

## **Cross Party Group on Women**

### **Annual Report 2018-19**

**July 2019**

#### **Overview**

The Cross-Party Group on Women exists to promote cross party action to achieve equality for women in Wales. Since its inception in July, the group convened three times in 2018 and 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 dignity and respect; electoral reform of Welsh politics; Feminist Scorecard for Welsh Government; the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); and creating a diverse Welsh politics. After a long break, the Cross Party Group met in July 2019, when Suzy Davies AM was approved as the co-chair of the group following Jane Hutt AM's stepping down due to restrictions as a newly elected minister.

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 Assembly Member support staff.

#### **1. Group membership and Office Holders**

##### **i. Group membership and office holders 2018**

#### **Officers**

- Jane Hutt AM (co-chair)
- Siân Gwenllian (co-chair)
- Hilary Watson, WEN Wales (secretary)

#### **Additional members**

- Suzy Davies AM (member)
- Angela Burns AM (member)
- Lynne Neagle AM (member)

##### **ii. Group membership and office holders as of July 2019**

#### **Officers:**

- Siân Gwenllian (co-chair)
- Suzy Davies AM (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:** *'Electoral Reform & CEDAW'*

**Date:** 12-07-18

**Attendees:**

*Jane Hutt AM (co-chair), Suzy Davies AM, Siân Gwenllian AM (co-chair), Catherine Fookes (WEN Wales), 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 (Cardiff University), 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).*

**Summary of issues discussed:**

Professor Laura McAllister discussed the Expert Panel on Elector Reform Report and the recommendations made in relation to gender, detailing the potential use of quotas for women candidates and job-sharing for politicians. There were calls for the CPG to be very vocal on these issues and to focus on tackling deep rooted issues while pushing for progress. In addition WEN Wales presented their Welsh shadow report for UN CEDAW (United Nation's Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) and described the upcoming meeting and processes around engaging with the CEDAW Committee in Geneva later in the month.

*Siân Gwenllian AM and Jane Hutt AM were established as co-chairs of the group with Hilary Watson from WEN Wales as secretary.*

## Meeting 2

**Topic:** 'Creating a More Diverse Welsh Political Landscape'

**Date:** 25-09-18

**Attendees:**

*Jane Hutt AM (Co-chair), Siân Gwenllïan AM (Co-chair), Suzy Davies AM, Helen Mary Jones AM, Caroline Jones AM, Julie Morgan AM, Catherine Fookes (WEN Wales), Hilary Watson (WEN Wales), Maria Mesa (Women Connect First), Rayner Rees (Soroptimists International), Rachel Cable (Oxfam Cymru), Claire Swann (Oxfam Cymru), Mutale Merrill (Bawso), Dr Rachel Minto (Wales Governance Centre), Sarah Thomas (NFWI Wales), Frances Beecher (Llamau), Isabelle Michelson (NAWO), Fay Jones (Individual), Polly Winn (Chwarae Teg).*

**Summary of issues discussed:**

The Electoral Reform Society Cymru introduced new report 'New Voices' which is an updated look at why Welsh politics does not reflect the population, with data collected through surveys and interviews. The report is divided into a) Institutional barriers & b) Societal barriers. The CPG decided that diversity and equal representation was a priority and agreed to create a small subgroup to discuss a diverse 50:50 gender representation campaign.

**Meeting 3**  
**Joint Meeting with the Cross Party Group on Violence against Women and Children**

**Topic:** 'Dignity & Respect: End Gender-Based Violence in the World of Work'

**Date:** 27-11-18

**Attendees:**

*Jane Hutt AM (Co-chair – CPG on women), Sian Gwenllian AM (Co-chair – CPG on women), Mark Isherwood AM (Co-chair – CPG on VAWC), Jayne Bryant AM, Yasmin Khan (National Advisor), Catherine Fookes (WEN Wales), Hilary Watson (WEN Wales), Elinor Crouch-Puzey (Welsh Women's Aid), Gwendolyn Sterk (Welsh Women's Aid), Gauri Taylor-Nayar (SEEdS), Mutale Merrill (Bawso), Maria Mesa (Women Connect First), Chisimoro Phiri (NUS Wales), Cerith Rhys-Jones (NUS Wales), Vivienne Laing (NSPCC Cymru), Rachel Cable (Oxfam Cymru), Crash Wigley (Stonewall Cymru), Sarah Thomas (NFWI Wales), Helen Mary Jones AM, Leanne Wood AM, Becs Parker (AM Support Staff John Griffiths), Jackie Jones (Wales Assembly of Women), Phoebe Owen (WEN Wales), Llinos Price (Individual), Polly Winn (Chwarae Teg), Hilary Roberts (SEEdS).*

**Summary of issues discussed:**

Yasmin Khan discussed the three themes running through Welsh Government's work: Prevent, Protection & Support. The need for a joined-up approach and response to survivors from different services, a better understanding of sexual violence and the need for improved joint work in health. She confirmed SRE is an area for prioritising. Jayne Bryant AM, Chair of the Standards of Conduct Committee, discussed the work of the committee to develop the Dignity and Respect policy and ensure that there is a cultural change that enables reporting and prevention. Gwendolyn Sterk (Welsh Women's Aid) and Catherine Fookes (WEN Wales): discussed the pervasiveness of sexual harassment as a form of VAWDASV and the need for perpetrators' behaviour to be challenged. Sexual harassment is a cause and consequence of gender inequality, which means that linking Dignity and Respect agendas to the Gender Equality Review in Wales is important. WEN Wales discussed the Women's Manifesto and the need to end gender-based violence in the workplace and how 50:50 gender balance is needed in the National Assembly and at local government level.

## Meeting 4

**Topic:** 'Feminist Scorecard for Welsh Government'

**Date:** 18-07-19

### **Attendees:**

*Suzy Davies AM (co-chair), Siân Gwenllian AM (co-chair), Catherine Fookes (WEN Wales (speaker)), Claire Cunliffe (Oxfam Cymru (speaker)), Tina Reese (Welsh Women's Aid (speaker)), Hilary Watson (WEN Wales (secretary)), Isobel Mortimer (Graylings & NAWO Youth Team), Rachel Minto (Wales Governance Office), Catherine Iannucci (Deputy Minister & Chief Whip's support staff), Nia Thomas (Deputy Minister & Chief Whip's intern), Lynne Tedik (Soroptimist International), Debbie Shaffer (Fair Treatment for Women in Wales (via Skype/Phone))*

### **Summary of issues discussed:**

The speakers discussed the 6 areas of the Feminist Scorecard for Welsh Government and their scores (red, amber, green): Women & Equal Representation & Leadership: Amber; Women & Caring Responsibilities: Amber; Ending Violence against Women & Girls: Red; Global Responsibility & Women: Amber; Jobs & Pay Equality For Women: Red; Taxation & Budgets Impact on Women: Amber. Attendees discussed writing to the First Minister regarding all areas and that future work should include health as a key area of inequality. It was agreed also that the Women in Europe (Wales) network would become part of the CPG on Women.

*Siân Gwenllian AM and Suzy Davies AM were established as co-chairs of the group with Hilary Watson from WEN Wales as secretary.*

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

*As above.*

**4. Annual Financial Statement**

**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019

**Cross Party Group on Women**

**Co-chairs:** Jane Hutt AM & Siân Gwenllian AM (2018); Siân Gwenllian AM & Suzy Davies AM (2019)

**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
<b>Total cost</b>		£0.00