

Count me in!

Tackling poverty and social exclusion through culture, heritage and the arts

November 2019



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Tackling poverty and social exclusion through culture, heritage and the arts

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About the Committee

The Committee was established on 28 June 2016. Its remit can be found at: www.assembly.wales/SeneddCWLC

Committee Chair:



Bethan Sayed AM
Plaid Cymru
South Wales West

Current Committee membership:



Mick Antoniwm AM
Welsh Labour
Pontypridd



John Griffiths AM
Welsh Labour
Newport East



Delyth Jewell AM
Plaid Cymru
South Wales East



Carwyn Jones AM
Welsh Labour
Bridgend



David Melding AM
Welsh Conservatives
South Wales Central

The following Members were also members of the Committee during this inquiry.



Jayne Bryant AM
Welsh Labour
Newport West



Vikki Howells AM
Welsh Labour
Cynon Valley



Caroline Jones AM
Brexit Party
South Wales West



Rhianon Passmore AM
Welsh Labour
Pontypridd

The following Member attended as a substitute during this inquiry.



Huw Irranca-Davies AM
Welsh Labour
Ogmore

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Chair's foreword

The Committee chose to look at the ways in which poverty and social exclusion are mitigated by the arts and culture in the summer of 2019.

There are so many examples of the excellent work done by Welsh arts and cultural organisations that to say we were impressed is an understatement. Each one of the projects we learned about had helped to transform someone's life. Whether by reaching out to elderly people to provide stimulating activities, or introducing young people to orchestra and dance, the results of engaging creatively had lasting impact.

We know that the skills people gain from engaging in creative activity can help them develop skills which can improve their situation. We also know that participation in the arts can alleviate the effects of poverty and social exclusion. This is what makes it so important to ensure that our cultural life in Wales includes everyone.

We heard that encouraging wider participation can sometimes seem like an uphill struggle as the arts are viewed as elitist or out of touch. For instance, Kathryn from Rubicon Dance told us "the communities we work with don't think of themselves as hard to reach, often they find cultural and other organisations distant and disconnected from their lives. This begs the question of who exactly are the hard to reach". Is it in fact, cultural organisations themselves?

Public money supports this activity. This happens directly through public funding for organisations supported by the Arts Council for Wales and indirectly through the Welsh Government's Fusion Programme. This programme is designed to encourage our cultural organisations to make links with communities to provide opportunities for people facing economic barriers to enjoy our culture and heritage.

All of Wales' internationally recognised arts institutions are engaged in reaching out to new audiences. We also found a desire by participants to have greater control over the cultural activities they participate in. There are challenges associated with extending cultural activities to communities which then lack the infrastructure to support ongoing work. It can feel as if large arts institutions have parachuted in for a short time and the benefits of this are not built on.

I am confident that our cultural institutions can and should be enjoyed by everyone and Wales' cultural flag bearers are up for the challenge of creating that lasting impact on audiences regardless of background.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. The Welsh Government should commission a wholesale evaluation of the Fusion programme which assesses the original objectives, funding and evaluation..... Page 17

Recommendation 2. The Arts Council of Wales 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..... Page 17

Recommendation 3. The Welsh Government should guarantee funding for the Fusion programme to provide security of tenure for the Fusion Co-ordinators. Page 25

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. Page 25

Recommendation 5. The Welsh Government, via the Arts Council for 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..... Page 32

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. Page 32

Recommendation 7. The Welsh Government should increase the funding for the Fusion programme to allow participants to claim incidental costs such as transport. Page 32

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. Page 39

1. Introduction

1. The Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee of the National Assembly for Wales was set up in June 2016 to examine legislation and hold the Welsh Government to account by scrutinising expenditure, administration and policy matters, encompassing (but not restricted to): culture; the arts; historic environment; Welsh language; communications; broadcasting and the media.

2. The Committee chose to look into the role of arts and culture in tackling poverty and social exclusion. Between 5 October and 14 December 2018 the Committee asked people to write to us, setting out:

- How effective has the Welsh Government been in improving participation in and access to culture for people in poverty?
- How effective have the efforts of Welsh Government sponsored bodies (namely the Arts Council, National Museum, National Library and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales) and local government been in using culture to tackle poverty?
- What impact has the Welsh Government's Fusion programme had on using culture to tackle poverty?
- How effective have the Fusion pioneer programmes been in stimulating local collaboration?

3. In January 2019 the Members of the Committee visited Fusion programme activities and met the co-ordinators in their constituencies. Between March and May 2019 the Committee discussed the above questions in more detail. A list of those who contributed written evidence and those who came in to speak to the Committee is at Annex A.

Summary

4. This report sets out the issues which were discussed, including:

- the nature of the work to encourage collaboration between organisations in this field of work, including the Welsh Government's Fusion programme;
- public funding for this area of work;

- the ways in which greater access to culture, the arts and heritage is promoted and
- the evaluation of activity in this area of work.

5. The Committee makes recommendations for the Welsh Government on each of these topics.

2. Collaboration

6. The Committee heard of many examples from all of the organisations which took part in this inquiry of the outreach work they do with socially excluded groups such as the elderly, those in poverty and those living in rural areas. There were many comments which stressed the need for larger organisations to “work with” rather than “go into” these communities.

7. There were frequent calls to involve the target audience in the programming and design of arts events, rather than “parachuting in”. For instance, Mia Rees from Princes Trust Cymru suggested that organisations ask: “Is there a small community group that we can help build and develop into something bigger and more meaningful, rather than come in and do something completely new?”¹ She said it is likely to have a “a longer term, better impact and also it’s in the community—it’s not this coming from Cardiff to show you how to do the art”.²

8. Allan Herbert from the South Riverside Community Development Trust spoke of the need to consult the target audiences on their priorities. He stressed the need for audiences to “be a contributor to something they want to achieve”.³ He also cautioned that to engage communities in the consumption of arts, you need to involve them in the programming processes as well, not just as the audience.

9. Arielle Tye from ProMo Cymru also spoke of the need to design events from the “grass roots” up. She said:

“it’s actually designing things with people at their level, and then they are just engaged from the beginning, rather than having a programme that... you’re presenting it to people, and then you’ve immediately got a barrier because there’s so much effort that goes into trying to get people to come... And that’s really stressful and difficult, whereas, actually, when you design something with people in the first place, and use a more service-led co-production approach, people come because they’re involved and it was designed with them in mind. It’s a completely different approach”.⁴

¹ Para 97 CWLC meeting 6 March 2019

² *ibid*

³ Para 34 CWLC meeting 14 March 2019

⁴ Para 122, CWLC meeting 8 May 2019

10. Gareth Coles from Voluntary Arts Wales made a similar comment on the need to maintain the benefits of projects once they are over. He said:

“if there’s an intervention from a large arts organisation in the community, ‘What happens next? How is that sustained and embedded within the community?’ So, some consideration of maybe forming groups, maybe building that link so it’s sustained, so it doesn’t feel like a fantastic opportunity that then comes to an end, but so that’s built in right from the start, that embeddedness within a community, would be really, really helpful.”⁵

11. In terms of continuing the benefits of interventions, Michael Garvey from BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales spoke of the importance of having support for the outreach work his organisation undertakes:

“if preparation work hasn’t been done ahead of time and there’s no legacy left as a result with teachers, with community workers, with local youth orchestras or whatever it might be, the actual activity is almost wasted entirely. And that infrastructure therefore has to be in place.”⁶

12. Kathryn Williams from Rubicon Dance spoke of the importance of building and maintaining long term relationships with communities and gave an example of work they have been doing in a school in Adamsdown in Cardiff for 38 years. She said

“I think there is a real case for organisations working in partnership, but there needs to be a real understanding of partnership... because communities need to trust you, and if you’re going to come in and then you’re going to come out, they’re not going to trust you”.⁷

13. She also commented that there are no “hard to reach” audiences, saying “they do think of these institutions as really, really distant, and that has kind of informed the way that we as an organisation work. We deliberately take our work to people”.⁸

⁵ Para 20, CWLC meeting 6 March 2019

⁶ Para 60, CWLC meeting 8 May 2019

⁷ Para 86, CWLC meeting 3 April 2019

⁸ Para 76, CWLC meeting 3 April 2019

2. 1. Fusion

14. The Welsh Government promotes collaboration between national bodies - such as the National Library, the National Museum and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments - and community groups and schools via the **Fusion: Creating Opportunity Through Culture** programme, (the Fusion programme) launched in 2015.

2. 2. Background to the Fusion programme

15. In July 2013 the Welsh Government tasked Baroness Kay Andrews OBE with investigating how culture and heritage bodies across Wales could contribute more effectively to reducing poverty. Her report: **Culture and Poverty** was launched in March 2014. She makes 33 recommendations, targeted at organisations involved with culture and heritage in Wales, from the Welsh Government to cultural organisations themselves. These recommendations fall into four key themes:

- New opportunities to drive change, in collaboration, across knowledge and resources from national to very local;
- New opportunities to bring social, economic and cultural policy together in practical ways, from policy design, to practical delivery, at national and local level;
- New ways of reducing barriers and increasing access to the national cultural institutions, and to create new frameworks for local engagement and delivery; and
- New tools, training opportunities and incentives to provide mutual support and better ways of reaching children, young people and adults.

16. The report states that “much of what is proposed is simply to make the capital and the human resources of Wales work harder”.⁹

17. In response, the Welsh Government announced the Fusion programme – “a small number of pioneer areas across Wales, where national organisations will work together with local authority and community leaders to realise the core

⁹ Page 8, Culture and Poverty

vision set out in the report”¹⁰. They highlighted that extra funds would not be needed to implement the report recommendations, stating:

Many of these recommendations do not come at an extra cost to the cultural sector. They are about the alignment of agendas and priorities, and bending the use of existing resources and funding streams.”¹¹

18. Funding for the programme currently stands at £287,000 which supports the activities of Fusion coordinators in the eight Fusion areas: Gwynedd, Conwy, Torfaen and Caerphilly, Cardiff, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Newport.

19. The lead bodies were tasked with delivering 2-year strategic programmes using culture, heritage and the arts to support employability, empowerment, the early years, and health and wellbeing – for those living in the most deprived communities. As well as taking forward several initiatives including volunteering and training placements.

2. 3. Collaboration and Fusion

20. Greater collaboration was noted by several respondents to the consultation as a benefit of the Fusion project. The WLGA note that the Government’s evaluation of Fusion “found cultural organisations identified greater collaboration as one of the main benefits of the programme”.¹²

21. The Arts Council says that Fusion has “helped develop closer links and encouraged greater collaboration and networking between the Arts and Heritage/museum sectors”. It goes on to say that:

“In its second iteration, the Fusion model - which involves the funding of a coordinator in each partner region - seems to be the best use of fairly modest funds. The coordinators are increasingly proving effective brokers, able to straddle sectors, spot opportunities and stimulate collaboration.

The national networking days, training and cross-sector working is clearly, in our opinion, a strength of the programme.”¹³

¹⁰ Page 5, Welsh Government response to the Culture and Poverty report

¹¹ Page ?, Welsh Government response to the Culture and Poverty report

¹² WLGA written evidence

¹³ Arts Council Written evidence

22. The Welsh Government's evidence says:

"anecdotal evidence from partner organisations indicates that the Coordinators' role is highlighted by all of the organisations involved in Fusion as being critical to its success."¹⁴

And

"Fusion continues to provide opportunities to breaking down barriers in the culture and heritage sectors. Whilst it is making progress in addressing poverty and social exclusion, it will require additional support and resources in future, if it is to sustain and widen its impact."¹⁵

23. The Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism told the Committee:

"I would like to see Fusion becoming more national in its outlook, and being seen as good practice generally in Wales."¹⁶

And that

"...it would be good if we could have more co-ordinators who could do this all more generally."¹⁷

24. In terms of promoting collaboration between national and community organisations, Lesley-Anne Kerr from the Welsh Government told the Committee:

"I think the role of the co-ordinators is absolutely key, and what they're doing on the ground is actually developing partnerships and developing sustainable partnerships, and they're actually embedding a way of working that we're seeing as being really, really effective. So, for us, that does remain an absolutely key role."¹⁸

Our View

The Committee heard of the importance of collaborating with communities when designing and delivering activities to increase cultural participation.

¹⁴ Welsh Government written evidence

¹⁵ Welsh Government written evidence

¹⁶ Para 49, CWLC meeting 22 May 2019

¹⁷ Para 79, CWLC Meeting, 22 May 2019

¹⁸ Para 96, CWLC Meeting, 22 May 2019

The most frequent comment which arose was the need to involve the target audience in the programming and design of the events, rather than simply expecting them to attend because it was local and admittance was free.

The Committee heard of the need to co-produce content, rather than take existing content to “hard to reach” groups, who consider the organisations engaging with them as equally “hard to reach”. The importance of collaboration from the ground up was an overriding theme. The point was made that attracting audiences is not difficult when they are motivated to participate in content they have chosen.

The Committee heard there also needs to be a greater recognition of the artistic expression generated by the target audiences. It may be worth investigating how this is being built on and encouraged by the organisations supported by the Arts Council for Wales. By encouraging their portfolio members to start from the point of view of the audiences they wish to engage, they can widen the scope of creativity they support.

The Committee also heard that despite best efforts it is not always possible to develop a long term relationship between arts establishments and community groups such as schools or day centres. This may be because the expertise and structures do not exist in the communities, such as access to music teaching and instruments in schools. In such cases, the Committee was told that the work of organisations such as the Royal College of Music and Drama, the Welsh National Opera and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales can act as a “springboard” for young people’s creativity.

However, all those who took part in this inquiry agreed that it was preferable to encourage Government-funded arts organisations to establish long term relationships with the communities they are trying to engage. The Committee heard about the frustration felt by organisations “parachuting in” to carry out engagement activities without the resources to continue that work.

A proper exploration of how our national arts organisations can collaborate with community groups is needed. As the main funding body, the Arts Council of Wales would be ideally placed to lead a workshop on this topic. The suggestions put to the Committee include the introduction of participatory budgeting and input from representatives of community arts groups to their strategic planning processes.

Infrastructure as a facilitator of collaboration

Community involvement in cultural activities relies upon the infrastructure necessary for these cultural activities to take place. This ranges from church halls to cinemas and concert halls. As Michael Garvey from the BBC National Orchestra said, he could send the orchestra to anywhere in Wales, but if “that infrastructure isn’t there, there’s almost no point in going, which is a blunt thing to say, but I believe it’s true”.

The Welsh Government and local authorities should explore the means available to them to maintain and enhance this infrastructure. This includes ensuring that funding schemes such as the Welsh Government’s Communities Facilities Programme are well-funded and accessible. Whilst we are mindful of the budgetary challenges faced by local authorities, they should be aware that when council cultural facilities close down, this is likely to hit poorest communities hardest, who rely upon these venues to access cultural activities. If closures are needed, in exceptional circumstances, local authorities should work with expert organisations, such as the Arts Council and Welsh Council for Voluntary Action to try and ensure a smooth handover of these assets to a community organisation.

Sharing social capital

Affluent areas are often rich in social capital as well as financial capital. The availability of professional skills, and most crucially time, in more affluent areas means that, as John Hallam from Maindee Unlimited told the Committee, “it’s easier in wealthy areas such as Penarth to rally the troops to get the fête going on a Saturday, or to save the pier, or whatever”. Often these areas are geographically very close to less affluent areas, such as the neighbouring communities of Pontcanna and Riverside in Cardiff.

The Committee would like to see greater linking between more affluent and nearby less affluent areas, whereby the social capital in one is used to the benefit of the other. This concept could be explored by grant-givers: for example, making the receipt of grants for cultural activities in more affluent areas conditional on those involved volunteering their time and skills to help less affluent communities in the local area. Such a relationship would no doubt benefit both areas – as skills and experiences flow in both directions – whilst helping to narrow the gap that exists between the two in access to and involvement in cultural activities.

Fusion

The importance of creating long term partnerships was recognised by the Welsh Government. It has sought to promote collaboration between the larger artistic, cultural and heritage institutions and smaller community groups, charities and schools with the [Fusion Creating Opportunities Through Culture](#) programme.

There was plenty of evidence of the success of the Fusion programme in promoting collaboration across cultural organisations in Wales. Everyone who contributed to the inquiry agreed on the importance of the co-ordinators in building these partnerships.

The Committee is impressed with what has been achieved in the first five years of the programme. The programme has been reviewed annually, however, after five years the entire programme would benefit from a wholesale evaluation. It is worth taking the time to acknowledge its success and see how it can be improved. The Committee has suggested areas the review should cover, including:

- The options for co-production and co-funding. The pooling of resources from other Government departments such as Health, Education and Economic Regeneration should be explored.
- The funding for the co-ordinator posts should be guaranteed for three to five years.
- An investigation of the benefits of additional funding for incidental costs – such as transport and childcare - for participants. This investigation should explore if this funding would be value for money and how it could be administered.
- The evaluation should ask participants how they think it can be improved.
- The role of the co-ordinators should be reviewed, and they should be provided with job descriptions.
- There should be a formal network for co-ordinators to share best practice.
- The original objectives should be reviewed to see if they are still valuable or if some can be replaced with more holistic outputs.

- There should be an assessment of the extent to which the programme has delivered the intention behind the 33 recommendations in the report “Culture and Poverty”.
- There should be a review of the evaluation methodology and criteria to determine if there are more appropriate measures which capture the “journey and not the end point”. That is, an evaluation which better reflects increases in social skills and other intangible outcomes.

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

Recommendation 2. The Arts Council of Wales 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.

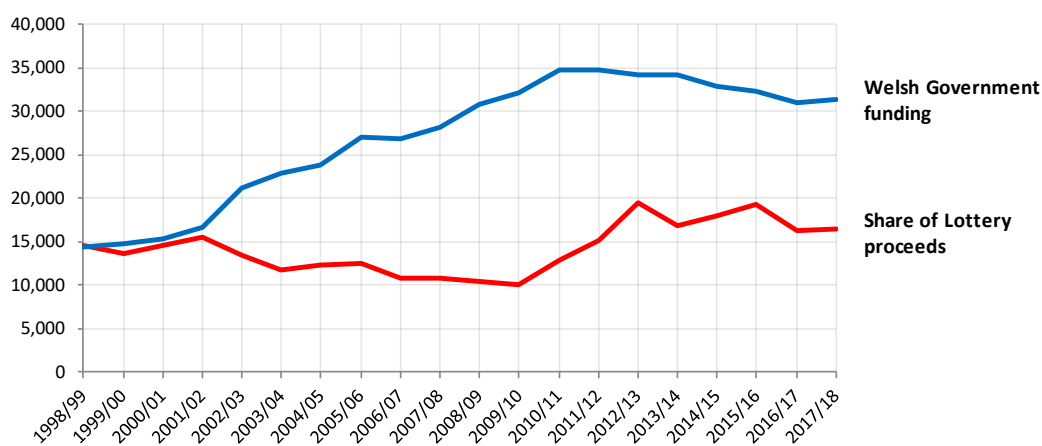
3. Funding

3.1. Public funding of the arts

25. The vast majority of the Welsh Government's budget allocations for the arts is distributed via the Arts Council of Wales: £31.2 million revenue out of £31.7 million allocated in this area in the 2017-18 draft budget. Revenue funding in this area increased by 3.5% in cash terms compared to the 2016-17 revised baseline, and has remained the same since.

Public funding of the Arts Council for Wales (£m)

Grant-in-aid funding from the Welsh Government and Lottery funding



* Grant-in-aid funding from the Welsh Government is restricted and unrestricted funding combined

Source: Arts Council for Wales Annual Reports and Accounts

26. Welsh Government funding of the arts via the Arts Council has declined by 18% in real-terms between 2011-12 and 2017-18¹⁹. The Arts Council's share of Lottery proceeds has also decreased very slightly in real terms between 2011-12 and 2017-18. The bulk of the Arts Council's funding passes through it to organisations and individuals that it funds on either a regular or one-off basis.

27. Arts Portfolio Wales is the name given to the 67 arts organisations who receive revenue funding from the Arts Council. Portfolio members range from large, internationally-significant companies (such as National Theatre Wales, the Wales Millennium Centre and the Welsh National Opera), to small, community-focused organisations (such as Valleys Kids, Cwmni'r Frân Wen and Theatr

¹⁹ Calculations based on the UK GDP deflators.

Felinfach). In 2017/18, funding of Arts Portfolio Wales amounted to £26.7 million (reduced by about 4% since 2013/14).

28. Arts Council for Wales notes that this funding is not taken advantage of by everyone in equal measure. They quote UK wide statistics produced by the Warwick Commission which highlight that the wealthiest, better educated and least ethnically diverse 8% of society make up nearly half of the live music audience and almost a third of theatregoers and gallery visitors. It also noted a downward trend in participation levels in the arts.²⁰

29. Local authorities also fund arts organisations. But this is a discretionary area of spending, and has reduced as local authority budgets have tightened in recent years. Local authority funding of Arts Portfolio Wales has reduced from £11 million in 2011-12 to £5.1 million in 2016-17.

30. On local authority spending, the WLGA wrote:

“successive years of financial austerity have made it increasingly difficult for local authorities to support cultural activities... Libraries have experienced a cut of 35% since 2009/10 whilst culture and recreation has been cut by 42%. Compounding the issue, it has been difficult to attract Lottery funding to support activities run by public bodies. They are often seen as the responsibility of local authorities and therefore considered ineligible for Lottery support.”²¹

31. Gareth Coles from Voluntary Arts Wales also highlighted the effects of local authority cutbacks on infrastructure which makes participating in the arts possible. He said:

“The problems come when things like buildings or these enablers that enable people to participate in their local cultural activity are affected, and maybe indirectly... These... elements of the infrastructure, like community transport, even access to public toilets and certainly buildings, that’s where people will find that their ability to participate in their local communities with others, like mine did on creative pursuits, will definitely be affected.”²²

²⁰ Arts Council for Wales Corporate Plan 2018-2023

²¹ WLGA written evidence

²² Para 24, CWLC meeting, 6 March 2019

Funding targeted at tackling poverty and social exclusion

32. The Committee investigated how public funding is directed at tackling poverty and social exclusion specifically.

33. As the principal funding distributor, the Arts Council noted that “tackling poverty through culture has been an Arts Council of Wales objective for many years”, but that “in spite of these interventions, we are still not reaching those people who are experiencing the consequence of economic or social disadvantage”.²³

34. They have recently made their objectives in this area a higher priority. Their Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023 says:

“There are, it seems, still too many barriers that impede people’s access to the arts, whether cultural, social or economic. Breaking down these barriers will be one of our defining priorities.”²⁴

35. One of the targets they have set themselves for 2023 is “There will be a narrowing of the gap between those in the most and least affluent social sectors as audiences and participants”.²⁵ The intractability of the problem may be inferred from the evidence at the same session from the Arts Council that:

“It’s been one of our priorities in the last corporate plan and the corporate plan before that, so it has been there, and we’ve pushed and we have been pushing the agenda and we’ve [been] delivering projects and programmes ourselves that have really tackled that.”²⁶

36. Diane Hebb from the Arts Council of Wales explained how funding is tied to delivering outcomes for sponsored organisations:

“We enter into funding agreements with those organisations every year... As part of those funding agreements, we specifically ask questions about... how they’re targeting disadvantaged communities. So, we expect, through the funding agreements, for those organisations to be delivering on that agenda... so we have organisations that are specifically funded to do that kind of work—our community arts

²³ Arts Council for Wales written evidence

²⁴ Page 6, Arts Council for Wales Corporate Plan 2018-2023

²⁵ Page 10, Arts Council for Wales Corporate Plan 2018-2023

²⁶ Para 72, CWLC meeting 2 May 2019

organisations. We have other organisations that are delivering specific projects and programmes.”²⁷

37. As the largest funding body for the arts in Wales, the Arts Council was criticised for the way in which it appeared to favour larger, national arts organisations rather than smaller, community based ones. For instance, ProMo Cymru suggested that the Arts Council should re-evaluate how its funding is distributed between large organisations, and grassroots organisations embedded in communities.²⁸

38. Mia Rees from Princes Trust Cymru noted that, when allocating funding cuts, the Arts Council did not consider specific community engagement work done by organisations:

“One of the concerns that I have about the way that the arts council funds is—so, for example, in the last tranche, they basically just renewed everybody’s funding at a slightly lower level; they didn’t really dig into the community work that all of those different groups were doing and really analyse the growth and potential and engagement that those different groups were doing.”²⁹

3. 2. Funding for the Fusion programme

39. Those taking part in the inquiry commented on funding for the Fusion programme which is £287,000 per annum and funds the co-ordinator roles. Many said the shortage of funding was a limiting factor on what could be achieved. Nia Williams from the National Museum of Wales said:

“I think we need to think about increasing the funding; the funding is very small.”³⁰

40. Written evidence from the Museum says “taking a longer term view is essential as developing trusted relationships between partners takes time and needs investment up front”. Furthermore, “targeted work, especially with protected characteristics communities, requires a lot of input and continued investment”.³¹

²⁷ Para 4, CWLC meeting 2 May 2019

²⁸ ProMo Cymru written evidence

²⁹ Para 29, CWLC meeting 6 March 2019

³⁰ Para 244, CWLC meeting 14 March 2019

³¹ National Museum of Wales written evidence

41. The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, though enthusiastic about the work Fusion had led them to do, noted the challenge of carrying out work in this area given how much of its funding was already allocated to core tasks:

“Our core funding is designed to do very specific tasks, there’s very little discretionary funding for doing this kind of work.”³²

42. Tina McMahon from Caerphilly County Borough Council also commented on the need for long term funding, she said:

“The problem with any grant funding is it’s not sustainable... in the long term... It’s more about mainstreaming these types of things than it is about actually putting pots of money that have particular criteria and at the end of two years, they’re gone. I’m not sure that that’s really beneficial, particularly in the communities where we work. And, actually, changing the cultural aspirations of a community can’t happen in two years. So, you find that you start things with grant funding, then the funding ends, and how then do you continue that? Often, you’ve started to make inroads, but... I’m not sure that the grants that are available are particularly geared up to support the anti-poverty agenda.”³³

43. Baroness Kay Andrews OBE, when commenting on the future of the programme, said:

“It needs some sort of formal structure and sustainable funding. Sustainable funding is the key. Predictable three-to-five-year funding, actually, would make all the difference.”³⁴

44. She argued that this activity had to be “an explicit part of every Government objective”. For that reason, funds should be drawn from other departmental budgets such as health, regeneration, education, housing and regional budgets.³⁵ She also called for greater co-production and co-funding of activities between organisations. She gave examples of the National Heritage Lottery Fund and the Pupil Deprivation Grant as suggested sources of co-funding.

³² Para 220, CWLC meeting 14 March 2019

³³ Para 70, CWLC meeting 20 March 2019

³⁴ Para 229, CWLC meeting 10 July 2019

³⁵ Para 239, CWLC meeting 10 July 2019

45. When Committee Members visited Fusion projects a frequent comment from participants and co-ordinators was that incidental costs were a common barrier to accessing to cultural activities, such as transport or childcare costs.

3. 3. Welsh Government evidence

46. The Welsh Government's paper notes the challenges that come with Fusion's short-term funding arrangements. It says that:

"Fusion Challenge Grant Lead Bodies have highlighted that short term funding does not allow for long term planning and retention of skilled and knowledgeable members of staff who can build lasting and effective relationships with and within communities.

There is a concern that if funding is devolved to local stakeholders, the focus on Fusion could be lost, especially given local authority funding pressures. However, in the longer term, the Welsh Government would consider looking to persuade local authorities and the culture sector to support this agendas part of their core work. Officials are currently exploring plans with stakeholders for the longer-term funding of Fusion."³⁶

47. The current short-term funding arrangements can perhaps be contrasted with the Welsh Government's call for Fusion engagement to help individuals and communities benefit from "lasting engagement with culture and heritage".

48. The Welsh Government's paper notes the calls for increased funding:

"Fusion continues to provide opportunities to breaking down barriers in the culture and heritage sectors. Whilst it is making progress in addressing poverty and social exclusion, it will require additional support and resources in future, if it is to sustain and widen its impact."³⁷

49. In response to the call from organisations for long term funding, Jason Thomas from the Welsh Government said:

"there's undoubtedly a commitment to try and do that, but... we're not able to do that at the moment. We've got more certainty over capital funding, but in terms of revenue funding we've had to do our best to come up with a model that will give that certainty, but where we stand

³⁶ Welsh Government written evidence

³⁷ Welsh Government written evidence

at the moment we're just not able to do that, although I think everybody recognises that it would be beneficial to do so."³⁸

50. When asked to comment on the distribution of public funding between large central organisations and community groups, the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism said:

"I don't think it's either/or. I think what I would say is that the value of the expertise that we have in our national institutions... the museums and galleries, and... the national library as a national resource—. One of the things I'm looking... is to do even more in partnership with local museums and indeed with the library service generally, so that people can benefit, through the partnership, from the experience that these organisations have."³⁹

Our View

The Committee heard about the need for longer term funding commitments and the nature of the public funding profile which appears to be geared towards supporting larger national organisations.

Public funding of the arts fulfils a number of purposes, one of which is to sustain our cultural flag bearers. It is important to have sufficient funding to enable our national orchestras, theatres, museums, dance companies and other cultural and heritage organisations to compete globally. It is vital to maintain our profile on the international stage. The cultural highlights this country has to offer attract international visitors and support a whole host of tourist and leisure businesses.

The Arts Council of Wales is the body responsible for distributing funding to arts organisations, and as such has a great degree of leverage when it comes to increasing participation from all sectors. The Arts Council of Wales confirmed that increasing access is a condition of grant funding for the organisations they support. However, throughout the inquiry it was noted that the majority of the funding for the arts in Wales is directed at large national bodies rather than smaller, community organisations. The Committee recognise that the national bodies work with smaller voluntary and community groups, but the funding profile currently favours the "established" groups.

³⁸ Para 104, CWLC meeting 22 May 2019

³⁹ Para 98, CWLC meeting 22 May 2019

In a world of finite resource, difficult decisions have to be made about how that resource is distributed. Inevitably this will result in balancing the need for funding between national organisations and community groups.

Long term funding

The obligation on the national organisations to share their creative expertise with communities is embedded in their funding agreements with the Arts Council for Wales. The Fusion programme is the means by which partnerships between the sectors can flourish.

However, this work involves long terms commitments to building relationships which require secure, long term funding. The Committee recommends the Welsh Government guarantees funding for the Fusion programme to provide security of tenure for the Fusion Co-ordinators.

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

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.

4. Access and participation

51. The Committee heard that there are various barriers which prevent people in poverty being able to participate in cultural activities. The cost of admittance was not the only one. Almost all of the organisations which participated in this inquiry have discounted or free admittance. People are also prevented from participation by the cost and availability of transport, infrastructure and the perception that cultural activities are “not for them”.

Participation and attendance

52. Figures from the Arts Council show that participation in the arts for members of the ABC1 social group have risen from 84% to 90% between 2011 and 2018. Participation by members of the C2DE social group has risen from 77% to 84% over the same time.

53. Evidence from the Bevan Foundation states:

“There is limited research that suggests that improving participation in the arts can be part of the solution to poverty, although on its own it has little effect. Involving people who live in poverty in the production of cultural events can lead to increased confidence and the development of new skills. This can provide an important step in encouraging those who are currently not in work to seek employment opportunities and it can also give confidence to those who are already employed to seek progression opportunities, boosting their incomes.”⁴⁰

54. The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales said:

“We also know that cultural participation appeals to people who have rejected formal education, and by engaging in cultural and heritage activities, people can acquire a very broad range of transferable skills without being aware that they are engaged in ‘learning’.”⁴¹

55. Figures from the Arts Council for Wales show that arts attendance has risen from 82% to 92% for the ABC1 social group between 2012 and 2018. However,

⁴⁰ Bevan Foundation written evidence

⁴¹ Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments written evidence

attendance by those in the C2DE social group rose from 76% to 86% during the same time.

56. Evidence from the Bevan Foundation states:

“it is less clear whether being in the audience for cultural events has the same benefits as being involved in its production. Whilst [it]... can be an effective way of developing social networks, strong social networks as of themselves do not overcome the challenges faced by families living in poverty... it would appear prudent that projects that seek to find a solution to poverty through the arts should focus on increasing participation in the production rather than the consumption of culture.”⁴²

57. It also notes that there is “no great difference in proportional terms between what lower income households spend on recreation and culture, and higher income households”.⁴³ Households with less income spend less on recreation and culture.

4. 1. Infrastructure and Transport barriers to participation and attendance

58. The Committee heard from a number of organisations that people living in poverty miss out on attending arts events because even when ticket prices are reduced or free because the cost and availability of transport and other infrastructure such as accessible venues prevents them from attending.

4. 2. Transport

59. Of the structural barriers to participation the most frequently cited was transport. Figures from the Office for National Statistics show that car ownership is much less for those on lower incomes.⁴⁴ The problem was noted by the Bevan Foundation and cited by Morag McDermont and Evan Elliot as one of the top five barriers. Age Cymru wrote:

⁴² Bevan Foundation written evidence

⁴³ Bevan Foundation written evidence

⁴⁴

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/expenditure/datasets/percentageofhouseholdswithcarsbyincomegrouptenureandhouseholdcompositionuktablea47

“Some older people miss out on socialising or activities because even small charges for these, or the costs of transport, are beyond them.”⁴⁵

60. The Welsh National Opera gave more detail on the impact of transport provision on their work with young people:

“A major barrier for communities accessing our provision is transport links, particularly when we cover such a wide geographical spread across Wales... whilst we provide free transport for both our youth opera programme... and in some cases to attend our shows, this has considerable cost attached to the organisation. Partnership programmes around improved transport links... to Valleys communities and across North Wales would be a huge benefit.”⁴⁶

61. The Committee heard of many examples of programmes of outreach work based on organisations taking their productions to communities which would otherwise find it difficult to participate due to distance and cost. All of the national organisations taking part in this inquiry are funded to carry out this type of outreach work. The most commonly cited example of this activity was the Arts Council of Wales’ “Night Out” scheme which takes theatrical, musical and dance performances to community venues across Wales.

62. Allan Herbert from South Riverside Community Development Centre described the scheme as “terrific”, saying:

“It really does take theatre to places it’s not normally seen... the last one we put on... at least 70 per cent of them had never been in a theatre, let alone being regular theatre-goers.”⁴⁷

63. Morag McDermont also stressed the need to locate cultural infrastructure in less wealthy communities to improve participation and work opportunities. She gave examples:

“The media centres that have been set up actually in communities that are at the margin... to enable people within their own community to be engaging in the cultural arts, to be using their own creativity... It’s making it possible for people to think, ‘Yes, this is something I could do.’ So, not assuming that people will go and travel into an unfamiliar area,

⁴⁵ Age Cymru written evidence

⁴⁶ Welsh National Opera written evidence

⁴⁷ Para 54, CWLC meeting 14 March 2019

but to be able to start off by saying, 'Yes, this is something that can happen within this community'."⁴⁸

4. 3. Cultural barriers

64. The Committee heard that many people feel that the arts are for a particular group, and that they have a preconceived idea of what it encompasses. Rubicon Dance wrote "Culture can have overtones of hierarchy, status and elitism".⁴⁹

65. Kathryn Williams from Rubicon Dance spoke about how the organisation seeks to work with those considered socially excluded or "hard to reach":

"in our experience, the communities that we work with wouldn't consider themselves hard to reach, they wouldn't consider themselves disadvantaged, but they do think of these institutions as really, really distant, and that has kind of informed the way that we as an organisation work. We deliberately take our work to people ... I think we need to think about 'hard to reach' differently, and if organisations are saying, 'These people are hard to reach', they're not trying hard enough. They need to look at different strategies."⁵⁰

66. The Committee heard from ProMo-Cymru that to broaden attendance, cultural centres need to do more than encourage people in poverty and social exclusion to attend their existing roster of events, saying "to achieve effective inclusion and participation the focus needs to shift further towards working with young people and their families to create cultural activities that are relevant to them".⁵¹

67. They write that the "big institutions... struggle to work out how to effectively engage people at their level and create things that are appealing and relevant to them" and that "It's not about getting more 'people from poverty' to attend an exhibition, but more around supporting their own culture to have prominence".⁵²

68. Mia Rees from Princes Trust Cymru also stressed the need for engaging with people to widen access. She said:

⁴⁸ Para 134, CWLC meeting 2 May 2019

⁴⁹ Rubicon Dance written evidence

⁵⁰ Para 76 CWLC meeting 3 April 2019

⁵¹ ProMo Cymru written evidence

⁵² ProMo Cymru written evidence

“If I could put it quite crudely, engaging people in participation costs a lot more than reducing your ticket prices and getting bums on seats. If you are to engage in participation, as you will all know through what you all do, there is a real commitment of time and effort and energy and money that needs to be spent on that. It is much easier to go, ‘We’re going to reduce our ticket prices and open the doors to people’—it’s quicker, it’s easier and it’s cheaper. I would say that it’s not unvaluable to get people viewing. People can’t do and can’t be what they can’t see.”⁵³

69. Gareth Coles from Voluntary Arts Wales also stressed the importance of people being actively involved in creative projects, saying:

“I think, self-determination and governance, so, self-governance of groups—it’s really important that people are involved in the decision making of their groups”⁵⁴

70. Julia Barry from the Sherman Theatre commented on the need to address the lack of confidence people feel when accessing an unfamiliar place such as the buildings housing our national cultural institutions. She said:

“When we first started our Sherman 5 project... that was very much about getting people in as audiences to start with—one of the overarching responses that we were receiving from people as to why they didn’t attend was ‘Theatre isn’t for people like me.’ They talked about costs, they talked about transport, but actually, ‘Theatre isn’t for people like me’... And just for young people to have that awareness of what’s involved from the outset, I think, is a starting point.”⁵⁵

71. The Committee also heard of the success of the “Who Decides” projects which involved clients of [The Wallich](#) homelessness charity choosing artworks from the National Museum of Wales’ collection and writing about the work in their own words.

72. The National Museum described their efforts to make their collections more accessible. Owain Rhys said:

“For example, we have appointed, in the past month, a field worker in terms of black history in Wales. So, the field worker will go around

⁵³ Para 81, CWLC meeting 6 March 2019

⁵⁴ Para 82, CWLC meeting 6 March 2019

⁵⁵ Para 281, CWLC meeting 14 March 2019

Wales gathering elements of history that aren't represented at the moment in St Fagans."⁵⁶

Our view

The Committee heard that a range of barriers exist to prevent people in poverty from participating in cultural activity. Most obviously there is the cost of entry. However, the Committee heard that even when the cost of admittance is reduced or free there are many other barriers which prevent people from participating in the arts and culture in Wales. Those experiencing poverty can also be excluded because they have little time, lack of transport and the arts can seem alienating and “not for them”.

Transport

Those in poverty are less likely to own a car and are more reliant on public transport. The Committee heard that transport is either not available for people to attend cultural events during the evening or it is too costly to justify the expenditure for cultural events. There is scope for the Welsh Government, via Transport for Wales, to explore concessionary rates on public transport with participation in cultural activities for those at risk of social exclusion or experiencing poverty. Many of the organisations involved in running projects for this cohort would benefit if they could offer their clients subsidised or free travel to participate in their activities.

Increasing access to cultural venues for those in poverty or at risk of social exclusion should be considered as one of the objectives of Transport for Wales. The Committee would be interested to see pilot schemes to establish partnerships to provide free or subsidised transport for specific cultural organisations, perhaps for a season or particular event. These pilots should be evaluated and reported on to the Committee.

Breaking down cultural barriers

Increasing access by introducing young people to cultural institutions and experiences from a young age is vital for breaking down barriers and addressing the perception that culture and the arts is elitist and exclusive. Poverty of ambition and social exclusion is considered as much a part of poverty as financial exclusion.

⁵⁶ Para 196, CWLC meeting 14 March 2019

It was clear that our national institutions are committed to widening participation, not only through their outreach work but by increasing access to their collections and creative endeavours by taking them to the communities which cannot see them in their permanent venues. The Committee recognises this as an important step in breaking down the barriers which can prevent people from participating.

It was also shown that alongside the efforts to increase access to institutions are the efforts to involve people who may be seen as “hard to reach” in producing art on their own terms. Projects involving communities in curating artworks, writing plays, choreographing dance and recoding oral history give people a chance to show their creativity alongside professional artists. The Committee heard examples of best practice in this area including the Arts Council’s “Night Out” scheme and the National Museum of Wales’ “Who Decides” project which were particularly well received.

The importance of allowing participants to find their own way creatively and to set the agenda was highlighted. It was noted that many of the difficulties in persuading unfamiliar audiences to see cultural events are removed if those audiences involved in designing the event in the first place.

Recommendation 5. The Welsh Government, via the Arts Council for 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.

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.

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

5. Evaluation

73. The Committee heard of the difficulty of measuring the impact on attendees of creative and cultural experiences. It was suggested that quantitative data - such as visitors to an attraction and the number of people entering employment - do not give a sufficient assessment of the outcomes of work in this area. Witnesses the use of qualitative data, such as questionnaires which ask participants to assess any changes they experience in confidence and social skills. It was also noted that such changes can appear over a longer time period, increasing the difficulty of gathering this evidence.

74. The Committee heard from Morag McDermont and Eva Elliot that “the imposition of an outcomes approach tended to discourage rather than encourage creative engagement”.⁵⁷ Eva Elliott acknowledged the importance of accountability for public spending on the Fusion scheme, but cautioned that “the ways in which you’re looking at the outcomes can actually have an impact itself and... stifle the kind of changes that you’re actually wanting”. She said organisations felt that the Fusion outcomes were unrealistic and restrictive, and organisers “were expected to show how brilliantly they’d done in ways that were not possible”,⁵⁸ such as showing people gaining employment or apprenticeships after only six months.

75. Prof Helena Gaunt from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama described the difficulties with evaluating interventions:

“The problem that we’ve got is that much of that evidence is from fairly small data sets, and the evidence of the value of these disciplines... is often one that is about indirect benefits that ultimately lead towards improved lives and employment. You’re not necessarily saying, ‘This is the one and only factor that makes all the difference’. And I think it would be a mistake for the arts to try and start to suggest those things. It’s part of a bigger picture.”⁵⁹

76. Mia Rees from Princes Trust Cymru described their difficulties with evaluating their activities:

⁵⁷ Written evidence from Prof McDermont and Dr Elliott

⁵⁸ Para 177, CWLC meeting 2 May 2019

⁵⁹ Para 292, CWLC meeting 14 March 2019

“The way that we measure its value at the Trust is the confidence that being involved in those activities gives—those soft skills that it gives people to progress in their lives positively, to help them live, learn, earn successfully... When we apply for funding, we have to assess on those hard outcomes: how many young people did we get into work, how many young people did we get into training?”⁶⁰

77. The National Museum explored the challenge of more comprehensively measuring the outcome of Fusion work by using more qualitative data:

“Measuring... the impact of culture is very complex. There are a number of other factors that can have an impact on the change. And then perhaps measuring figures in themselves isn’t enough, and we need to measure what we can measure, but also think about how we describe more qualitative, soft, evidence in the way that we work.”⁶¹

78. ProMo Cymru described the personal journeys of participants in cultural activities, which made evaluating success objectively difficult:

“They have more aspiration at the end of it and I think that’s the thing. You can see their eyes light up and they really feel proud of what they’ve been doing, and you know that they’re going to take that experience with them... you know, they’re on the brink, loads of them do end up in prison, this is the reality, but so many of them you can see that, actually, it has changed their path and it’s given them something else, and it just gave them that bit of value, and that is really hard to quantify, but you can see that it’s changed their journey.”⁶²

79. When discussing the difficulty of measuring success, Diane Hebb from the Arts Council said:

“We do have... case studies that we could refer to where people have been involved in some of those projects and programmes who have then gone... either back into education or on to further training, volunteering or into employment. I think they’re few and far between, and I don’t think that’s what engagement in the arts is fundamentally about. I think it’s about changing aspiration. It’s about all of those kinds of skills of confidence, social skills, creative skills. It’s about that and those being an important part of the journey towards potential

⁶⁰ Para 84, CWLC meeting 6 March 2019

⁶¹ Para 231, CWLC meeting 14 March 2019

⁶² Para 154, CWLC meeting 8 May 2019

employment, volunteering and that. [Evaluation] is something that we need to get better at. But, clearly, through the programmes... we fund have been delivering—it's those skills of confidence, enrichment, collaboration, organising, decision making, which come with everyday creativity, that make a difference as part of a journey.”⁶³

Welsh Government evidence:

80. When discussing evaluation, Lesley-Anne Kerr from the Welsh Government said:

“I think the qualitative evaluation is always the difficult bit to really pin down. So, what we're actually looking at at the moment are different evaluation models, and one we've looked at, for example, is the University College London model, which is more round—it's a model for museums, but would transfer quite well across the cultural sector, I think. That looks at health and well-being. I think three different museums in Wales have used it, and they've found that quite a useful model.”⁶⁴

5. 1. Evaluation of the Fusion programme

Background

81. Work undertaken through Fusion is evaluated according to the following indicators:

- Supporting the Early Years and Family Learning;
- Gaining a qualification;
- Regular volunteering as route to work;
- Completing a work experience placement;
- Improved digital skills;
- Improved attitude to formal learning;
- Better able to manage mental well-being and physical health.

⁶³ Para 27, CWLC meeting 2 May 2019

⁶⁴ Para 122, CWLC meeting 22 May 2019

82. The Fusion programme has been evaluated three times. The first evaluation focussed on the effectiveness of the **Pioneer Area programme's design and delivery** and the extent to which they increased participation in Communities First areas in culture, arts and heritage activities, in ways that helped people gain in learning, skills, confidence and wellbeing, between 2015 and 2016. The evaluation showed:

“a strong emphasis ... on developing structures and activities to guide and support individuals to develop appropriate pathways to independent living, learning and/or employment, and to monitor and facilitate their progression.”⁶⁵

83. The second evaluation focussed on the views of a wide range of cultural stakeholders participating in Fusion Partnerships to assess the impact of the programme on their own organisations, during 2016-17. It showed:

“cultural organisations are targeting activities more effectively at people experiencing poverty. Most survey respondents also felt their organisation collaborated to a greater extent on the co-design of cultural interventions with individuals and groups from deprived communities, and more effectively with other cultural organisations and local community agencies working within disadvantaged communities. The stakeholders who took part in the research also felt that individuals experiencing poverty in their communities were accessing cultural activities more as a result of the Fusion Partnerships.”⁶⁶

84. The review stated: “the need for Fusion Partnerships to include a wide variety of organisations was the factor identified as most critical to future success”.⁶⁷

85. The third review is focussed on the role of the Fusion co-ordinators and is due to be published after the Committee has agreed this report.

Findings

86. Greater collaboration between cultural organisations was noted by several respondents to the consultation as the main benefit of the Fusion project.

⁶⁵ Pioneer Area Programme Pilot Year Evaluation

⁶⁶ Fusion: Second Year Review

⁶⁷ Fusion: Second Year Review

87. Many witnesses said that the coordinator roles funded through Fusion seemed to be working well. The National Museum said:

“The role of the co-ordinator has worked, because he works as a broker to bring people together on a local level and in the community, and to bring the national in, rather than the national parachuting in.”⁶⁸

88. The Arts Council says that funding the co-ordinator roles “seems to be the best use of fairly modest funds”. It goes on to say that:

“The coordinators are increasingly proving effective brokers, able to straddle sectors, spot opportunities and stimulate collaboration.

The national networking days, training and cross-sector working is clearly, in our opinion, a strength of the programme.”⁶⁹

89. The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales has said that the types of interventions in the Fusion programme can be “life-changing for the individuals concerned”, but for a small number of people, and that “these interventions are not scalable”.⁷⁰

90. Like many others, Rubicon Dance called for Fusion – which is currently limited to the former Communities First areas – to have “a more national reach”.⁷¹

Methodology

91. Several witnesses questioned the suitability of the outcomes used to evaluate Fusion. For example, Allan Herbert of the South Riverside Community Development Centre said that the current outcomes used to evaluate Fusion were limiting, and too focused on employment, he said:

“I think Welsh Government’s done a disservice to the Baroness Kay Andrews report... the breadth of that report was not just about employment... And when that gets translated into an outcomes framework for Fusion... it distorts the entire intent of the recommendations.. They’ve co-opted another programme for an employment programme, and that does a disservice to the research, it does a disservice to people and their ability, because the real way that

⁶⁸ Para 246, CWLC meeting, 14 March 2019

⁶⁹ Arts Council for Wales written evidence

⁷⁰ Royal and Ancient Commission on Historical Monuments written evidence

⁷¹ Para 119, CWLC meeting, 3 April 2019

you get progress is not just through shoe-horning someone into a job; it's through increasing the engagement process with culture, and that will lead to more meaningful employment. If you don't do that, you're missing a real big trick, there."⁷²

92. Baroness Kay Andrews OBE commented on the need for the evaluation to include greater consideration of health, for instance mental health, and educational outcomes. She commented on the difficulty of measuring change:

"the first thing is you have to acknowledge the timescales are different for different sorts of outcomes and different sorts of projects, and be very sophisticated about that, actually. So, we can't expect to see direct causal relationships in education, for example, around motivation, which would manifest itself, possibly, as better attendance in the classroom."⁷³

93. She spoke of the need to include personal narratives when evaluating interventions. She called for the case studies produced for Fusion Co-ordinators' reports, to be considered by the Welsh Government alongside other data, she said:

"they do write the story of the experience of maybe one person or maybe a group of people. And in that, of course, there is a whole narrative of emotional change, confidence, trusting, people respecting you for doing whatever you've chosen to do...One of my arguments is to say that I think we should be less inhibited about releasing that sort of story."⁷⁴

Our view

The Committee heard of the difficulties of measuring the outcomes of work done to tackle poverty and social exclusion.

The long term nature of the impact on people's lives means measuring outcomes can be expensive and attributing changes to specific interventions is very difficult. The organisations we heard from recommend using qualitative as well as quantitative data. For instance, measuring how confident a person feels about visiting a museum can be done alongside visitor figures.

⁷² Para 26, CWLC meeting 14 March 2019

⁷³ Para 198, CWLC meeting 10 July 2019

⁷⁴ Para 206 and 208 CWLC meeting 10 July 2019

Often organisations are bound by funding requirements to collect hard data, such as the number of participants entering employment or training, meaning there is less reason to invest in collecting qualitative data such as measuring increased confidence, social skills and creative skills over a longer time period.

The Committee heard of the power of individual case studies to demonstrate success, such as a participant from the South Riverside Community Development Centre who decided to re-enter education in adulthood and went on to become a nurse.

The Committee heard calls for more use of case studies in reflecting the success of the arts and cultural programmes and the value they can offer in demonstrating personal transformation.

It is encouraging that the Welsh Government is considering their evaluation model for the Fusion programme to see how it can capture more qualitative data. It is hoped this can be agreed in time for the fourth annual review of the Fusion programme.

The Committee heard of differing methods of collecting qualitative data, including examples from ProMo Cymru, the Arts Council of Wales, the Warwick Commission and the National Museum of Wales.

It would be useful for the Welsh Government's Knowledge and Analytical Services to carry out an assessment of these methods and report to the Committee on the relative strengths and weaknesses and their proposals for how they will be updating their collection and analysis of qualitative data on the Fusion project in future.

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.

Next Steps

This report will be sent to the Welsh Government and they will write to the Committee to respond to each recommendation. The recommendations and the progress of the Welsh Government's work in this area will be discussed with the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism during a scrutiny session on this topic and in discussion on the next Draft Budget.

If you have any questions about this inquiry please email SeneddCWLC@assembly.wales.

Annex A

The Committee heard from the following individuals and organisations at our meetings. The transcripts of these meetings are available on our website:

<http://record.assembly.wales/Search/?type=2&meetingtype=445>

Date	Name and Organisation
6 March 2019	Gareth Coles, Voluntary Arts Wales Mia Rees, The Princes Trust Cymru
14 March 2019	Dr Victoria Winckler, Joseph Rowntree Foundation Allan Herbert, South Riverside Community Development Centre John Hallam, Maindee Unlimited Christopher Catling, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales David Thomas, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales Nia Williams, National Museum Wales Owain Rhys, National Museum Wales Professor Helena Gaunt, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama Julia Barry, Sherman Theatre
20 March 2019	Tina McMahon, Caerphilly County Borough Council Lauren Hughes, Caerphilly County Borough Council Kelly Barr, Age Cymru Dr Valerie Billingham, Age Cymru
3 April 2019	Siân Lewis, Urdd Catrin James, Urdd Kathryn Williams, Rubicon Dance
2 May 2019	Richard Bellamy, Heritage Lottery Fund Diane Hebb, Arts Council of Wales Professor Morag McDermont, University of Bristol Law School Dr Eva Elliott, Cardiff University
8 May 2019	Leonara Thomson, Welsh National Opera Michael Garvey, BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales Arielle Tye, ProMo-Cymru

22 May 2019	Dafydd Elis Thomas AM, Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, Welsh Government Jason Thomas, Welsh Government Lesley-Anne Kerr, Welsh Government
10 July 2019	Baroness Kay Andrews OBE

Annex B

The Committee received written evidence from the following individuals and organisations. It is available here:

<http://senedd.assembly.wales/mgConsultationDisplay.aspx?id=319>

Reference	Organisation
CP01	Music Traditions Wales
CP02	Caerphilly Arts Development
CP03	Cered
CP04	Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd
CP05	Arts Council of Wales
CP06	Age Cymru
CP07	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
CP08	Literature Wales
CP09	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
CP10	Kids in Museums
CP11	Urdd Gobaith Cymru
CP12	Welsh Local Government Association
CP13	Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama
CP14	Conwy County Borough Council
CP15	Federation of Museums and Art Galleries of Wales
CP16	Gwynedd Council
CP17	Bevan Foundation
CP18	National Museum Wales
CP19	Voluntary Arts Wales
CP20	Maindee Unlimited
CP21	Sherman Theatre
CP22	Rubicon Dance