

Written Response by the Welsh Government to the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee's report 'Count me in'

December 2019

We welcome the findings and offer the following response to the recommendations in the report.

The Fusion programme has been a huge success since its creation which the committee has acknowledged, and we welcome the findings and offer the following response to the recommendations in the report. ACW will be working in partnership with Welsh Government towards meeting those recommendations.

Recommendation 1. The Welsh Government should commission a wholesale evaluation of the Fusion programme which assesses the original objectives, funding and evaluation.

Response: Yes.

Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales, with support from The Welsh Government's Knowledge and Analytical Services, has already undertaken a number of reviews of the Fusion programme: <https://gov.wales/review-fusion-challenge-grants-programme>; <https://gov.wales/research-fusion-creating-opportunities-through-culture-programme-0>; <https://gov.wales/evaluation-pioneer-areas-pilot-year-0>

The Welsh Government has also initiated the commissioning of a further independent review of the Fusion programme. This will utilise, where possible, findings from the previous reviews and existing monitoring data to ensure value for money.

Financial Implications – No new funding required. Any costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 2. The Arts Council of Wales (ACW) should ensure that all members of Arts Portfolio Wales (its revenue-funded organisations) work with the different communities they serve to design their programme of activities.

Response: Not a recommendation for the Welsh Government.

This is a matter for the Arts Council Wales.

It is our understanding that ACW agrees with the recommendation and that there are organisations within ACW's Arts Portfolio that already work closely with different communities in the design and creation of work. ACW acknowledged in its presentation to the Committee, that there is more that could be done across the portfolio of organisations, as a whole, ACW is committed to working with them to

develop this approach. We expect ACW to do this as it takes forward its 2020 Investment Review.

Financial Implications – None for Welsh Government.

Recommendation 3. The Welsh Government should guarantee funding for the Fusion programme to provide security of tenure for the Fusion Co-ordinators.

Response: Yes.

All participants had funding agreed for a set period April 2019 – March 2020, as part of their applications to be part of the Fusion Programme. The Welsh Government is currently developing a new programme structure and will consider the length and terms of funding as part of the programme's development. Stakeholder engagement sessions are scheduled for January and February 2020.

However, as with all Government funding, funding is dependent upon the budgetary cycle and allocations of relevant funding.

Financial Implications – Funding for the programme is dependent upon budget allocations and consideration versus other priorities.

Recommendation 4. The Welsh Government should work with the Arts Council of Wales to annually review progress against their outcomes in the Corporate Plan 2018-2023 in terms of widening access to the arts. The Welsh Government should report on this to the Committee.

Response: This is primarily a matter for the Arts Council of Wales.

It is our understanding that ACW agrees with the recommendation. ACW meets regularly with the Welsh Government to discuss its performance, including widening access and participation in the Arts, and an update has been provided in 2018 and 2019 within the Welsh Government's Budget Scrutiny reply to CWLCC. We will ask ACW to also report back more fully on progress on a yearly basis to the CWLCC and the Welsh Government.

Financial Implications – None for Welsh Government

Recommendation 5. The Welsh Government, via the Arts Council of Wales, should require all arts and cultural bodies in receipt of public funding to set out their objectives for tackling poverty and social exclusion in their strategic plans. Those in receipt of funding should also set out how they intend to co-design creative activities and content with these target audiences.

Response: Yes.

The Welsh Government, via the ACW, will require all arts and cultural bodies who are in receipt of ACW funding, to set out their objectives for tackling poverty and social exclusion in their strategic plans. Cultural bodies include Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales and the National Library of Wales. Those in receipt of funding should also set out how they intend to co-design creative activities and content with these target audiences.

The Welsh Government will ensure that relevant other bodies in receipt of public funding, especially Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales and the National Library of Wales, include objectives for tackling poverty and social inclusion in their strategic plans and will actively encourage national arts and cultural bodies to co-design creative activities and content. New major capital projects, such as the contemporary art gallery and football museum, will be required to include objectives for tackling poverty and addressing social inclusion in their development plans.

Financial Implications – None.

Recommendation 6. Increasing access to the arts, culture and heritage venues for those in poverty or at risk of social exclusion should be considered as one of the strategic objectives of Transport for Wales. The Welsh Government should explore options for Transport for Wales to enter into partnerships with cultural organisations for specific events and/or venues to make accessing their activities free or subsidised. These pilot schemes should be reported on to the Committee.

Response: Yes, in principle

Welsh Government is exploring pilot schemes under the Fusion programme in 2020/21. This includes exploring options with Transport for Wales (TfW) to enter into partnerships with cultural organisations for specific events and/or venues to make accessing their activities free or subsidised in a similar manner to the successful programme with Cadw.

Cadw agreed a partnership with Transport for Wales offering a 2-for-1 admission ticket promotion until December 2020. Any visitor showing a valid TfW ticket for the specific route will receive 2-for-1 admission deal into Cade sites. The partnership includes Cadw poster adverts in train stations across Wales and reciprocal promotion across social channels and websites. Transport for Wales is also advertising the promotion across Cadw's digital screens at 7 sites.

Financial Implications – We will determine the funding and resources required to support this recommendation.

Recommendation 7. The Welsh Government should increase the funding for the Fusion programme to allow participants to claim incidental costs such as transport.

Response: Yes.

The Welsh Government is exploring options to provide funding for the Fusion programme to allow participants to claim incidental costs such as transport costs and is currently planning to trial small scale pilots during 2020/2021 subject to funding.

Financial Implications – We are determining the funding and resources required to support this recommendation.

Recommendation 8. The Welsh Government should report to the Committee on the proposals for developing a qualitative data set on the Fusion programme and the timetable for incorporating it into the evaluation methodology.

Response: Yes

The Welsh Government is working on proposals to develop a qualitative data set on the Fusion programme and a timetable for incorporating it into the evaluation methodology. The independent review we will commission will include an analysis of the qualitative data that has already been collected by Fusion areas as well as collect new qualitative data in the form of case studies.

Financial Implications – We are determining the funding and resources required to support this recommendation.