

Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2023 4:16 PM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Thanks again all.

I've run this by the MSJCW's Spad for a view and he's content with the below which I'll circulate for Ministerial clearance shortly.

"We are disappointed to hear of the closure of Chwarae Teg and would like to pay tribute to its work over many years. The charity has touched the lives of women across Wales, given them a voice and provided the Welsh Government with the insight and evidence necessary to make strides to deliver real change.

"Sadly, this is an example of how UK Government policies impact on organisations in Wales. As a direct result of Westminster's approach to the Shared Prosperity Fund, the entire allocation to Wales is £1.1 billion less compared to EU structural and rural funds, which has only been exacerbated by UK Government delays and chaotic implementation, putting local authorities under huge pressure and damaging key sectors of our economy."

Notes

- Entire Shared Prosperity Fund to Wales: £585m
- The Welsh Government and the Senedd is being bypassed on a plainly devolved matter, with universities, colleges, the third sector and businesses also shut out from directly accessing funding
- Chwarae Teg's successful EU-funded Agile Nation 2 project helped over 4,000 women and over 700 businesses, making a positive contribution to improving the position of women in the Welsh workforce
- Chwarae Teg are in discussions with Working Wales so that staff can access redundancy support packages from ReAct+

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 4:37 PM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

We are happy with any revisions. The Lines we supplied were intended:

- a) to be consistent with the FM's narrative on funding (which you are better placed to comment on than me, so do feel free to tweak!); and
- b) to deflect away from any perception that WG could be *to blame* for CT's demise, or has in some way *let them* go under.

For context, in the run up to this we were supportive of their transition towards a business model that was less reliant on public funds and suggested ways in which they could increase their financial sustainability. We continue to have a very good

relationship with them and have been particularly supportive over the last few weeks in exploring any way in which they as an organisation or their activity and the benefits they deliver could continue.

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 4:31 PM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Sorry, just added some more in green, as we don't want to give any indication that LAs are to blame for the delays and delivery of this programme, many thanks

A Welsh Government spokesperson said: "We're disappointed to hear of the closure of Chwarae Teg and would like to thank the charity and all employees, past and present, for championing the importance of gender equality for the last thirty years.

"The charity has touched the lives of women across Wales, given them a voice and provided the Welsh Government with the insight and evidence necessary to make strides to deliver real change.

"Sadly, this is an example of how UK Government policies directly impact on organisations in Wales. As a direct result of Westminster's approach to the Shared Prosperity Fund, the entire allocation to Wales is £1.1 billion less compared to EU structural and rural funds, which has only been exacerbated by UK Government delays and chaotic implementation, putting local authorities under huge pressure and damaging key sectors of our economy."

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 4:00 PM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Thanks [Welsh Government Official]. Amended below.

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 3:45 PM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

[Welsh Government Official] copied me in. Just a slight note of caution about the SPF reference, as [Welsh Government Official] mentions they need to repay some EU funds so some may corrupt that to say that structural funds is 'part of the problem'. Perhaps a focus on the delay in SPF being available, as well as the quantum, may help, ie they may have been in a better position to manage their liabilities.

On the positives, a line below on what were successful EU funded employability projects ([Welsh Government Official] mentions the positive evaluation already):

- Chwarae Teg's successful EU-funded Agile Nation 2 project helped over 4,000 women and over 700 businesses, making a positive contribution to improving the position of women in the Welsh workforce.

Cofion / Regards

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 3:21 PM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Thanks [Welsh Government Official] – good to praise them further if we can.

I'd assume their release will lay out the detail of how their delivery has impacted on women so I've tried to keep things concise and added a line below in red.

[Welsh Government Official], your change is also reflected in this version – many thanks.

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 2:44 PM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Hi,

I take it you have had sight of the briefing I did for MSPCW today which contains the most up to date info, attached just in case.

Thanks for drafting the statement. I think we could do with beefing up the bit in red because they do more than provide insights. They have done a lot of direct delivery too, for instant an independent evaluation of their most recent ESF project identified that they have increased the earnings of 3000 women, and with a value of £6million. That is a lot of people who have felt a direct, tangible impact from the organisation.

The MSPCW's briefing doesn't go in to that (trying to keep it brief)!

I would say their impact has been to:

- Champion the importance of the gender equality mission
- Give voice to women and advocate for them
- Provide insight and build the evidence base that has supported WG to make strides to deliver real change for women in Wales
- And a whole range of activities and programmes that have touched the lives of women across Wales, from exposing young girls to the wealth of career opportunities open to them, to training and mentorship for women to progress and rise to the top of their professions.

Maybe you can craft something from that!

In the meantime I can do some digging to get some measurable outcomes if that is helpful.

All the best,

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 1:38 PM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Hi all,

I'd be keen to have a media response ready for when this story breaks – just in case anything happens out of hours.

I've drafted the below based on the suggested lines to take and would be grateful for any comments before asking Ministers to clear.

A Welsh Government spokesperson said: "We're disappointed to hear of the closure of Chwarae Teg and would like to thank the charity and all employees, past and present, for championing the importance of gender equality for the last thirty years.

"The charity has touched the lives of women across Wales, given them a voice and provided the Welsh Government with the insight and evidence necessary to make strides to deliver real change.

"Sadly, this is an example of how UK Government policies directly impact on organisations in Wales. As a direct result of Westminster's approach to the Shared Prosperity Fund, the entire allocation to Wales is £1.1 billion less compared to EU structural and rural funds, which has only been exacerbated by a series of delays since the fund was first announced."

Notes

- Entire Shared Prosperity Fund to Wales: £585m
- The Welsh Government and the Senedd is being bypassed on a plainly devolved matter, with universities, colleges, the third sector and businesses also shut out from directly accessing funding
- Chwarae Teg's successful EU-funded Agile Nation 2 project helped over 4,000 women and over 700 businesses, making a positive contribution to improving the position of women in the Welsh workforce
- Chwarae Teg are in discussions with Working Wales so that staff made can access redundancy support packages from ReAct+

Many thanks

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 11:22 AM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

sorry, [Welsh Government Official] is off, cc'ing [Welsh Government Official] .

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 11:00 AM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Thank you, will do

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 10:58 AM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Hello

I think it would be useful for lines to be sent to comms colleagues as well, cc'd.
Diolch

Hapus i gyfarthrebu yn Saesneg neu Cymraeg.

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 10:42 AM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Thank you for the update, that is helpful.

No, CT have not issued a press notice yet. They were waiting for the Board to formally take the decision to close the organisation, which they did on Friday afternoon.

I have asked when they plan to issue a press note so that we can be prepared to respond. Our comms team have been made aware.

Update 18/09/23:

On Friday trustees of Chwarae Teg voted unanimously to request that the Executive Team commence the total controlled closure of Chwarae Teg and prepare for the dissolution of the charity on October 20th as discussed.

This week CT are progressing conversations with WCVA and local Shared Prosperity Fund teams in NPT, Swansea, Carmarthen, Vale of Glamorgan, Pembrokeshire and Blaenau Gwent to discuss novation of contracts for agreed SPF projects to December 2024.

The CE of CT has approached WEN Wales new Director to discuss potential novation of AOP activity (subject to WG approval) but has not had a response.

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 10:06 AM

Subject: RE: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

I believe the DM is minded to follow the advice and MSJCW is in agreement. The FM has also been alerted but don't know if he had a view.

I don't think there has been any public statement on this yet, unless there is something I haven't seen?

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 10:01 AM

Subject: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg - MSPCW attending ESJ today

Hi,

Hope you had a nice weekend.

MSJCW will be attending ESJ Committee today to speak about VAWDASV and I have been asked to send some lines on Chwarae Teg in case it comes up. I'll copy you in.

Did the DM get a chance to speak to the FM, and other Ministers last week? Do we have a sense of how the news was received, and if the DM is minded to follow the advice from the External Assurance Committee not to provide a rescue package?

As mentioned in the email last week, I have asked CT to write to the DM formally, but I don't believe that has been sent yet.

All the best,

Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2023 2:00 PM

Subject: Following on from the meeting with Chwarae Teg

Hi,

I am conscious that the DM is intending to speak with the FM this afternoon about Chwarae Teg, and so wanted to provide an update following our meeting yesterday.

In the meeting, the advice from the External Assurance Panel was conveyed to Chwarae Teg (notes from the meeting and EAP terms of reference attached for info).

I have confirmed with Chwarae Teg that this is advice which will help inform the decision of the DM.

I have also asked for them to formally write to the DM consolidating the actual ask and business case, which we can package up in to an MA in order for the DM to provide a formal response.

We previously referred to WEFO working with CT officials to identify any operational costs that had not previously been claimed on AN2, and could reduce the repayment. They are still working on the final figure but it looks to be in the region of 25+% of the £Xk repayment.

CT are now more aggressively pursuing other sources to fill the funding gap, which adds another alternative scenario whereby CT could continue to operate and deliver their grant activity for us.

All the best,