via the teams chat channel noted that RCPCH would very much agree with the points made by CG and MC on children's budgeting and protection of prevention and early years funding in future Welsh Government budgets. This is something many organisations have called for repeatedly in budget consultations, including RCPCH, the Future Generations Commissioner and NHS Confederation.

JD noted there have been some key points and issues raised to include in legacy report and suggested the group meet in January to finalise legacy report.

#### 4. AOB

None.

#### Summary Actions

1. **Cecile (NSPCC)**: Provide form of words on children's budgeting ask for legacy report
2. **Davina (Family Fund)**: Send details of 4th December coalition meeting to Rachel (secretariat) for distribution
3. **Jane's Office**: Write to SUSR/Dawn requesting key recommendations from child practice reviews
4. **Rachel (Secretariat)**: Send dates for final meeting in January 2026 (3rd or 4th week)
5. **All members**: Reflect on additional issues for legacy report before January meeting
6. **Both cross-party groups**: Share legacy reports between Children & Families group and Children in Our Care group

#### Next Steps

- Final meeting scheduled for **January 2026** (3rd or 4th week)
- Legacy report to be finalized capturing:
  - Reflections on work completed
  - Priority issues for next Senedd (2026)
  - Key themes: prevention, early intervention, children's budgeting, disability support, cross-government working, third sector sustainability