

**MINUTES OF THE WALES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020**  
**Online via Teams**

**MEMBERS:**

Adrian Webb	Wales Committee Chair
Rona Aldrich	Wales Committee Member
Sian Callaghan	Wales Committee Member
Nicola Russell-Brooks	Wales Committee Member
Helen Wilkinson	Wales Committee Member
Fadhili Maghiya	Wales Committee Member

**ATTENDEES:**

John Rose	Wales Director
Ruth Bates	Head of Communications
Andrew Owen	Head of Funding
Rob Roffe	Head of Knowledge and Learning
Awel Jones	Governance Officer (Minutes)
Cassie Robinson	Senior Head of UK portfolio (Item 2 only)
Jemma Nurse	Funding Manager (Item 5 only)
Josh Coles-Riley	Knowledge and Learning Officer (Item 6 only)
Derek Preston-Hughes	Funding Manager (Item 7 only)

**1. CHAIR'S WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair began the meeting and ensured members were clear on the process and format of the online Teams meeting. No apologies were received.

- 1.1 The Committee confirmed that the previous meeting minutes (WBM 20/14) were an accurate reflection of the previous meeting. There were no outstanding matters.
- 1.2 There were no decisions made by written procedure.
- 1.3 No declarations of interest were declared.

**2. UK portfolio: Sensemaking network**

2.1 JR introduced CR to the Committee and noted the work she has been doing on the scanning and sensing network which is looking at feedback from across the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic and what this means for our future.

2.2 CR provided a presentation to explain this work and highlighted the below points:

- The UK portfolio is now focusing on foresight as part of their work in order to think longer term, which is why the network was set up. A group of colleagues are holding interviews with existing grant holders and people in communities and meet every 3 weeks to share notes. They then use the 3 horizons framework by looking at what is happening at present, what are immediate issues moving forward and what's emerging in the longer term.

- Although the network was set up initially due to COVID-19 it will continue to exist beyond the emergency.
- The Emerging Futures Fund was set up quickly in response to COVID-19. They are short grants which will be useful for insight and learning, understand what communities are imagining and to inform future funding priorities and the Funds UK wide sector support strategy.
- CR outlined “Pockets of the Future” some filmed interviews with a selection of participants that will be published online. The work is focusing on identifying the questions we should be asking at this time rather than identifying solutions.
- CR is working with JR on our Sector Support strategy, which was developed in 2018, to re-think and refresh it following the pandemic. It will be an ongoing strategy and a continuous feedback loop between The Fund and the civil society as the wider context will keep changing. It is a strategy that needs to be adaptive.

2.3 Committee questioned how individual Committees can better interact with the UK portfolio and how they can help with this process.

2.4 JR posed a question to Committee on what networks they are aware of in Wales who are also considering foresight. Committee raised that organisation are using foresight although often use different language to describe this.

2.5 It was queried what this mean for UK Committee and Country funding portfolios and how this work will influence the development of our portfolio. JR emphasised that the work is still in quite an early stage and not necessarily providing clear answers yet.

2.6 FM highlighted the importance of considering the future of our work in Wales in the context of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WBFGA), and in the context of other recent social movements focusing on a more equitable society.

2.7 Committee discussed organisations who are involved in foresight. Committee stressed the need to be a catalyst sharing learning and seeking a more integrated approach across our partners.

### 3. Wales Portfolio Update

3.1 AO provided an update on our funding overview. Just over £5m of £9.6m of People & Places (P&P) funding has gone to COVID-19 focused applications, with the remainder being pipeline projects which we would work with flexibly to adapt where needed. However, looking at both National Lottery Awards for All and P&P together, around 70% of awards are going to COVID-19 focused projects. More recently there has been a reduction in demand for COVID-19 funding. Following a recent review by the Finance Team an additional £5.1m has been made available to the Wales budget. Further work will be undertaken to identify how this might best be used. JR emphasised the need to be mindful of cashflow and the uncertainty of future income.

3.2 The Committee passed on their thanks to all staff as they recognised how flexible they had been in challenging circumstances.

3.3 RB provided an update from our Communications work highlighting key points from our stakeholder and customer engagement, customer satisfaction and media and digital highlights.

3.4 Committee were pleased to see positive stories through the media about the impact of our funding and queried if we are getting enough stories from partners to do more of this. RB noted they were trying to capitalise more on the themes of our funding and areas that need the support, examples provided were Domestic Violence, Climate Change and Young People.

3.5 Committee queried how we are connecting to the Government's agenda on health, in particular obesity. RB noted that this focus on health can be something we can put into our messaging as we focus on environment and the International Young People's day in August. RB also highlighted the work we are doing with Sustrans cycle routes promoting active travel.

3.6 AW noted that the Wales Funders Forum is taking a more strategic and collaborative approach and emphasised the need to facilitate the development of collaborative approaches.

3.7 RR provided an update from the Knowledge & Learning team noting 4 key areas of their activity:

- Supporting programme development
- Working with UK K&L colleagues on the impact & implications of the COVID-19 pandemic to build comprehensive UK wide picture.
- Review of Regional working
- Fund Insight to the Bevan Foundation discussion piece supporting Civil Society through the Pandemic.

RR also drew Committee's attention to Welsh Government announcements on relevant themes during the pandemic including domestic violence, young people and mental health.

3.8 JR updated The Committee on issues of interest noting grants awarded from the UK Climate Action Fund, particularly the 2 welsh organisations, Welcome to our Woods and Partnership of Welsh Wildlife Trusts. JR also noted the busy time in England as they are administering the COVID-19 Emergency Fund on behalf of the UK Government, whilst in Northern Ireland The Fund is administering the COVID-19 Charities Fund on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive.

3.9 JR provided an update on internal developments and covered the recent employee engagement survey, National Lottery income, future accommodation, returning to the offices and governance updates.

3.10 JR concluded the Wales Portfolio update by noting our priorities for the coming quarter.

3.11 Committee emphasised their appreciation to staff over this period.

#### **4. Helping End Homelessness Programme Review (WBM 20/15)**

4.1 RR introduced the paper and noted that the programme had been paused due to the impact of the pandemic on the homelessness sector, and to ease the pressure on organisations on having to submit an application. In the interim period there have been significant developments including the Welsh Government announcement of £20 million to help deliver the phase 2 guidance and recommendations from the Housing Action Group. The rapid review of the programme will review these in order to ensure no duplication or additionality issues.

4.2 RR invited Committee to consider questions 8.1 in the paper and drew their attention to paragraph 4.4 of the paper which invited the Committee to consider the review either by correspondence or to attend an additional 'virtual' meeting in September.

4.3 There was a discussion among Committee and the below key points were highlighted:

- Ensuring that the approach we take engages Local Authorities and Social Housing providers.
- It is essential that our funded work listens to the voice of people with lived experience, and tackles prejudice and stigma.
- The need to consider the future and the impact of COVID-19 on poverty and the potential rise in homelessness due to this, whilst also ensuring we remain mindful of the potential impact of a second wave of COVID-19.
- A strong emphasis on prevention owing to the challenges of hidden homelessness.

## **5. Dormant Accounts Scheme: Climate Change (WBM 20/16)**

5.1 JN introduced the paper and provided the context, highlighting the climate emergency and the need to take action. JN drew Committee's attention to section 12 which highlights the key areas for consideration and invited Committee to consider the questions in section 13.

5.2 JR recognised that this is a big agenda and reminded Committee that this is very much in the interim position and therefore it is for Committee's initial response only.

5.3 Committee stressed the opportunity COVID-19 presented in terms of changing ways of working and indicated need to help the third sector to quantify and demonstrate their impact in any approach we take.

5.4 Committee drew attention to point 12.7 in the papers which notes our requirement to support behaviour change and the importance of highlighting co-benefits and education to help people understand how they can take action.

5.5 Committee queried whether we are considering renewable energy as a potential funding area noting the work in North Wales funded through People and Places.

5.6 AW concluded the discussion by noting the need to take a broad view, not limited only to energy efficiency and green energy production, but to consider what is achievable by communities and individuals in a way that engages them as active partners rather than passive recipients.

## **6. Young People programme update (WBM 20/17)**

6.1 JCR provided an overview of the paper noting that it's a recap/ summary of the strategy day in June and an opportunity for Committee to provide further reflections. JCR elaborated on the 5 key issues that emerged so far:

- Mental Health
- Inequality and racial disparity
- Access to space both physical and online
- Employment
- Digital inclusion and access

6.2 Committee raised the below points:

- It is important not to forget the views of a younger age range to help young people's resilience.
- It would be beneficial to have a discussion on Young People's contribution to society and promote a positive perception of this.
- Expand the point on mental health to include wellbeing with links to healthy eating and exercise.

6.3 RB pointed out that we plan to start introducing the 11 members of the advisory panel on social media and share their stories of the positive contributions they've made to society on those platforms.

6.4 AW concluded the conversation and highlighted the big impact that a potential recession will have on young people and the need to consider how any funding programme would work in that context.

## **7. Programme Deep Dive: People & Places**

7.1 DPH provided a thorough presentation of the People & Places programme, including the background from its launch in 2005 and changes made to the programme to date. The following information was covered in the presentation:

- Details of the current version of the programme (People & Places 3) which re-launched in 2017 and our conversational approach.
- Details of the process of applying to both medium and large grants
- Application statistics
- The programme's quick response to COVID-19
- Progress of the programme
- Customer satisfaction
- Customer support
- Current challenges

7.2 Committee thanked Derek and the team for their work.

7.3 Committee highlighted the need to think about language when considering framing any future changes to the programme so that our customers have a better understanding of our terminology. DPH noted the need to consult with our new customer base that haven't applied for funding previously.

## **8. Forward work plan (WBM 20/18)**

8.1 Committee noted the contents of the forward work plan with no comments.

## **9. Feedback from Corporate Meetings**

9.1 AW noted that the Annual Report and Accounts were discussed at the previous Audit & Risk Committee meeting.

9.2 AW provided 2 updates from the UK Board meeting:

- A need to improve our performance in terms of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in particular to consider how we improve our reach into BAME communities to ensure we really are “for everyone”.
- The engagement of young people who are now working alongside England Committee and one of whom will shortly shadow the Board.

9.3 JR ensured Committee that working with BAME communities is a key priority area for the Fund in Wales as reflected in our own Wales plan and that we are taking steps to improve success rates from this sector in Wales as well as throughout the UK.

9.4 Other than the awards made under Climate Action Fund and highlighted earlier, there was nothing specific to raise from the UK Funding Committee.

## **10. AOB**

10. 1 As the meeting had overrun Committee raised the need to look at timings of future meetings when there are multiple presentations.

10.2 The date of the next Committee meeting was confirmed as the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020. JR reminded Committee that we will contact them ahead of this date for a further review of the Helping End Homelessness programme. Committee confirmed they were happy to do this by correspondence, however a further virtual meeting would be beneficial if a further discussion is needed.