# Cronfa Gymunedol y Loteri Genedlaethol / The National Lottery Community Fund

# PWYLLGOR CYMRU / WALES COMMITTEE

10th December 2024

Virtual

**Minutes**

**In Attendance:**

Simone Lowthe-Thomas Wales Committee Chair

Nicola Russell-Brooks Wales Committee Member

Trystan Pritchard Wales Committee Member

Kate Young Wales Committee Member

Fadhili Maghiya (Part) Wales Committee Member

**Officers**

John Rose The National Lottery Community Fund

Rob Roffe The National Lottery Community Fund

Andrew Owen The National Lottery Community Fund

Ruth Bates The National Lottery Community Fund

**Attendees**

Chris Johnes Building Communities Trust

Jess Hey The National Lottery Community Fund

Dylan Hughes The National Lottery Community Fund

Millie Welch The National Lottery Community Fund

Catherine Roberts The National Lottery Community Fund

Jay Calderisi The National Lottery Community Fund (Minutes)

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
   1. Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
   2. Apologies were received from Gwenllian Lansdown Davies.
2. **Review of minutes from the Wales Committee held on the 12th September 2024 (WBM 24.30)**
   1. The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of proceedings.
3. **Matters arising from previous meeting**

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| Meeting Date | Agenda Item | Action | Owner | Due Date | Status | Comments |
| 10.06.24 | 13 | Invite Dr Lindsay Cordery-Bruce (new Chief Executive of WCVA) as an external speaker before Wales Committee in their next catch up. | John Rose |  | Complete | Agreed to attend March 2025 meeting |
| 12.09.24 | 6 | To provide analysis of A4A applications once completed centrally | JR/AO |  | Incomplete | Not yet available |
| 12.09.24 | 13 | Review case study locations in Wales Annual Report and ensure the geographical spread is proportionate | RB |  | Complete |  |

* 1. The Chair noted that due to the external speaker, the March meeting will now be held in Cardiff.

1. **Papers by written procedure**
   1. WBM 24.31 SGI Review Committee – for discussion – no objections.
   2. WBM 24.32 Impact Strategy Autumn 2024 – for discussion - no objections.
2. **Declarations of Interest** 
   1. No declarations of interest were received.
3. **Wales Portfolio Update** **(WBM 24.33)**
   1. Officers provided an update on work over the last 3 months ending 30 November 2024. Highlights included:
      * £3.5m awarded through Awards for All, £1.3m awarded through People and Places (medium), £6.2m awarded through People and Places (large) stage 2.
      * High application rates are affecting success rates, causing more good quality applications to be rejected due to insufficient funds.
      * Inge Deane will be providing training to People and Places Committees on the programme refresh. The videos created for relaunch of the programme have been particularly successful, including a video with Inge Dean, which achieved almost 10,000 views.
      * All staff were invited to Birmingham to celebrate the National Lottery’s 30th birthday.
      * Our Welsh Language Standards Annual Report was launched in October on Shwmae Su'mae Day and was received well by the Welsh Language Commissioner.
      * We have established a virtual reference group of key stakeholders to inform development of the Children and Natural Environment Programme. It met for the first time on 27th November.
   2. The Committee thanked the Communications team for all their hard work and noted their interest in the the movement of the team to the Funding Strategy, Communications and Impact Team. They appreciate the exceptional work of the Wales Comms team and hope that this excellent focus on the local region is not reduced by a move to the ‘One Fund’ approach and central priorities.
   3. Committee members noted that it is becoming harder to assess projects due to budgetary constraints. The decision panels have become increasingly challenging.
   4. The Committee noted that it is very interesting to see the complex data we use to determine the areas of most need in order to meet KPI3, and that the interplay between KPI3 and 4 will be challenging.
4. **Supporting Great Ideas (for decision) (WBM 24.34)**
   1. The Committee considered the application from The Samaritans, noting that this was not to what extent this was a clear development on current work. More emphasis on partnering with community-focused organisations working with potential target volunteer audiences from different backgrounds could have strengthened the application and should have been undertaken as part of the project development.
   2. The Committee REJECTED funding for ‘Samaritans Cymru’ funding request from The Samaritans due to partial alignment with the programme, and the need for earlier engagement with potential partner communities and partner organisations.
   3. The Committee considered the ‘Imagine Action’ application from The Wales Centre for International Affairs, noting that it was well considered and a good fit the programme criteria. The grassroots delivery of change is very positive and the organisation is well-placed to be able to share the knowledge and learning from this project.
   4. The Committee APPROVED funding for Welsh Centre for International Affairs.
   5. The Committee noted the status of potential future Supporting Great Ideas proposals and that it would be helpful to begin encouraging collaboration between applicants with similar ideas.

*Jess Hey joined the meeting*

1. **Helping End Homelessness Update Report (WBM 24.35)** 
   1. Wales Committee thanked the Knowledge and Learning team for their comprehensive report and noted and discussed the findings of the first annual learning report for Helping End Homelessness.
   2. The Committee found the ethical questions about involving people in the evaluation process very interesting, although the report did not seem to highlight any unique learning. John Rose noted that paying people to contribute their expertise to knowledge and learning is a growing trend and something the Fund is considering as part of its funding policy work. The Committee reflected that it is important to use a trauma-informed approach which engages people with lived experience in a responsible way.

*Jess Hey left the meeting*

1. **Annual Report from the Building Communities Trust (WBM 24.36)**

*Chris Johnes and David Dallimore from Building Communities Trust joined the meeting.*

* 1. Chris Johnes and David Dallimore presented learnings from the Building Communities Trust annual report and the Committee thanked them for their report and presentation.
  2. The Committee discussed the importance of evaluating project impact and the willingness of people and communities to be open about challenges they face. They noted that the legacy of the BCT project will be very important in highlighting the changes within communities due to the long-term nature of the programme, and its’ independence of shorter-term political timescales. DD agreed that the project has navigated many societal and political changes and the legacy of the programme will be affected by many factors. CJ noted that the evaluation method was chosen to draw out key themes.
  3. The committee discussed the development of resources by BCT and the importance of sharing learning from the programme, including longer term sustainability and navigating tensions within steering groups which are both common issues. The Committee also expressed and interest in potential collaboration with CVCs in sharing learning around where projects need additional support.

*Chris Johnes and David Dallimore from Building Communities Trust left the meeting.*

1. **Create Your Space Evaluation Summary (WBM 24.37)**

*Dylan Hughes joined the meeting.*

* 1. The Committee noted the conclusions and recommendations arising from Old Bell 3’s (OB3) evaluation report and discussed OB3’s recommendations in relation to The Fund, specifically about how long–term funded programmes should be designed in the future.
  2. The Committee was particularly interested in the perceived reduction in interest in the legacy of the programme due to the long-term duration, and discussed how people can be encouraged to remain engaged in projects. JR noted that the programme had had no formal mid-point review and this could be a point for consideration, but the project was also interrupted by COVID and was therefore subject to less structured monitoring. RR noted that regular learning from projects should be part of the new impact and evidence strategy to contribute to continual improvement.
  3. The Committee discussed the role of ‘lead organisation’. The report highlighted that place-based organisations are better placed to lead projects and contribute to longer-term sustainability because they have strong volunteer bases to draw from. The Committee noted that a small community-based organisation might ‘lead’ a project due to their volunteer base and local knowledge, however, they might not have the capacity to be the ‘lead organisation’ in a consortium. These two roles should be drawn out and distinguished in future conversations.

*Dylan Hughes left the meeting.*

1. **Supporting Great Ideas proposals for refresh (WBM 24.38)**

*Millie Welch joined the meeting.*

* 1. The Committee discussed the refresh of definitions of the aims. The freedom to fail was seen as very positive as it encourages a wider mindset on the programme. It also encourages people to share learning which results from failure as well as success. Communication with potential applicants will be important going forward to ensure applications are in line with the programmes aims and viable.
  2. Wales Committee AGREED the final recommendations for refreshing the Supporting Great Ideas (SGI) programme. These are:
     + A refresh of the definitions of the programme aims
     + An indicative upper limit of £500,000 to the grant size.
  3. Committee also noted the changes that officers will make to programme delivery following October’s discussion, namely:
     + A mandated call with a funding officer before the Expression of Interest stage
     + Published submission deadlines for applicants
     + Committee to be informed of unsuccessful applications and upcoming applications (the ‘pipeline’).

*Millie Welch left the meeting.*

1. **Sustainable Steps Green Careers additional proposal (WBM 24.39)**
   1. The Wales Committee considered the two proposals for the Sustainable Steps Green Careers programme which were:
      * Increase the programme budget to £14m.
      * Ring fence part of or increase the programme budget and explore another round of applications which is restricted to organisations working with and embedded within the ethnically minoritised communities
   2. The Committee felt it was important to understand perceived barriers to organisations led by ethnically minoritised communities and to engage with them in refining a second round should that be necessary.
2. **Wales Draft Grant Budget 2025/26 (WBM 24.40)**
   1. The Committee was asked to agree an amended budget for 24/25 and draft budget for 25/26 which will be presented to Board for agreement.
   2. The Committee AGREED to increase the budget for 24/25.
   3. The Committee AGREED the draft budget for 25/26.
   4. The Committee AGREED to increase the Sustainable Steps Green Futures budget.
3. **New Terms of Reference for Country Committees (WBM 24.41)**

*Catherine Roberts joined the meeting.*

* 1. The Wales Committee noted the revisions to the ToRs for Country Committees.
  2. The Wales Committee recommended the updated Wales Committee ToR for approval by Board.

*Catherine Roberts left the meeting.*

1. **Forward Workplan (WBM 24.42)** 
   1. Wales Committee noted the forward work plan and the change of venue for March 2025.
2. **Feedback from Corporate Meetings**

16.1 UK Board

* + - The last meeting was last week in London. The Board had a full discussion of the environmental mission. RR spoke to the Board about data and impact. England’s annual report and forward strategy was presented. The business planning for next year was also discussed.
    - A new Chair of the Board was appointed recently, who aims to attend a Wales Committee meeting in 2025.

16.2 UK Funding Committee

* Nicola Russell-Brooks will hand the committee role to KY when she leaves.

16.3 UK Funding Panel

* Nicola Russell-Brooks gave an update on the UK funding panel. They will look at applications for young people in February 25.

1. **AOB**
   1. Gwenllian Lansdowne-Davies has had her second term as Wales Committee Member approved by the Welsh Government.
   2. Victoria Winckler has had her appointment as Wales Committee Member approved by the Welsh Government.
   3. Callum Bruce-Phillips will join as a new Wales Committee Member in the new year to represent the voice of young people.
   4. The Chair thanked NRB for her service to the Wales Committee and The Fund.
   5. The Chair thanked all present for their attendance.

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