

Cross Party Group Women

Annual Report

October 2020

Overview

The Cross-Party Group on Women exists to promote cross party action to achieve equality for women in Wales. Suzy Davies MS and Siân Gwenllian MS are co-Chairs of the group. WEN Wales offers secretarial support. Since the previous annual report in July 2019, the group has convened four times: 17th October 2019; 3rd December 2019; 18th June 2020 and 15th October 2020. All meetings, including planning meetings, were online via Zoom from March 2020 due to Covid-19.

The group has used these meetings to focus on a number of issues, including: a joint meeting with the Cross Party Group on violence against women and children on online abuse; the Gender Equality Review Phase 2, Local Government Bill and the launch of the Women's Budget Group's final report on A Gender-Equal Economy.

The group also worked closely with the Women in Europe (Wales) network, which became part of the Cross Party Group on Women from July 2019.

Attendance at the meetings over the year has been made up of political representatives, third sector organisations working to end discrimination against women, individuals interested in gender equality and Members of the Senedd support staff.

1. Group membership and office holders

Officers:

- Suzy Davies AM (co-Chair)
- Siân Gwenllian (co-Chair)
- Hilary Watson, WEN Wales (secretary)

Additional members:

- Angela Burns AM (member)
- Lynne Neagle AM (member)
- Jayne Bryant AM (member)

2. Previous Group Meetings since last AGM

Meeting 1

Topic: 'Gender Equality Review, Phase 2'

Date: 17th October 2019

Attendees:

Suzy Davies AM (co-Chair), Siân Gwenllïan AM (co-Chair, via teleconference), Hilary Watson WEN Wales (secretary), Natasha Davies, Chwarae Teg (speaker), Eleri Cabbage, Women in Europe (Wales) (speaker), Claire Cunliffe, Oxfam Cymru, Gwendolyn Sterk, Welsh Women's Aid, Catherine Iannucci, Jane Hutt AM's support staff, Lydia Godden, WEN Wales intern/student, Polly Winn, Chwarae Teg, Mat Mathias, ERS Cymru, Sarah Rees, Women's Equality Party, Heddwen Daniel, Welsh Women's Aid, Sioned James, Plaid Cymru AMSS.

Summary of issues discussed:

Eleri Cabbage, joint coordinator of Women in Europe (Wales) gave an overview of the network and raised concerns in relation to women's rights threatened by EU withdrawal. She briefly discussed the EU's gender equality architecture that has been developed over decades of feminist activism in Europe. Tash Davies gave an overview of Phase 2 of the Gender Equality Review, which is currently awaiting response from Welsh Government.

Meeting 2

Joint Meeting with the Cross Party Group on Violence against Women and Children

Topic: 'Online Abuse'

Date: 3rd December 2019;

Attendees: *Bethan Sayed AM (Chair); Delyth Jewell AM (speaker); Suzy Davies AM; Mark Isherwood AM; Sian Gwenllïan AM; Helen Mary Jones AM; Gwendolyn Sterk, Welsh Women's Aid (speaker); Catherine Fookes, WEN Wales; Amy Jones, Welsh Government (speaker); Lesley Curtis, Hafan Cymru; Jordan Watkins, PPC Gwent; Charlotte Archibald, Independent; Korina Tsioni, WCVA; Gemma Price, Independent; Ele Hicks, Diverse Cymru; Sarah Thomas, National Federation of Women's Institutes; Nancy Cavill, AMSS for Julie Morgan AM; Lynne Tedik Soroptimist International, Wales South Region Representative; Bishop June Osborne; Julie Richards, SEEdS.*

Summary of issues discussed: **Group discussed** Online abuse in the context of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, led by Gwendolyn Sterk, Welsh Women's Aid; Online abuse of women in public office, led by Delyth Jewell AM; and Welsh Government's campaign for young people and the use of technology, led by Amy Jones, Welsh Government.

Meeting 3, Online

Topic: Women, Diversity & Local Government & Elections Bill, Amendments

Date: 18th June 2020

Attendees: *Sian Gwenllian MS; Hilary Watson, WEN Wales; Jackie Jones, Women in Europe (Wales) (speaker); Cllr Mary Sherwood (speaker); Leena Farhat (speaker); Prof Sarah Childs (speaker); Mia Rees office of Suzy Davies MS; Ele Hicks, Diverse Cymru; Leigh Ingham, Plan International UK; Katerina Stivasari-Jones, consultant/WEN Wales Mentee; Lori Frat WEN Wales Mentee; Rhian A Davies, Theatr Genedlaethon Cymru; Liz Hill O'Shea, WEN Wales Mentee; Patience Bentu, Race Council Cymru; Sioned Jones office of Siân Gwenllian MS; Katie Cooke, independent; Emma Wilde, WEN Wales Mentee; Toni Beardmore, independent; Sara Kirkpatrick, Welsh Women's Aid; Beth Thomas, The Big Issue; Helen Parfitt office of Helen Mary Jones MS; Diana Stirbu, London Metropolitan University; Deborah Shaffer, FTWW; Jane Fenton-May, Wales Assembly of Women; bSarah Rees office of Bethan Sayed MS; Sophie Weeks, WEN Wales Mentee; Abbie Winsor, Aberystwyth University; Polly Winn, Chwarae Teg*

Summary of issues discussed: The Local Government & Elections Bill and possible amendments were discussed to strengthen the Bill's potential in relation to diversity. speakers discussed job-sharing as councillors, the working culture around political roles, gender quotas and affirmative action for increased diversity in political institutions, parental leave (absent from the Bill), and rurality, and how an adaptation of the electoral system could impact on diversity work we do in Wales for women and different types of diversity.

Meeting 4, Online

Topic: Creating a Caring Economy in Wales & Annual General Meeting

Date: 15th October 2020.

Attendees: TBC

Sian Gwenllian MS (Chair); Suzy Davies MS (Chair); Catherine Fookes, WEN Wales; Hilary Watson, WEN Wales (minutes); Tash Davies, Women's Budget Group (speaker); Patience Bentu, First Minister's BAME Covid-19 Advisory Group (speaker); Duncan Fisher, Women's Budget Group (speaker); Jackie Jones, Women in Europe (Wales) (speaker); Rachel Minto, Women in Europe (Wales); Jenna Norman, Women's Budget Group; Alison Parken, Cardiff Business School; Ruth McKie, Soroptimists Int. Wales South; Jessica Williams, WCVA; Lynne Tedik, Soroptimists Int. Wales South; Debbie Shaffer, Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales; Rachel Cable, Oxfam Cymru; Ele Hicks, Diverse Cymru; Sarah Thomas, NFWI; Jenny Ramsay, Office of Paul Davies MS; Abi Thomas, Plaid Cymru Women's Officer for Carmarthen & S Pembrokeshire constituency; Julie Richards; Claire Thomas, Bevan Foundation.

Summary of issues discussed: After the re-election of the chairs and secretariat, the group heard from the Women in Europe (Wales) group with an update on the UK withdrawal from the European Union and European and international activities of interest to the group. Our speaker from the *First Minister's BAME Covid-19 Advisory Group* discussed the work of the group and gave an overview of the socio-economic impact of Covid-19 on BAME people and communities in Wales. speakers from the

Women's Budget Group discussed how an economy that sufficiently takes into account paid and unpaid care would strengthen women's rights and benefit both women and men.

3. Professional lobbyists, voluntary organisations and charities with whom the Group has met during the preceding year

As above.

4. Annual Financial Statement

Date: 29-10-20

Cross Party Group on Women

Co-Chairs: Siân Gwenllian MS & Suzy Davies MS

Secretary: Hilary Watson, WEN Wales

Group's Expenses	None	£0.00
Costs of all goods	No goods purchased	£0.00
Benefits received by the group or individual Members from outside bodies.	No benefits received	£0.00
Any secretariat or other support	No financial support received	£0.00
	Total cost	£0.00