

National Assembly for Wales
Communities and Culture Committee

Legacy Report

March 2011



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The Communities and Culture Committee

The main function of scrutiny committees is to examine within their remit the expenditure, administration and policy of the government and associated public bodies.

The Communities and Culture Committee's remit covers:

- housing;
- community safety;
- community Inclusion including Communities First and the Spatial Plan;
- Welsh Language, sport and culture.

Powers

The Committee was established on 26.6.07 as one of the Assembly's scrutiny committees. Its powers are set out in the National Assembly for Wales' Standing Orders, particularly SO 12. These are available at www.assemblywales.org

Committee membership



Sandy Mewies
(Chair)
Delyn
Labour



Mohammad Asghar
South Wales East
Welsh Conservative Party



Eleanor Burnham
North Wales
Welsh Liberal Democrats



Alun Davies
Mid and West Wales
Labour



Mark Isherwood
North Wales
Welsh Conservative Party



Bethan Jenkins
South Wales West
Plaid Cymru



Dai Lloyd
South Wales West
Plaid Cymru



Lynne Neagle
Torfaen
Labour



Joyce Watson
Mid and West Wales
Labour

The following Members were also members of the Committee during its existence:



Janice Gregory
(Former chair)
Ogmore
Labour



Peter Black
South Wales West
Liberal Democrats



Paul Davies
Preseli Pembrokeshire
Welsh Conservative Party



Nerys Evans
Mid and West Wales
Plaid Cymru



Lesley Griffiths
Wrexham
Labour



Alun Cairns
South Wales West
Welsh Conservative Party

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Chair's foreword

I have been privileged to be Chair of the Communities and Culture Committee since January 2010. During the last 15 months, the Committee has engaged in a wide variety of important, and indeed sometimes controversial, investigations and inquiries.

I am very grateful to all Members of the Committee, both past and present, for their commitment to holding the Welsh Government to account. Whether in scrutinising Ministers, speaking with children in secure estates, or taking questions from the public on the content of the Committee's reports, I have always been indebted to their professionalism and dedication. I would like to thank and pay tribute to the work of Janice Gregory AM for her work in chairing this committee between September 2007 and December 2009. All members of the Committee are quite rightly proud of the Committee's achievements, but we also recognise that there is much more to be done. These are harsher economic times than those which met the beginning of the Third Assembly, and it is more critical than ever that every penny of public expenditure is used effectively on behalf of Wales and its people. At the same time, it is imperative that money is not stripped away from vulnerable minorities, or from the tackling of 'hidden issues,' such as domestic abuse, in favour of other more 'popular' issues.

For this reason, we have developed this legacy report- to provide a useful 'starting point' for our successor committee(s) as they consider what work to undertake. Clearly this will be only one of several resources for the new committee(s) to draw upon, but we hope it will be helpful to them both in suggesting potential areas for beginning their scrutiny, and to inform them of ways of working that we have found to be particularly effective in the past.

Finally, on behalf of the Committee, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all those individuals and organisations who gave us the benefit of their experience and advice over the last 4 years: whether through formal committee meetings, written papers, questionnaires or informal dialogue during our visits. Without their expertise and hard work, it would have been impossible for us to carry out our role.

Our recommendations to our successor committee(s)

Our recommendations to our successor committee(s) are summarised below, in the order they appear in this report. Please refer to the relevant pages of this report to see the context in which we have made these recommendations.

Recommendation 1. We recommend that our successor committee(s) have regard for previously identified areas of concern in the Welsh Government's draft budget proposals. (Page 11)

Recommendation 2. We recommend that our successor committee(s) give consideration and regard to petitions submitted to the National Assembly for Wales, when determining the subjects of Committee inquiries. (Page 13)

Recommendation 3. We recommend that our successor committee(s) continue to have a particular focus on the Welsh Government's efforts to tackle domestic violence. (Page 19)

Recommendation 4. We recommend that our successor committee(s) monitor the Welsh Government strategic support for, and endorsement of, financial education campaigns developed by partners. (Page 28)

Recommendation 5. We recommend that our successor committee(s) give consideration to conducting a further inquiry into how broadcasting (in all media forms) is functioning in Wales. (Page 30)

1. The Communities and Culture Committee of the Third Assembly

Who are we?

1. The Communities and Culture Committee is a cross party committee of the National Assembly for Wales, made up of Members from all 4 political parties represented at the Assembly.
2. The Committee was established on 26 June 2007 as one of the National Assembly for Wales's four scrutiny committees.
3. The Committee is not part of the Welsh Government. Rather, the Committee is responsible for examining the expenditure, administration and policy of the Welsh Government, and associated public bodies, particularly in relation to Housing, Community Safety, Community Inclusion, the Welsh Language, Sport and Culture.

What is a legacy report?

4. On 24 March 2011, the Communities and Culture Committee met for a final time before the Assembly elections on 5 May 2011, which will establish the Members of the fourth Assembly.
5. At this time, we don't know how Committees will be organised in the fourth Assembly. We don't know whether a single Committee or several will carry forward the role of examining the expenditure, administration and policy of the Welsh Government, and associated public bodies.
6. But we do know that matters relating to Housing, Community Safety, Community Inclusion, the Welsh Language, Sport and Culture will continue to be examined by our successor committee(s).
7. For this reason, we have created this legacy report, with the intention of informing our successor committee(s) about:
 - ways of working that we've found to be particularly useful, and reflections on our experiences;
 - the specific inquiries that we've completed during this assembly;

- and issues that we've identified, which the forthcoming elections prevent us examining, but which our successor committee(s) may wish to take forward.

Useful ways of working

8. Most Scrutiny Committees have four broad areas of work:
- regular scrutiny of the Welsh Government's (and associated public bodies') expenditure, administration and policy;
 - intense scrutiny of the Welsh Government's (and associated public bodies') expenditure, administration and policy;
 - monitoring of relevant UK, EU and UN legislative proposals;
 - external engagement.

Regular scrutiny of the Welsh Government and associated public bodies

9. We progressed this area of work with regular 'general scrutiny' meetings with the Minister for Social Justice, the Minister for Heritage and the Deputy Minister for Housing. We tended to conduct one of these 'general scrutiny' sessions once per term, in which we held one of the Ministers to account on a range of issues which were both within the Committee's remit, and the Minister's portfolio.

10. We also scrutinised, on an annual basis, the Welsh Government's draft budget proposals, sending a report of our findings to Finance Committee each year.

11. Notably, following the publication of the Welsh Government's 2011-2012 draft budget, we received evidence from the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) detailing a number of areas of concern in the draft budget for voluntary organisations. Although we scrutinised many of these issues, we anticipate that our successor committee(s) may have a particular interest in the WCVA's specified areas of concern in years 2 and 3 of the draft budget.¹ For example, the WCVA noted that while funding for domestic abuse was "stable in year one,"² it "drops 28.6% in year 2 and 40% in year 3."³

¹ CC(3)-18-10 paper 8

² CC(3)-18-10 paper 8

³ CC(3)-18-10 paper 8

We recommend that our successor committee(s) have regard for previously identified areas of concern in the Welsh Government's draft budget proposals.

Intense scrutiny of the Welsh Government and associated public bodies

12. We stated in several of our reports that we often:

“do this work by holding an inquiry into a particular issue. This involves us speaking with lots of different people to gather evidence about what's happening about a particular issue, before presenting our findings to the Welsh Government. This enables us to hold Welsh Government Ministers' work to account, and also allows us to suggest recommendations on how the Welsh Government could improve its work in relation to a particular issue.”⁴

13. As a Committee, in determining the subjects of our inquiries, we gave consideration to:

- our own ideas as individual Members, based on our political and personal experiences and interests;
- suggestions from Stakeholders, through contact with the Committee as a whole, or with individual Members;
- issues raised in the course of the wider proceedings of the National Assembly for Wales (such as Petitions submitted to the Petitions Committee);
- analyses of emerging potential issues of concern within the Committee's remit, identified by the Members' Research Service.

14. In identifying which inquiries to prioritise undertaking, we considered:

- the relation of the inquiry's scope to our own remit;⁵

⁴ See, for example: Communities and Culture Committee, Making the Most of the Private Rented Sector, 4 February 2011, Para 3.

⁵ All our inquiries focussed on subjects within our remit, but as Committees' remits were broad, in prioritising inquiries, we also considered whether any other Committees were undertaking similar inquiries. We also sought- over the course of the 3rd Assembly- to cover a wide range of issues across our remit, rather than solely on one area of our remit.

- the potential impact of a Committee inquiry;⁶
- what we would need to conduct the inquiry.⁷

15. Sometimes we identified a broad area that we would wish to conduct an inquiry into, and then subsequently ascertained the specific issues we wanted to examine. For example, in determining the focus of our inquiry into ‘Youth Justice’ we decided to formally consult a number of key stakeholders, with a clear strategic interest or expertise in the area of youth justice, to help inform the scope of the inquiry. Such stakeholders were asked to consider 5 specific questions in their written response to the Committee. We received written responses from 8 Consultees to this short consultation exercise (including from the Minister for Health and Social Services). As a result of this consultation, we decided that our Youth Justice inquiry would have a particular focus on ‘the experiences of Welsh Children in the secure estate.’

16. Although none of our inquiries were directly indebted to petitions submitted to the National Assembly for Wales, we liaised with Petitions Committee on matters relating to two of our inquiries. In our inquiry into ‘Financial Inclusion and the Impact of Financial Education’ we noted that Shelter Cymru had submitted a petition calling for “the Assembly to apply pressure on the Welsh Government to include information and education about leaving home in the national curriculum.”⁸ We recognised that there was “overlap between the petition and... our inquiry into financial inclusion.”⁹ Similarly, in our report on ‘the accessibility of arts and cultural experiences in Wales’ we recognised that:

⁶ While we considered it important to not pre-empt the conclusions of our inquiry, in deciding whether to prioritise an inquiry, we considered whether there was any evidence (including anecdotal evidence) to suggest the people of Wales, or specific groups of people in Wales, would benefit from an inquiry. Similarly, we considered whether the subject of a potential inquiry was of obvious public concern or controversy. We also considered what stage the Welsh Government was at in its own decision making processes, enabling us to have a better idea of any key deadlines we needed to meet for influencing policy or legislation.

⁷ For example, we gave consideration to the particular resource implications and timescales (including Committee Meeting slots) that would be needed for undertaking particular inquiries.

⁸ National Assembly for Wales, Record of Proceedings, Communities and Culture Committee, 20 May 2010, Para 64

⁹ Ibid

“the National Assembly for Wales’ Petitions Committee is currently considering petitions submitted by individual organisations involved in delivering Theatre in Education who have had their funding discontinued. We look forward to the Petitions Committee’s consideration of these individual organisations’ petitions.”¹⁰

17. We consider that there is considerable merit in our successor committee(s) giving consideration to petitions submitted to the National Assembly for Wales.

We recommend that our successor committee(s) give consideration and regard to petitions submitted to the National Assembly for Wales, when determining the subjects of Committee inquiries.

18. The length of our inquiries varied. For example, we agreed terms of reference for our inquiry into ‘Youth Justice: the experiences of Welsh Children in the Secure Estate’ in March 2009, and reported in February 2010. By contrast, we agreed terms of reference for an inquiry into ‘the Potential Impact of the UK Government’s Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill for Community Safety in Wales’ on 13 January 2011, and sent a report of our findings to the UK Parliament’s Public Bill Committee on 17 February 2011.

19. We consider there to be merit in both lengthy, in-depth inquiries and short, tightly focussed pieces of work, and consider that our successor committee(s) could usefully pursue both types of inquiry, dependent on the subject of their investigations.

Monitoring of relevant UK, EU and UN legislation

20. We sought to maintain an awareness of relevant legislative proposals, for consideration in our forward work planning. This was primarily achieved through analyses of emerging potential issues of concern within the Committee’s remit, identified by the Members’ Research Service.

21. Notably, we conducted a short inquiry into the potential impact of the UK Government’s Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill for Community Safety in Wales. The responsibility for policing and licensing falls outside the remit of the Welsh Government, and as such,

¹⁰ Communities and Culture Committee, The accessibility of arts and cultural activities in Wales, 3 February 2011, Para 255

we did consider whether or not it would be appropriate for us to scrutinise the impact of this legislation. However, we recognised that the police are key partners in delivering many of the Welsh Government's policies. We considered that any changes in the accountability and governance of the police could have a substantial knock-on impact for issues like community safety in Wales, which is both a devolved area of responsibility to Wales, and was within the remit of our committee.

External Engagement

22. External engagement cut across all our areas of work, reflecting the National Assembly for Wales' resolve to 'represent the interests of Wales and its people.'

23. For example, in conducting our inquiries we took evidence from stakeholders through formal mechanisms- such as written papers, and attendance at formal committee meetings. We also recognised the merits of getting information from individuals, small groups or people/organisations who might not readily participate in more formal activities. For this reason we also:

- visited a secure children's home and a range of young offender institutes that housed young Welsh offenders, both in England and Wales (as part of our inquiry into Youth Justice: The experiences of Welsh Children in the Secure Estate). During these visits, we took evidence from both staff and young offenders. The young people were often left alone with us (and the Committee's staff), to create an open atmosphere for them to comment on their experiences of the secure estate;
- visited a range of projects delivering financial education in Wales, and had the opportunity to speak with both adults and children receiving such (as part of our inquiry into Financial Inclusion and the impact of Financial Education);
- issued a questionnaire to gather evidence about the general public's experiences of financial inclusion and financial education, which was made available on the Committee's webpage and was distributed in hard copy to the general public at summer events. 57 questionnaires were anonymously completed.

24. We consider there to be notable value in these less traditional, 'innovative' methods of evidence gathering, and believe they should be utilised by our successor committee(s) where appropriate.

25. We also sought to make our reports accessible. For example, we produced plain English summaries of our reports on 'Youth Justice: the experiences of Welsh Children in the secure estate' and 'Financial Inclusion and the impact of Financial Education.' We also gave stakeholders who had contributed to the development of our inquiries the opportunity to ask us questions about our reports, at several of our report launches (using the BBC's 'Question Time' format).

26. From January 2011, we also made our forward work programmes publically available on the Committee's webpages, so that interested stakeholders could identify issues of potential interest.

27. Finally, we sought to meet ad-hoc requests for information and engagement. For example, several Members of the Committee volunteered to discuss the Committee's work with a group of Kenyan Active Citizens who visited the National Assembly for Wales as part of the British Council's 'Active Citizens' international programme.

Other cross-cutting issues

28. Throughout our work we sought to consider the impact of the Welsh Government's decisions in the light of its cross-cutting commitments, in relation to equality, child poverty and sustainability for example. We would encourage the Fourth Assembly to continue to require all of its Committees to include such issues within their deliberations.

2. Issues within our remit

29. During the course of the third Assembly, we published reports of 10 inquiries (and approved 1 report of an inquiry by our Broadcasting Sub-committee for publication).

30. Recognising that our successor committee(s) may have different remits to our own, these inquiries are loosely organised in this legacy report by the different areas within our remit, rather than by their chronology.

Housing

- Making the Most of the Private Rented Sector in Wales (February 2011);

Community Safety

- Domestic Abuse in Wales (December 2008);
- Youth Justice: The experience of Welsh Children in the Secure Estate (February 2010);
- The impact of the UK Government's Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill for Community Safety in Wales (February 2011);

Community Inclusion (including Communities First and the Spatial Plan)

- The Funding of Voluntary Sector Organisations in Wales (May 2008);
- Financial Inclusion and the Impact of Financial Education (November 2010);

Welsh Language, Sport and Culture

- Public Service Broadcasting in Wales (June 2009);
- The Welsh Newspaper Industry (June 2009);
- The Promotion of Welsh Arts and Culture on the World Stage (July 2009);
- Making the Most of Major Sporting Events (June 2010).
- The Accessibility of Arts and Cultural Activities in Wales (February 2011)

3. Housing

Making the Most of the Private Rented Sector in Wales (February 2011)

31. We laid our report on ‘Making the most of the Private Rented Sector in Wales’ on 4 February 2011.

32. Our report considered the key issues emerging from its inquiry across 4 chapters:

- the potential of the private rented sector;
- changes that could raise standards within the private rented sector;
- barriers preventing access to the private rented sector;
- the potential for empty homes to be brought back into occupation.

33. Notably, we called for the Welsh Government to produce a specific strategy for making the most of the private rented sector, and advocated that the Welsh Government promote a positive public image of the sector as a tenure of choice.

34. We also recommended that the Welsh Government took appropriate legislative action to enable the introduction of statutory regulation of all letting agencies in Wales.

35. Furthermore, we suggested that the Welsh Government should research the potential effectiveness and feasibility of a mandatory licensing or registration scheme for all managers of private rented sector accommodation (including some landlords) in Wales.

Developments since the publication of the Committee’s report

36. A response from the Minister for Housing, to the Committee’s report, was received on 18 March 2011, which accepted in full, or in principle, all of our recommendations.

37. Given that this report was only published in February 2011, we consider that our successor committee(s) could usefully examine in the future whether the recommendations of our report were effectively being implemented by the new Welsh Government.

4. Community Safety

Domestic Abuse in Wales (December 2008)

38. In April 2008 the Communities and Culture Committee began taking evidence on its inquiry into Domestic Abuse in Wales, and its report was published in December 2008.

Key themes from the inquiry

39. A number of issues emerged during the course of the inquiry and are reflected in the report, including:

- concerns from organisations who felt the Welsh Government's domestic abuse strategy was not being fully implemented, and also a variety of views on the scope of the strategy;
- services and support for people affected by domestic abuse, in particular lack of capacity in refuge and move-on accommodation, gaps in counselling services for children and young people and experiences of survivors seeking help from local authority housing departments;
- the need to meet the needs of different groups of people and the barriers faced by different groups in accessing services;
- the variability in provision of preventative work and challenging cultural attitudes towards domestic abuse by raising awareness and challenging myths about domestic abuse;
- concerns around sustainable funding, variable provision and evaluation of the effectiveness of perpetrator programmes;
- funding issues in relation to children's workers, Sexual Assault Referral Centres, Specialist Domestic Violence Courts, Independent Domestic Violence Advocates and access to legal aid;
- a lack of coherence in multi-agency working and strategic arrangements;
- the need for evaluating, monitoring and research to increase understanding of the prevalence and nature of domestic abuse, and to measure the effectiveness of domestic abuse services.

Developments since the publication of the Committee's report

40. We received oral updates on the implementation of the (accepted) recommendations in our report in October 2009, and in February 2011.

41. The Welsh Government's 'The Right to be Safe' strategy was published in March 2010, along with the 'Violence against Women and Domestic Abuse Implementation Plan 2010-13'.

42. We consider that our successor committee(s) could usefully examine the effectiveness of the Welsh Government's 'The Right to be Safe' strategy in the future. We believe that in the current financial climate, it is particularly important that the tackling of 'hidden issues,' such as domestic abuse, remain priorities in public spending. We therefore believe that it is particularly appropriate for our successor committee(s) to have a continued focus on tackling domestic violence.

We recommend that our successor committee(s) continue to have a particular focus on the Welsh Government's efforts to tackle domestic violence.

Youth Justice: The experiences of Welsh Children in the Secure Estate (February 2010)

43. We published our report on 'Youth Justice: The experiences of Welsh Children in the Secure Estate' on 25 February 2010.

Key themes from the inquiry

44. We considered that 7 key issues emerged in the course of our inquiry, detailed below:

- devolution of the Secure Estate to Wales;
- preventing young people offending;
- responding to young people offending;
- existing provision of secure estate placements in Wales;
- specific issues within the secure estate;
- additional support for specific groups of children and young people in the secure estate;
- staff training;
- resettlement and aftercare.

45. Critically, we recommended that the Welsh Government ask the UK Government to give it devolved responsibility for the juvenile secure estate.

46. One of the key findings of our inquiry was that the Welsh Government's rights-based agenda being delivered for children in Wales was considered by witnesses to be considerably more developed than the agenda delivered by counterparts in Whitehall.

47. Another of our recommendations was to urge the Welsh Government to challenge the public perception of young offenders and dispel the 'hoodie' stereotype. We considered that children and young people are often demonised unfairly. Evidence presented to the committee demonstrated that in many cases, young offenders had been victims of physical and sexual abuse, been lured into drug misuse or had spent time in the care of social services because of problems at home.

48. We also recommended that the Welsh Government review the use of custody and ensure it is only used in appropriate circumstances in

line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Child, and review the availability and suitability of bail accommodation for children and young people in Wales.

49. The report also called for the Welsh Government to continue to engage with the UK Government towards enabling the development of new secure estate placements in Wales, using the Hillside secure unit as a model, and including the development of provision in an appropriate location in North Wales.

Developments since the publication of the Committee's report

50. The Welsh Government accepted in full or in principle 26 of our 28 recommendations.

51. We received an oral update on the implementation of the (accepted) recommendations in the report on 17 March 2011. Notably, the update stated that:

“In the twelve months since the Communities & Culture Committee reported on the experience of Welsh children in the secure estate, there have been significant changes in the public service delivery context. For example, there has been a change in the UK Government and a consequent announcement of the abolition of the Youth Justice Board. However, perhaps the most significant development has been the extent to which public finances have come under pressure as a result of economic downturn and moves to reduce the UK financial deficit. Inevitably this has had a well documented impact on the configuration and availability of public services. The juvenile secure estate is not exempt from this impact.... However, not all the changes over the last year have been negative. We have continued to see a very positive downward trend in the number of children and young people entering the youth justice system, a reduction in the frequency with which young people re-offend and a diminishing juvenile custodial cohort.”¹¹

¹¹ CC(3)-5-11 Paper 1

52. As a result of these changes, the Welsh Government considered that it was no longer “presently viable to commit capital spending on new provision in Wales.”¹²

53. The update also detailed that the Welsh Assembly Government will further examine the principles and financial implications of the recommendations relating to the devolution of youth justice. Cabinet will receive a further paper on this matter in March 2011.

54. Given the significant changes that are continuing to take place in the field of Youth Justice, we consider that there would be considerable merit in our successor committee(s) continuing to scrutinise the Welsh Government’s administration, expenditure and policy in this important area. In particular, our successor committee(s) may wish to ascertain the Welsh Government’s position on the devolution of Youth Justice.

¹² CC(3)-5-11 Paper 1

The potential impact of the UK Government's Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill for Community Safety in Wales (February 2011)

55. We laid our report on the potential impact of the UK Government's Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill for Community Safety in Wales on 24 February 2011.

56. Although policing is not a devolved issue in Wales, we carried out the inquiry because the Bill - introduced in the House of Commons in November 2010 - had clauses that provide for distinct arrangements in Wales.

57. Of particular interest to us was the Bill's aim to replace police authorities with directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners from May 2012, with the intention of improving police accountability.

58. In our report we called for the deferral of this process in Wales until its success has been measured elsewhere in the UK.

59. We also recommended that the Welsh and UK Governments work together to ensure that, if the Commissioners and Panels are established in Wales, they would be implemented on the basis of a consensual approach. Our report stated that this would mean the Commissioner and Panel assume an equal role in appointing or dismissing the Chief Constable, setting the precept and agreeing priorities through the local Police and Crime Plan.

60. These two recommendations were voted on by the Committee, with 7 out of 9 Members in favour of them.

61. Other recommendations, agreed by the whole Committee, included the need for the Welsh Government to ensure the UK Government works with Police Authorities to develop a consistent approach to community engagement and partnership working.

62. The report also stated that the Welsh Government should review its policies, including the 'Right to be Safe' strategy for tackling violence against women, to ensure that their objectives can be integrated with the policy landscape resulting from the final Bill.

Developments since the publication of the Committee's report

63. A response from the Welsh Government to this report was not anticipated prior to the dissolution of the third Assembly.

64. We consider that our successor committee(s) could usefully monitor both the Welsh Government's response to this report, and the wider impact of the UK Government's Bill, in relation to Community Safety in Wales.

5. Community Inclusion

The Funding of Voluntary Sector Organisations in Wales (May 2008)

65. In May 2008 we published a report of our inquiry into the funding of voluntary organisations in Wales.

66. In the course of this inquiry many of those that gave evidence said they preferred the term Third Sector rather than voluntary sector, so that terminology is used in this legacy report.

67. There are over 30,000 Third Sector organisations in Wales covering a range of voluntary and community groups, religious organisations, co-operatives, social enterprises and other not-for-profit organisations. Funding for the sector comes from a variety of sources including central and devolved government, local government and public donation.

68. Section 74 of the *Government of Wales Act 2006* requires that the Welsh Ministers must make a scheme (“the voluntary sector scheme”) setting out how they propose, in the exercise of their functions, to promote the interests of relevant voluntary organisations.

Key Themes from the Inquiry

69. In our report we made 25 recommendations to the Welsh Government. A number of issues emerged during the course of the inquiry, including:

- the reliance of the Third Sector on public sector funding (43 per cent of its income);
- the public sector should treat the Third Sector as a strategic partner;
- more needs to be done by the public sector, and other funders, such as the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) to help the Third Sector help itself;
- more practical support should be provided by County Voluntary Councils; and
- short term funding for projects should be avoided as it prevents strategic planning.

Developments since the publication of the Committee's report

70. The Welsh Government provided updates on its progress towards implementing our recommendations in February 2009 and January 2011.

71. The Welsh Government has continued to meet its statutory commitment to maintain a voluntary sector scheme, and to publish annual reports outlining how it supports the sector. The most recent report was for 2008-09.

72. In the context of the increased pressure on public finances, there will clearly be value in our successor committee(s) continuing to examine- in broad terms- the funding of third sector organisations by the Welsh Government.

Financial Inclusion and the Impact of Financial Education (November 2010);

73. On 3 November 2010, we published a report on 'Financial Inclusion and the Impact of Financial Education,' highlighting concerns about the availability and standard of financial education in schools and communities in Wales.

74. The report stated that while financial education initiatives were in place, the Welsh Government needed to do more to ensure that they are cohesive, effective and protected from cuts in the tight economic climate.

75. It also highlighted the importance of providing school children with adequate financial knowledge and recommended that the Welsh Government made financial education compulsory in PSE syllabuses.

76. The report noted that we had heard positive evidence of schools working with credit unions to deliver financial education, resulting in changing pupils' financial habits by promoting responsible spending. To encourage more projects like this, the report urged the Welsh Government to establish a central hub of information for agencies and communities to quickly identify partners and develop links and collaborative projects.

77. It also recommended more engagement in the wider community, including public awareness-raising and protecting and developing the Wales Financial Education Unit – part of the Welsh Government's Financial Inclusion strategy.

Developments since the publication of the Committee's report

78. We were pleased that the Welsh Government accepted in full or in principle 11 of our 13 recommendations (with 1 rejected, and 1 being still under consideration at the time of this legacy report).

79. We were disappointed that the Welsh Government stated that it had rejected our recommendation that it consider undertaking a sustained media campaign to help people to understand the benefits of financial inclusion and education. The Welsh Government's rationale for this decision was that it did not believe this would represent the most effective use of public money.

80. However, in a subsequent plenary debate on our report, the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government clarified that the Welsh Government did:

“endorse the need for raising awareness and understanding of financial issues. I therefore agree that the Assembly Government should be involved in discussions with key stakeholders, such as the north and south Wales financial capability fora, CFEB, the financial inclusion champions and the Welsh financial education unit on how those facilities can be better used to increase financial education across the whole of Wales.”¹³

81. We consider that our successor committee(s) could usefully follow up the Welsh Government’s commitment to strategically support and endorse financial education campaigns developed by key stakeholders.

We recommend that our successor committee(s) monitor the Welsh Government strategic support for, and endorsement of, financial education campaigns developed by partners.

82. More broadly, we consider that our successor committee(s) could usefully monitor the broader implementation of recommendations from this report. We consider that the recommendations of this report are particularly pertinent in the current economic climate, when it is more crucial than ever that people are able to manage their money well.

¹³ National Assembly for Wales, Record of Proceedings, Plenary, 19 January 2011, Page 29.

6. Welsh Language, Sport and Culture

Public Service Broadcasting in Wales (June 2009)

83. Following a referral by the Broadcasting Sub-Committee, we published our report on Public Service Broadcasting in Wales on 9 June 2009.

Key themes from the inquiry

84. A number of issues emerged during the course of the inquiry, including:

- the need to ensure plurality, and the Committee's consideration of options for securing plurality;
- the portrayal of Wales on the network;
- the Broadcasting licence in Wales;
- DAB radio in Wales;
- developing media in Wales.

85. Notably, we recommended that the Welsh Government should urge the UK Government to ensure plurality in English language broadcasting in Wales, especially on ITV. It also called for the establishment of an independent Welsh Media Commission to safeguard plurality in public service broadcasting in Wales. The Welsh Government agreed with our views on plurality, but stated that the establishment of any commission would be dependent on receiving funding from the UK Government.

86. We also recommended that the Broadcasting Act was reviewed in order to create a single commercial licence for Wales. The Welsh Government partially accepted this recommendation, stating that it was pressing on the UK Government to review the current ITV licensing arrangements in Wales.

87. We also called on the Welsh Government to work with broadcasters, independent producers and the BBC to develop a creative hub for the media in Wales. The Welsh Government accepted this recommendation, stating that discussions were underway with the BBC to develop a major production centre in Cardiff.

Developments since the publication of the Committee's report

88. In 2009, the UK (Labour) Government announced plans to establish an Independently Funded News Consortium (IFNC) pilot for channel 3 in Wales – a development which the Welsh Government welcomed. However, the new UK (Coalition) Government announced in 2010 that this pilot would not be going ahead.

89. We received an oral update on the implementation of the recommendations in this report in July 2010.

90. In his 2010 update, the Minister stated that the Welsh Government was still concerned by the current ITV licensing arrangements, and that it would discuss the matter with the UK Government, Ofcom and ITV in light of the regulatory review recently announced by the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport.

91. In his 2010 update, the Minister also stated that the Cardiff Media Capital project was progressing, with the BBC Drama Village component at Roath Basin due to become operational in August 2011. The Minister stated that the Welsh Government was actively working with Cardiff Council, the BBC and other stakeholders in order to establish a partnership that would enable further progression.

92. We consider that our successor committee(s) could usefully continue to monitor the progress made by the Welsh Government in addressing our recommendations. With the development of the BBC Drama Village and Cardiff Media Capital project, continued debate over the future of S4C and commercial licenses, and calls for the devolution of the broadcasting function we anticipate that issues associated with broadcasting and the media will have an increasing importance in Wales, economically, culturally and in terms of community inclusion.

We recommend that our successor committee(s) give consideration to conducting a further inquiry into how broadcasting (in all media forms) is functioning in Wales.

The Welsh Newspaper Industry (June 2009)

93. The Broadcasting Sub-committee (of the Communities and Culture Committee) published its report on the Welsh Newspaper Industry on 17 June 2009. The inquiry was initially prompted by concerns about the future of local newspapers in Wales.

94. The sub-committee made 4 recommendations to the Welsh Government, recommending that the Welsh Government should:

- make representations to the UK Government seeking assurances that cross media rules are relaxed to allow exploration of new partnerships;
- make representations to the UK Government seeking assurances that any move to relax regulations relating to cross-media ownership should be accompanied by measures to protect plurality of local media;
- establish a dialogue with newspaper companies and unions to explore means of supporting English language journalism in Wales;
- consider in its strategic approach to advertising taking account of the circulation and penetrations of newspapers involved and ensure that relevant titles are not overlooked. In doing this the Assembly Government should clearly communicate its advertising strategy to Welsh newspaper companies.

Developments since the publication of the sub-committee's report

95. The Communities and Culture Committee received an oral update on the implementation of the recommendations in the sub-committee's report in July 2010. In his update, the Minister reiterated his support for partnership working, and stated that Ofcom has made recommendations about relaxing cross media rules. However, he also stated that the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport was reviewing these as a result of the decision not to press ahead with the Independently Funded News Consortia (IFNC) pilot schemes. The Minister also detailed work undertaken with stakeholders to develop skills in the newspaper industry in Wales, including the work of the Wales Union Learning Fund.

Promoting Welsh Arts and Culture on the World Stage (July 2009)

96. We published our report on Promoting Welsh Arts and Culture on the World Stage on 14 July 2009.

Key themes emerging from the inquiry

97. We considered that six key issues emerged in the course of our inquiry, which were:

- the need for a strategic approach;
- the need for funding and support;
- the need for partnership working;
- the role of local authorities and working across the whole of Wales;
- the role of publishing;
- barriers and support for arts practitioners.

98. Notably, we recommended that the Welsh Government should refresh its strategic framework to promote Wales on the international stage, and should provide a firm commitment to expedite a new culture strategy. The Minister accepted these recommendations, although he said that this would not need to entail a full renewal of the *Creative Future* strategy.

99. We also recommended that the Welsh Government should develop wales.com to become the definitive internet site that people consult on Wales. The Welsh Government accepted this recommendation in principle.

100. We also recommended that the Arts Council of Wales and Wales Arts International should explore how to improve the proactive marketing of their services. We also recommended that Wales Arts International should provide and market a support service to help Welsh artists address the practical difficulties of taking their work abroad.

Developments since the publication of the committee's report

101. We received an oral update on the implementation of the recommendations in this report in July 2010.

102. In his update, the Minister for Heritage stated that the First Minister had decided to bring together a Policy Board that would oversee the strategic promotion of Wales's interests abroad. The Minister also stated that the current economic climate meant that it would be inappropriate to develop a new detailed strategy for culture, but that a Culture Summit would be held on 7 July 2010 for key players from the culture sector to discuss the challenges that have arisen as a result of the recession.

103. The Minister also detailed work undertaken by Wales Arts International to pilot a new on-line international calendar of cultural activities for Wales, in parallel with work on the Arts Council of Wales's new website.

104. Regarding the support services for artists, the Minister stated that this work was already partly undertaken through Wales Arts International's participation in the PRACTICS scheme, which is an EU-funded programme that provides administrative support to help artists and cultural workers overcome obstacles in pursuing an international career.

Making the Most of Major Sporting Events (June 2010).

105. The Communities and Culture Committee published its report on 'making the most of major sporting events' on 4 June 2010.

106. The report called for major sporting events in Wales to be enabled to leave lasting legacies, concluding that greater strategic advice and support needed to be provided to event organisers and authorities, to help them to capitalise on the economic benefits and popularity of major sporting events by providing lasting legacies for communities.

107. The report also called for the Welsh Government to explicitly state that major sporting events seeking financial support from public funds would be required to include a post-event strategy.

108. It also recommended that the Welsh Government organise an annual seminar for local authorities, the media, charities, private sector companies, sporting bodies and transport providers, to enable an exchange of good practice, and greater partnership working in the delivery of events.

Developments since the publication of the committee's report

109. The Welsh Government accepted in full or in principle 12 of the report's 14 recommendations.

110. We particularly welcomed the Welsh Government's decision to accept our recommendation that the Major Event Unit should provide event organisers with a central source of practical guidance and advice on the management of such events.

111. We were also pleased that the Minister had accepted our call to establish a national calendar of major events, to enable the development of a strategic spread of events across the calendar.

112. We consider that our successor committee(s) could usefully monitor the implementation of the recommendations in this report in the future, given the relatively recent publication of this report.

The Accessibility of Arts and Cultural Activities in Wales (February 2011)

113. We published our report on 'the accessibility of arts and cultural activities in Wales on 3 February 2011.

114. The report called for the Welsh Government to put less focus on developing purpose-built venues for staging arts and cultural experiences, and to put more attention and investment in community-based projects to reach a wider audience, particularly those with disabilities or from minority groups.

115. The report urged the Welsh Government to accept that it has an accountability, at a strategic level, for the funding decisions undertaken by Assembly Government Sponsored Bodies, such as the Arts Council of Wales. We also called for the Welsh Government to ensure that the rationale for such decisions was as clear and transparent as possible.

116. The report also suggested that the Welsh Government could bring forward legislation to place a statutory duty on local authorities to support arts and cultural experiences in their local areas. The Committee considered it appropriate to seek a greater level of consistency between local authorities in their support for the arts, without tying their hands excessively.

Developments since the publication of the committee's report

117. The Welsh Government is expected to respond to the committee's report in March 2011.

118. We consider that our successor committee(s) could usefully monitor the implementation of the recommendations in this report in the future, given its relatively recent publication.