

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and Education Committee

Gwaith Ieuenctid – gwaith dilynol | Youth Work – Follow up

YW(2) 01

Ymateb gan: Dr Howard Williamson, Prifysgol De Cymru

Response from: Dr Howard Williamson, University of South Wales

### **Committee Recommendation 1:**

The Minister should review the National Strategy and refresh the statutory guidance in consultation with stakeholders and young people. A detailed action plan for implementation, including timescales, must be developed alongside a new strategy.

### **Accepted by Welsh Government**

### **Welsh Government Response**

#### **We have:**

- Commissioned Wrexham Glyndwr University, Cardiff Metropolitan University, and Susanne Rauprich OBE, to review the impact of the National Youth Work Strategy. A final report has been received and is being prepared for publication. This work was informed by stakeholders and young people.
- Commissioned Margaret Jervis, MBE DL, to review Extending Entitlement. A final report has been submitted and is being prepared for publication. This work was informed by stakeholders and young people.
- Commissioned the Youth Work Reference Group (YWRG), who represent the youth work sector, providing advice to Welsh Government, to review Margaret's recommendations and propose a way forward.

#### **We will:**

- Immediately begin development of a new, aspirational Youth Work Strategy.
- Ensure a long term vision is built into the strategy, with detailed annual planning, self-evaluation, and review.
- Co-construct the strategy with young people and stakeholders at all levels in the system.
- Publish Margaret's Review, the 'Review of the Impact of the Youth Work Strategy', and associated reviews of grant funding Embed lessons learned, including from the Committee's Inquiry, alongside wider evidence in Wales, the UK and beyond.
- Firmly ground our approaches in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Wellbeing for Future Generations Act.
- Re-establish a Youth Work Offer/Charter at the centre of the new strategy.
- Include consideration of 'sufficiency of provision', and the role of other bodies such as service providers, regulators, local authorities, and Welsh Government in ensuring rigorous accountability.
- Develop our approaches in the context and ethos of Extending Entitlement, with a view toward considering the status of existing statutory guidance, once the strategic approach for securing youth work has been developed in partnership with stakeholders.
- Establish an Interim Youth Work Board to support the development of the strategy,

evaluate approaches for deploying resources, represent the voice of the sector, and provide advice to Welsh Government.

- Publish a timeline setting out how/when this will be delivered.

### **Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 1:**

**There are certainly moves, since the Committee's recommendations, to reflect on and review the current National Youth Work Strategy in Wales and, indeed, Extending Entitlement which – at least rhetorically – remains the philosophical anchor for youth policy in Wales.**

**The review/evaluation of the National Strategy needs to be treated with some care and caution. Some interpretations are open to very different alternatives and some assertions are made on flawed historical memory. Nevertheless, the review is to be welcomed and does provide some foundation for moving forward with a future strategy.**

**The review of Extending Entitlement is also to be welcome, though it needs to be recognised that it is largely a consideration of youth work (and the relationships between youth work and youth support work) whereas Extending Entitlement was painted on a much wider canvas, to which youth work (NOT youth support work in the first instance) was anticipated to make a significant contribution. Youth support work entered Welsh youth policy parlance through the Learning and Skills Act – and has muddied the waters ever since.**

**The Youth Work Reference Group (of which I am a member, with observer status) both contributed the Margaret Jervis' review of Extending Entitlement (largely supporting the Committee's concerns about the decline in open-access youth work) and deliberated on its findings. This was, arguably the start of the thinking that might underpin a new youth work strategy for Wales.**

**I have also read the list of 'promises' made in the Welsh Government response to the Committee in relation to this recommendation. Though the UK is leaving the European Union and therefore the next EU youth strategy (currently in early formation) may have less relevance to Wales, the UK is not leaving the Council of Europe which – sometimes through its Youth Partnership with the EU – has had a strong focus on youth work for the past ten years. There have been seminars and publications on the history of youth work in Europe (six volumes to date, since 2009, with a seventh being planned), professional Declarations, a political Recommendation (endorsed by the Committee of Ministers on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017), and a current high level task force on Europe (of which I am a member). The Council of Europe is currently embarking on shaping a ten-year youth strategy 2020-2030. I have reported much of this, in headline form, to the Youth Work Reference Group and find it disappointing that no mention is made of the European context between the UNCRC and the Welsh Government's Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.**

**I welcome the commitment to re-establish the Youth Work Offer/Charter as a centrepiece of any new strategy, and also welcome the promise of robust sufficiency assessments, though – like 'adequacy' before it, in legislation these are weasel terms with considerable wriggle room that, one way or another, needs to be restricted if a reasonable and suitably diverse offer of youth work is to be secured.**

**As someone who was closely involved in the thinking behind and writing of Extending Entitlement, I passionately welcome Welsh Government's commitment to**

working within its 'context and ethos', though we need to remember and re-assert that the subtitle was 'Supporting young people in Wales' because the 'package of entitlement (opportunities and experiences' stretched much more widely than just those things that could be delivered or supported by youth work. EE had elements that were nothing to do with youth work.

I also welcome the intention to establish an Interim Youth Work Board to support the development of the strategy and to publish a timeline for its implementation and review.-

**Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee's report:**

**No**

**Committee Recommendation 2:**

The Minister should hold urgent discussions with the Ministerial Youth Work Reference Group to address the concerns from within the sector about a lack of engagement from Welsh Government.

**Accepted by Welsh Government**

**Welsh Government Response**

**We have:**

- Held urgent discussions at Ministerial level with the Youth Work Reference Group.
- Refreshed the remit of the group and begun extending their membership.
- Recognised the key role they play in supporting both the sector and Welsh Government in delivering and implementing policy.
- Tasked them with considering the draft report produced by Margaret Jervis, MBE DL.
- Drawn on their expertise and knowledge to inform the development of the new curriculum for Wales.
- Received positive feedback from the Youth Work Reference Group on this new approach.

**We will:**

- Continue to use the Youth Work Reference Group strategically, with regular engagement from Welsh Government to inform developing approaches.
- Commission them to begin work in supporting Welsh Government to develop a new Youth Work Strategy for Wales.
- Ensure alignment with the proposed Interim Youth Work Board, both in its development and when operational.

**Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 2:**

I am not sure quite where and when 'urgent discussions at Ministerial level with the Youth Work Reference Group' have taken place. The previous Minister appeared once, briefly, at a YWRG meeting. There has been no contact with the new Minister (though of course she will be speaking at the National Youth Work conference next Wednesday – 21<sup>st</sup> March).

The remit of the YWRG has been refreshed and its membership suitably extended to involve a representative of the Education Workforce Council and the Training Agencies Group (TAG). The conduct of the work of the YWRG has improved since a

**new team of Welsh Government officials took over responsibility for the youth engagement agenda.**

**I am glad that the role of the YWRG is 'recognised'. The membership of the YWRG embodies vast knowledge and experience of youth work and beyond. This was poorly recognised or utilised for quite some time. I hope that the 'two-way street' now established will continue.**

**Clearly, when the proposed Interim Youth Work Board is in place, the YWRG may no be needed but some alignment and parallel existence may be necessary for a time. Much depends on the ToR of the Board, which initially was conceived as a Youth Support Services Board. If its ToR embraces that direction, the YWRG - as the repository of knowledge and advocacy for YOUTH WORK in Wales - will need to be sustained for a longer time.**

**Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee's report:**

**No**

### **Committee Recommendation 3:**

**There should be a clear and meaningful route for young people to be equal partners in developing youth services in Wales. This should be developed by the Minister, stakeholders and young people.**

**Accepted by Welsh Government**

### **Welsh Government Response**

#### **We have:**

- Ensured young people were engaged with and consulted as part of the 'Review of the Impact of the Youth Work Strategy'.
- Ensured young people were engaged with and consulted as part of Margaret Jervis' review of Extending Entitlement.
- Commissioned Children in Wales to undertake a focused piece of work with young people to inform Margaret's work.
- Undertaken discussions with the Youth Work Reference Group to explore how young people can inform the development of a new, aspirational Youth Work Strategy for Wales.

#### **We will:**

- Involve young people in the co-construction of the new Youth Work Strategy for Wales.
- Consider and articulate the role they will play in the design, delivery and monitoring of youth services within the new Strategy.
- Develop an engagement plan, in partnership with young people and stakeholders, to ensure this recommendation continues to be fully met going forward.

### **Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 3:**

**This is easy rhetoric but a critical commitment (the 'why' question is now incontrovertible), but everything hinges on which young people, when and how young people, are engaged as 'meaningful partners' in developing youth services in Wales. Throughout the world, debates about the form and focus of youth**

participation are a standing item of policy discussion. Anne Crowley (our own authority on the matter, with a global reputation) and Dan Moxon have just published a report for the Council of Europe on New and Innovative Forms of Youth Participation. There are many approaches that might be adopted. Wales already has models on which to draw considerable experience – Llais Ifanc, Funky Dragon, youth forums, youth councils and more.

Young people were initially represented on the YWRG but seem to have disappeared without a trace. I was not happy with the way they were engaged at the time they did appear and debated and disputed this with officials. There are always pros and cons in the use of different styles of ‘partnership’ with young people, and now there is a wealth of literature and history about this. A proper dialogue across all stakeholders in the youth sector is needed and the proof of the pudding as to whether subsequent action on this front provides a ‘clear and meaningful route’ will be.....

I was pleased to see that young people played their part in Margaret Jervis’ review.

I worry that the Welsh Government response is long on jargon. Co-construction is just a new buzzword (though ‘co-management’ has been a reality within the Council of Europe’s Joint Council on Youth for almost two decades now). Practical models need careful exploration to consider what is fit for purpose within the Welsh Government’s youth policy context as well as its wider commitments to children and youth people rights and entitlements.

**Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee’s report:**

No

#### **Committee Recommendation 4:**

The Minister should introduce a national model for Youth Work, encompassing statutory and voluntary provision. The Minister should report to this Committee on progress within 6 months of the publication of this report.

**Accepted by Welsh Government**

#### **Welsh Government Response**

##### **We have:**

- Commissioned Margaret Jervis to undertake a review of Extending Entitlement, which included giving consideration to a ‘national model’ encompassing statutory and voluntary provision.
- Commissioned a Review of the Impact of the National Youth Work Strategy which makes recommendations on a way forward.
- Reflected on these findings, which propose potential ‘models’ for delivery in the future.

##### **We will:**

- Immediately begin development of a new, aspirational Youth Work Strategy, including consideration of an appropriate delivery model.
- Appoint an Interim Youth Work Board, whose remit will include supporting the development and implementation of a new strategy, and providing advice on appropriate delivery mechanisms.

- Expand the remit and membership of the Youth Work Reference Group, extending an invitation to strategic, local authority representatives, ensuring the new strategy balances aspirations and ability to deliver in the current context.
- Ensure the views of both statutory and voluntary provision are heard as part of its development.

#### **Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 4:**

I am not sure that enough discussion has taken place around the introduction of a 'national model' of youth work. There is not yet any real clarity about what a youth work offer should really entail (in terms of breadth, depth, scale and sufficiency). Exactly who delivers this is far less important – certainly in the eyes of young people whom I have never known to ask which funding stream pays for their provision or experiences. The important issue is that it is delivered, with the right spirit as well as content. This will inevitably require partnership and balance between local authorities, voluntary youth organisations and perhaps the private sector. There could, therefore, be a range of models that could produce the same outputs, outcomes and impact for young people. The important point here is to maintain the strength of the different components that will need to contribute to the mosaic that constitutes the model of youth work delivery – notably the voluntary sector and its umbrella body (CWVYS) but also interventions such as youth information, where the European network (ERYICA) has unchallenged experience and expertise over more than 30 years.

I found the Response rather bland and certainly repetitive of comments in previous sectors. Previous debate about a national model reflected on the time when Wales did have a national agency (the Wales Youth Agency) that endeavoured to develop and promote national standards for key elements of youth work (qualification, staff training, information, youth information, youth participation, voluntary sector, European exchanges); on Youthlink Scotland, that has continued to advocate successfully across the Scottish Government and within the voluntary sector for youth work practice in its considerable diversity; and, indeed, on some other models, such as Alliansi in Finland, though this is currently undergoing quite dramatic reorganisation as youth work in Finland is being revised.

#### **Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee's report:**

None

#### **Committee Recommendation 5:**

The Minister should report back to the Committee within 6 months of the publication of this report on how he intends to assess the extent to which his commitment to universal, open access provision, in English and Welsh, is being delivered.

**Accepted in Principle by Welsh Government**

#### **Welsh Government Response**

**We have:**

- Reported back to the Committee and acknowledged that the youth work landscape is changing in the context of a challenging financial climate.
- Accepted the role that 'Sufficiency Assessments' could play in assessing the extent to which universal, open access provision, in English and Welsh, is being delivered.

- Begun exploring the role that ‘Sufficiency Assessments’ will play going forward.

**We will:**

- Incorporate the notion of ‘sufficiency of provision’ and its assessment into the new Youth Work Strategy for Wales.
- Restate our commitment to the role youth work can play in supporting young people to use and develop their Welsh language skills.
- Engage with young people in the development of the new strategy to develop a current understanding of their needs in relation to the type of youth services they wish to access, in the language of their choice.

**Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 5:**

**This issue of universal, open access provision, in English and Welsh, lay at the heart of concern across the youth work field in Wales and prompted the Committee’s inquiry.**

**Yes, the youth work landscape is changing, as Welsh Government notes. But the ‘challenging financial climate’ cannot wholly be blamed for the trend and shift towards more targeted provision. Indeed, political decisions about what kinds of youth work to sustain could, theoretically at least, have gone the other way.**

**This should not be a battle between open/universal and closed/targeted youth work. Both have their place, as Margaret Jervis’ review of Extending Entitlement conveys. But it betrays the whole idea of youth work provision if some locales now have only targeted youth work provision. Indeed, this also flies in the face of old and new evidence. Long ago, targeted youth work around young offenders worked best if knowledge and contact was developed through open access provision. More recently, Vanessa Rogers report on schools’ perspectives on youth work provision emphasised the value of youth workers’ knowledge because of what they knew in the community. Without looser, community-based youth work provision, this would quickly evaporate.**

**So the point is about ensuring an appropriate balance. As the Council of Europe’s work on youth work points out, all youth work shares a similar agenda in BOTH providing *spaces* for young people to be themselves and live their lives now AND building *bridges* for young people to move to the next steps in their lives. There is, of course, a tension here, but good open youth work provides space for all young people who want to be there as well as supporting young people who need it to take the next steps with more competence and confidence – including back into education, employment or training, or through living more healthy lifestyles, and other things. There is strong research evidence about this – youth work supports the personal change that is a pre-requisite for subsequent positional change.**

**Of course, open access provision may no longer need to be bricks and mortar. New technologies may permit other forms of reach and relevance, though still through doing youth work. Finland and Estonia (and Slovakia and Bulgaria) have been pioneering ‘smart youth work’ or ‘on-line’ youth work that is open to all. So there should not be an unequivocal and perhaps naïve, even nostalgic, desire to return to open youth clubs (such as the one I ran for 25 years), though this might remain part of the package to be balanced, with other forms of youth work, in a local youth work offer.**

**Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee's report:**

**None**

**Committee Recommendation 6:**

Within 6 months of the publication of this report, the Minister should commission an exercise to map voluntary Youth Work provision across Wales. The exercise should be refreshed periodically.

**Accepted in Principle by Welsh Government**

**Welsh Government Response**

**We have:**

- Reflected on the mapping of voluntary youth work provision undertaken by CWVYS (2015) in relation to the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, and Cordis Bright (2016).
- Reported back to Committee that a national mapping exercise may not be appropriate given the rapidly changing context on the ground as services change and adapt.
- Stated our commitment to the concept of 'sufficiency of provision' and its assessment, in planning, delivering, and monitoring youth services.

**We will:**

- Incorporate the notion of 'sufficiency of provision' and its assessment into the new Youth Work Strategy for Wales. To ensure agility in an evolving landscape, any assessment should give consideration to both statutory and voluntary provision at a local, rather than national level.

**Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 6:**

**I concur with the Welsh Government response. I think the issue is a different one from undertaking a mapping exercise of voluntary *sector* youth work provision across Wales (the terminology should not be voluntary youth work provision – that exists, too, within statutory youth work provision!).**

**It was once said that an investment of about £10m a year levered about £100m of voluntary commitment to youth work. This included youth work delivered by the voluntary sector, which enlists a greater proportion of volunteers than the maintained sector.**

**Yes, there is an evolving landscape and much depends on what is required or demanded of youth work. That leads on to the training and qualifications needed of those making the provision – while we want all youth work to be professional, there is a *professionalised* segment of the youth service that has greater responsibilities for staffing the bridge-building that youth work can deliver (see above) – school inclusion, health promotion, crime prevention, vocational guidance, and more – while other parts of the youth service, located substantially within the voluntary sector are more focused on the 'space providing' elements of youth work that give more priority to personal development and experiential learning, albeit from different value bases and programming positions (contrast the Cadets, the Scouts, the Urdd or the Young Farmers).**



**The question for me is what can, or could, the voluntary sector contribute to the youth work offer in different parts of Wales, given suitable infrastructure. What is its current capacity and what needs to be improved (through resources, training, information or something else) for it to provide a more value-added contribution?**

**Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee's report:**

**No**

**Committee Recommendation 7:**

The Minister should ensure that Youth Work Sufficiency Assessments are undertaken by local authorities as part of their population needs assessments and report back to the Committee on progress within 6 months of the publication of this report.

**Accepted in Principle by Welsh Government**

**Welsh Government Response**

**We have:**

- Accepted the potential role of 'Sufficiency Assessments' in the planning, delivery and monitoring of youth service provision.
- Set up a working group in November 2017 to ascertain how these might work in Wales, learning from approaches taken forward in the Play sector.
- Determined that there is a requirement for an assessment to ensure services being provided within a local authority area are needed, of the required quality, and delivered by the most relevant organisation.
- Explored what an assessment might look like and concluded that, in the absence of a new, long term Youth Work Strategy and vision, that takes us beyond 2018, it is not possible to finalise an approach for immediate implementation.

**We will:**

- Incorporate the notion of 'sufficiency of provision' and its assessment into the new Youth Work Strategy for Wales.
- Co-construct its design in partnership with young people and stakeholders.
- Secure agreement across the sector to the use of Sufficiency Assessments in the planning, delivery, and monitoring of youth service provision as part of the new strategy.

**Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 7:**

**Sufficiency, like adequacy, may end up being in the eye of the beholder (see Lord Justice Pill's judgement on adequacy for youth work in Warwickshire 1992).**

**For me, the discussion is a different one that makes 'sufficiency', at least in the first instance, a more simple concept. If we accept that young people have some entitlement to a certain amount of non-formal, out-of-school or beyond the formal curriculum, learning, then we need to have a benchmark for resourcing it. Once we know the resource level, then the balance of provision at the local level – for young people to access 'openly' or for youth work to target some young people specifically – can be determined. That resource was once set (in England and Wales) at 2% of the overall education budget. Other resources from elsewhere might be leveraged on top of that, but that level of resourcing was adequacy – sufficiency?**

**One model that was once proposed was that if youth work ended up ‘reaching’ around one-third of young people aged 13-19 and provided them with an average of 100 hours of ‘non-formal’ education a year at the hourly cost of a school classroom hour, that was ‘sufficient’. Wales, of course, views youth work offers as extending to age 25, so the formula might be a bit different. But the formula mentioned above ended up indicating, at the time, a resource level of 2% of the education budget for England and Wales.**

**Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee’s report:**

**No**

**Committee Recommendation 8:**

The Minister should develop an accountability framework for local authorities’ use of funds for Youth Work via the revenue support grant. The framework should include sanctions if outcomes are not delivered.

**Accepted in Principle by Welsh Government**

**Welsh Government Response**

**We have:**

- Confirmed that the Revenue Support Grant is an un-hypothecated funding stream and can be spent at local authorities’ discretion according to their locally identified needs and priorities.
- Confirmed that it is not currently possible to identify how much is spent on youth work, due to the pooling of budgets across services at a local level, nor to prescribe an amount.
- Reviewed our existing grant funding streams to consider how they might better support the desired outcomes of youth work and youth support services.
- Begun implementing changes to grant funding mechanisms, ensuring a greater focus on impact, rather than output.
- Explored an outcomes framework for youth work in the context of the current strategy.

**We will:**

- Publish the reviews of the Youth Work Grants.
- Continue to learn from them by keeping them under regular review.
- Establish an Interim Youth Work Board to support the development of a new Youth Work Strategy, and advise on approaches for deploying resources appropriately, including any unintended consequences.
- Secure agreement across the sector to the use of ‘Sufficiency Assessments’ in the planning, delivery, and monitoring of youth service provision as part of a new strategy. This will include consideration of their role in a new accountability framework for youth services across local authority and voluntary provision.

**Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 8:**

**The response to this Recommendation reiterates many points that have already been made.**

**I agree with Welsh Government about the need to review existing grant funding streams to consider how they might better support the desired outcomes of youth**

**work and youth support services.**

**I think two issues here merit careful attention. One is that there should not be an over-obsession with outcomes. Youth work is as much about input. One reason for the scepticism that often prevails amongst politicians and the wider public about youth work is that it is often rather poor quality (there are many reasons for this, around employment conditions, training, poor professional practice – and they loop together). Poor interventions change very little in young people’s lives. Youth work is a complex practice that requires a level of professionalism if it is to have a positive effect. Youth work needs high quality engagement with young people. It may be hard to predict what that engagement (those conversations, activities and experiences that are the life-blood of youth work) will produce, either short-term or long-term, but good quality opportunities rarely produce bad outcomes, even if we don’t quite know when and where the good outcomes eventually kick in, let alone to whom these can be ‘scientifically’ attributed. Bad opportunities almost certain produce bad outcomes.**

**The other is the balance that needs to be struck between reactive funding procedures, relying on applications, and more proactive approaches, where invitations are provided to plug gaps or broaden the range of choices in particular locales. The latter has often been limited in scope and reach, resulting in some young people in Wales having a poverty and paucity of opportunity compared to other young people in places where there is a luxury of youth work options on their doorstep.**

**More concretely, I find it deplorable that, from the evidence I have seen, so many local authorities in Wales underspend on the levels that are indicative for youth work (and within that, perhaps, we know little about how much is further ‘distorted’ as youth support work that may be a pale shadow of recognisable youth work.**

**Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee’s report:**

**No**

**Committee Recommendation 9:**

The Minister should explore the potential continuation of Erasmus+ funding, should the UK Government decide not to do so.

**Accepted in Principle by Welsh Government**

**Welsh Government Response**

**We have:**

- Confirmed our commitment towards a credible, evidenced based approach towards withdrawal from the EU.

**We will:**

- Continue to advocate for an approach that places Wales’ priorities centre stage, while responding to the UK’s priorities as a whole.
- Continue dialogue with UK Government counterparts, addressing the role of Erasmus+ funding in the UK context.

**Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 9:**

The Welsh Government response is vapid in the extreme, possibly because officials have little knowledge or understanding of Erasmus + (Youth in Action). I add 'Youth in Action' because that is the YOUTH, rather than the schools or universities' segment of Erasmus +. In the last EU seven-year funding round, Erasmus+ Youth in Action funds were increased by 40% when compared to the previous Youth in Action programme. President Juncker of the EU has committed to an even greater increase for youth work-related activities in the next seven-year cycle of funding, on top of his commitments to the European Solidarity Corps and the European Voluntary Service programme (though the latter will probably be subsumed within the former).

Wales fought hard at the beginning of these EU youth programmes (late 1980s) to ensure it had its proportion of participation and experience. There needs to be a more robust engagement in dialogue about the future; it is not inconceivable that some distinctive arrangements might be struck, but I would not rely on the National Agency for EU youth programmes (ECORYS, in Birmingham) to argue the corner for Wales.

I simply do not know what a "commitment towards a credible, evidenced (sic) based approach toward withdrawal from the EU" means. What I have witnessed so far, across the UK, is inaction, inertia and an Ostrich-like lack of dialogue, as if the issue will go away. If it does, young people in Wales will be significant losers in terms of opportunities to be involved in transnational partnerships and exchanges.

**Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee's report:**

No

#### **Committee Recommendation 10:**

The Minister should ensure that the statutory and voluntary Youth Work sector play a central role in the process of curriculum reform.

**Accepted by Welsh Government**

#### **Welsh Government Response**

**We have:**

- Confirmed statutory and voluntary representation on the Education Reform Strategic Stakeholder Group.
- Engaged the Youth Work Reference Group (with representatives from both statutory and voluntary sectors) with the process of Curriculum Reform.

**We will:**

- Continue to ensure appropriate mechanisms for ensuring the statutory and voluntary youth work sector play a central role in the process of curriculum reform.
- Consider and articulate the links and alignment between formal education and youth work in the new Youth Work Strategy for Wales.

#### **Stakeholder Response to Recommendation 10:**

**Has the Welsh Government "engaged the Youth Work Reference Group (with representatives from both statutory and voluntary sectors) with the process of Curriculum Report". Tell me how and when.**

**The statutory and voluntary youth work sectors, though constituting THE youth**

service, have different agendas and circumstances. I cannot go into all the distinctions here but different opinions about role, collaboration, training and provision have often prevailed.

Alignment therefore needs to take multiple forms, not just between formal education and youth work, however much this is important. People love to draw fault lines between these two contexts of learning but it is often a false divide – schools now make a lot of use of dialogue and experiential learning; youth work has become more targeted and preoccupied with accredited outcomes. So there is a great deal of overlap. The real challenge is to identify what fits where in a young person's 'learning package'. Extending Entitlement was quite clear that there was a direct and indirect role for youth work in the provision of a number of the 'entitlements', but no place at all for youth work in some of them.

Any 'youth work' strategy has to work out its relationship with ever widening circles of young people's relationships with the wider frame of their lives and with wider dimensions of public policy directed towards young people – youth support services, schooling, communities and family life; formal education, healthy lifestyles and well-being; youth crime prevention and rehabilitation, and so forth.

Any other relevant issues arising since the publication of the Committee's report:

No