

**Cross Party Group on Women**

**July 12<sup>th</sup> 2018**

**12:30 – 13:30**

**Ty Hywel**

**Chairs: Jane Hutt AM & Siân Gwenllïan AM**

**Secretariat: WEN Wales**

**Attendees:**

Jane Hutt AM (co-chair)

Suzy Davies AM

Siân Gwenllïan AM (co-chair)

Catherine Fookes – WEN Wales (secretariat)

Prof Laura McAllister – Wales Governance Centre (speaker)

Hilary Watson – WEN Wales

Maria Mesa – Women Connect First

Rachel Cable – Oxfam Cymru

Eli Crouch-Puzey – Welsh Women's Aid

Rocio Cifuentes – EYST

Rayner Rees – Soroptimists International

Polly Winn – Chwarae Teg

Sarah Rees – Women's Equality Party

Dr Rachel Minto – Wales Governance Centre

Dr Diana Stirbu – Wales Governance Centre

Sarah Thomas – NFWI Wales

Frances Beecher – Llamau

Catriona Brown – AM staff

Julie Morgan – AM

Nancy Cavell – AM Support Staff

Eleri Evans – AM Support Staff

**Apologies:**

Angela Burns AM

Dai Lloyd AM

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Joyce Watson AM  
Ann Jones AM  
Mohammad Asghar AM  
Victoria Winckler – Bevan Foundation  
Mutale Merrill – Bawso  
Rhian Connick – Disability Wales

### Agenda:

- 1) **Welcome & Introductions – Jane Hutt AM**
- 2) **Gender Recommendations in Expert Panel for Electoral Reform Report – Professor Laura McAllister, Wales Governance Center**
- 3) **UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) welsh report launch – Catherine Fookes, WEN Wales**
- 4) **Equality for Women & Girls in Wales, Our Manifesto – Catherine Fookes, WEN Wales**
- 5) **AOB**

### Minutes:

#### 1. **Welcome & Introductions – Jane Hutt AM (co-chair)**

Jane Hutt AM introduces the group and puts it into context. Jane Hutt AM and Siân Gwenllïan AM have been established as co-chairs and WEN Wales as secretariat.

#### 2. **Gender Recommendations in Expert Panel for Electoral Reform Report – Professor Laura McAllister, Wales Governance Center**

Professor Laura McAllister highlights the gender recommendations of the Expert Panel for Electoral Reform Report. Professor McAllister recommends reading at least the summary of the report (full report is very long). Discussion around *gender quotas* and historically the effect of twinning (used by Welsh Labour) and zipping (used by Plaid Cymru). Recommendation for *80/90 AMs* with gender balance – in the first instance addressing inequality for the majority (it was acknowledged that other inequalities exist – e.g. no BME women AMs).

Professor McAllister described how prescriptive (with legislative backdrop) not just permissive attitudes towards quotas was beneficial – with both penalties

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and incentives, giving examples of Bosnia and Croatia – incentives used effectively.

Professor McAllister highlighted that *job-share* for politicians is very possible, where two politicians are seen legally as one – one vote, resign together, cost same as 1 politician etc. They are essential for women with caring responsibilities, candidates from different classes (including professions such as medical doctors, academics who can't take 5 years out of their sectors).

Also discussed was *candidate diversity information* and the call for this information to be published in order to hold political parties to account.

Suzy Davies AM described the way in which the Electoral Reform Report was being examined by a Commission with the three main parties to move forward with two bills and to take accepted recommendations forward. 1<sup>st</sup> bill – less controversial/ambitious in time for next election (name change to Welsh Parliament, votes for 16-17 year olds, looking into who can/can't stand as AM). 2<sup>nd</sup> bill – gender balance (quotas), prisoner voting. 2<sup>nd</sup> bill likely to be bigger, more controversial and work of next Assembly. It was highlighted that work around *job-share* may not go further so if it is important to CPG now would be the time to ask the Commission to re-examine job-share for AMs and ministers.

Unanimous view of those in attendance at the CPG that job-sharing is vital for progressing for both AMs and ministers (which will take legislative change in UK Parliament). Group highlighted many examples of professions that successfully job-share – e.g. surgeons, judges.

Calls were also made for the CPG to be very vocal and tackle deep rooted issues and push for progress. Others called for additional research to be circulated (see actions below). Links made to what Wales needs to achieve and the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality.

BME women are underpaid, overqualified and their contribution to Welsh society goes largely unrecognised. Not represented adequately at any level but no representation at AM level. Women can reach a certain point then there's

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nowhere to go, e.g. language barriers remedied with English lessons but not to the level needed to be an elected representative.

Actions:

- 1) Circulate a link to summary and full report of the 'Expert Panel for Electoral Reform Report' summary report: [Welsh / English](#) & full report: [Welsh / English](#) (secretariat)
- 2) Circulate Electoral Reform Society Cymru report 'New Voices: How Welsh Politics can Begin to Reflect Wales' [Welsh / English](#) (out on 12-07-18) and last week's report from Wales Governance Centre 'Unpacking Diversity'. [Welsh / English](#) (secretariat).
- 3) Circulate Fawcett Society's pamphlet 'Open House? Reflections on the Possibility and Practice of MPs Job-sharing' (**Welsh unavailable**) / [English](#) & Sarah Child's report 'A Good Parliament' (secretariat) (**Welsh unavailable**) / [English](#)
- 4) Group to write to the Commission to highlight importance of job-sharing changes for AMs (Chairs & secretariat) *Completed by Jane Hutt AM*
- 5) Group to issue a press statement on the importance of changes that would allow job sharing for Assembly Members and ministers – to be sent to all AMs to advance debate on this matter. Press statement to also highlight that gender quotas must also be considered seriously. (Chairs & secretariat). *Completed by Jane Hutt AM*
- 6) Organisations wishing to raise job sharing reforms urged to write to Commission and leader of the parties to advance this work (organisations attending CPG)

### **3. UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Welsh report launch – Catherine Fookes, WEN Wales**

Catherine Fookes launched the Wales shadow report for UN CEDAW from WEN Wales and described the process with the Committee with the upcoming meeting in Geneva.

Actions:

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1. Circulate a link the WEN Wales' Wales Shadow report CEDAW Wales Shadow Report (secretariat) [Welsh](#) / [English](#)

#### **4. Equality for Women & Girls in Wales: Our Manifesto – Catherine Fookes, WEN Wales**

Catherine Fookes introduced the Manifesto and highlighted that it has recently been sent to all AMs, Welsh MPs, Local Authority leads and CEOs and heads of Welsh Charities for endorsement and discussion.

Actions:

2. Circulate a link the WEN Wales and partners 'Equality for Women and Girls in Wales: Our Manifesto' [Welsh](#) / [English](#) (secretariat)

#### **1. AOB**

Gender Review – statement made in the chamber on 10<sup>th</sup> July – top level and doesn't yet detail specific policy asks. Chwarae Teg have highlighted that the Phase 1 report is a mapping report detailing how decisions are currently made and that childcare will be addressed fully during phase 2.

Possible rolling themes for the CPG in the future: Women & Brexit; period dignity; Me Too movement, sexual harassment & dignity & respect; health issues.

Action:

1. **Jane Hutt AM to ask the First Minister to make a statement on the Gender Review (Jane Hutt AM)** *Completed by Jane Hutt AM*

**Additional report: Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee of the National Assembly for Wales 'Work It Out: parenting and employment in Wales' [Welsh](#) / [English](#), published on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2018 (after the Cross Party Group met).**

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