



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru **The National Assembly for Wales**

Y Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a **Llywodraeth Leol** **The Communities, Equality and Local Government**

Dydd Mercher, 3 Gorffennaf 2013
Wednesday, 3 July 2013

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Motion under Standing Order No. 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public

Cofnodir y trafodion yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal, cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

The proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee. In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol
Committee members in attendance

Leighton Andrews	Llafur (yn dirprwyo ar ran Kenneth Skates) Labour (substitute for Kenneth Skates)
Peter Black	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Christine Chapman	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)
Jocelyn Davies	Plaid Cymru (yn dirprwyo ar ran Rhodri Glyn Thomas) The Party of Wales (substitute for Rhodri Glyn Thomas)
Janet Finch-Saunders	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Mike Hedges	Llafur Labour
Mark Isherwood	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Gwyn R. Price	Llafur Labour
Jenny Rathbone	Llafur Labour
Lindsay Whittle	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Jon Beynon	Uwch-gynghorydd Polisi Chwaraeon, Llywodraeth Cymru Senior Sports Policy Adviser, Welsh Government
Huw Brodie	Cyfarwyddwr, yr Adran Diwylliant a Chwaraeon, Llywodraeth Cymru Director, Culture and Sport Division, Welsh Government
John Griffiths	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon) Assembly Member, Labour (Minister for Culture and Sport)
Edwina Hart	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth) Assembly Member, Labour (Minister for Economy, Science and Transport)
Rob Holt	Pennaeth Strategaeth Twristiaeth, Llywodraeth Cymru Head of Tourism Strategy, Welsh Government

Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance

Sarah Bartlett	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Marc Wyn Jones	Clerc Clerk
Rhys Iorwerth	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.16 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.16 a.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Bore da and welcome to the Assembly's Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee. May I remind Members that if they have any BlackBerrys or mobile phones, that they should be switched off because they affect the transmission? Ken Skates has now left the committee, because, as you know, he has taken up an appointment as Deputy Minister. I am sure that you would like me to put on record your thanks to Ken for his contribution to the committee and to wish him all the best in his new appointment. I am very pleased to say that we have Leighton Andrews here today; welcome, Leighton.

9.17 a.m.

Ymchwiliad i Lefelau Cyfranogiad mewn Chwaraeon—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 7 Inquiry into Participation Levels in Sport—Evidence Session 7

[2] **Christine Chapman:** Our first item on the agenda is the inquiry into participation levels in sport in Wales. I welcome the Minister for Culture and Sport, John Griffiths. I also welcome Huw Brodie, director of the culture and sport division; and Jon Beynon, senior sports policy adviser. Thank you all for attending this morning. Minister, you have sent a paper to the Members, which we have read, so, if you are happy, we will go straight into questions.

[3] **The Minister for Culture and Sport (John Griffiths):** Certainly, Chair.

[4] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. I want to start, Minister, with some fairly broad questions. When you attended this committee on 15 May, you acknowledged that levels of physical activity among young people and adults had not risen over the last decade as we had hoped. Could you tell me where you think things have gone wrong in this respect, and what steps are you taking to overcome these difficulties?

[5] **John Griffiths:** Diolch yn fawr, Gadeirydd. I would not say that it is a matter of things having gone wrong. Obviously, we have not made the sort of progress that we would have liked to see, but these are very difficult matters right across the world. I am not sure that anywhere in the world has cracked it. It is a constant effort to try to drive up participation in physical activity. Obviously, governments and key partners need to approach these matters from a number of angles. We do accept the need to make greater progress, and it is very important to us to have a more physically active Wales, a Wales taking part in sport to a greater extent, for obvious reasons that I guess we are all familiar with.

[6] For me, as the fairly new Minister for Culture and Sport, it is a matter of assessing where we are at the moment. We know that we are not in the position that we would like to be in. How do we drive further progress, working with Sport Wales, local authorities, the sport governing bodies and a range of other partners? We are looking at these matters within Welsh Government and with our key partners.

[7] One big-ticket item for us, as it were, Chair, which Leighton Andrews will be very familiar with, is the report by Tanni Grey-Thompson, which was commissioned by Leighton as the Minister for Education and Skills, when Huw Lewis was the Minister for heritage. It is an obvious thing to say, really, but if we can catch our people young and instil in them good habits, physical literacy and an enjoyment of keeping fit and sport, then that is likely to stay with them throughout their lives. To some extent, you have a captive audience in schools and real opportunities to reach children in that environment. So, in terms of looking ahead and

futureproofing, as it were, on these issues, that is a very important piece of work indeed. Obviously, it will now be considered, consultation will take place, and a Government response will then follow.

[8] **Christine Chapman:** I understand that Members will want to come in with specific questions on that later, Minister. I just want to ask you about particular targets and timescales, because, obviously, there are concerns about the last decade and what progress has been made. How will you evaluate the targets, and what timescales will you put on this if we really want to make this step change in the next few years?

[9] **John Griffiths:** We are looking at those, Chair. I am sure that Members will be familiar with the 5x30 target for adults, and the 5x60 for young people. Once again, we have not seen the sort of progress that we would like to have seen regarding those targets, but we continue to try to drive forward progress. We now have a new executive group within the Welsh Government. It is very new; it has met only a couple of times. It involves me, the Minister for Health and Social Services and the chief medical officer. We are looking at how you get behavioural change and how you get quicker progress.

[10] The tackling poverty action plan will include new targets on disadvantage and physical activity. I am very clear—and I have said this a number of times—that there is no greater inequality in Wales or anywhere else than inequalities in relation to life expectancy and quality life expectancy. So, these are very important matters for the overall tackling poverty agenda, and I want to make sure that my area of responsibility is integrated in that effort.

[11] **Christine Chapman:** I call on Jocelyn and then Mark.

[12] **Jocelyn Davies:** I have a comment and then I will ask a question. You start off by saying that this is really hard; it is a bit self-defeating, Minister, to start off by saying that this is something really hard and that it is hard everywhere, all over the world.

[13] **John Griffiths:** It is acknowledging the reality, really.

[14] **Jocelyn Davies:** Yes, but maybe you should not start from that point. Are there any good examples from around the world, even though it has not been cracked anywhere around the world? Are there any good examples that we can build upon or learn from?

[15] **John Griffiths:** I am sure there are. We can look, and are looking, at those good examples. Finland, for example, is often cited as a country that has made real progress in getting that shift in behaviour and culture. However, it is always a question of the extent to which it is possible to replicate something from another country in Wales, because, obviously, there would be lots of different circumstances. However, that is a big part of the effort—looking right across the globe at what does work.

[16] **Jocelyn Davies:** I wonder what the Finnish example was.

[17] **John Griffiths:** They worked with communities over an extended period of time to get better health behaviours. Part of that was diet, but part of it was exercise. They have created an active country.

[18] **Mark Isherwood:** With regard to your answer on participation in sport, would you clarify your use of the term ‘physical activity’? Clearly, sport is physical activity, but not all physical activity is sport.

[19] **John Griffiths:** That is a very good point, Mark. We do talk about physical activity

generally, and sport is part of that. What we want to see is a more physically active Wales. So, it does not have to be participation in sport; people can be active in another way, whether through walking and enjoying our great outdoors, jogging along a canal, like I do on a Sunday morning, or just having a leisurely bike ride, or gardening. Whatever it might be, we want to see a more physically active Wales, but, obviously, within that, sport matters to us a great deal as well, in terms of mass participation and elite performance. So, sport is a sub-set of the overall picture.

[20] **Mike Hedges:** In talking about other countries, Brazil has a record of having two major sports—beach volleyball and football—which, from information I have got second and third-hand, tend to be very popular with young people. Perhaps lessons can be learnt there. I know that it has slightly better weather than we have but, having said that, participation levels are very high.

[21] **John Griffiths:** As I said earlier, we are very willing and eager to look across the globe and gain examples of good practice and assess whether they are replicable in Wales. So, that will be an ongoing effort.

[22] **Peter Black:** I am looking forward to a Government Bill to improve the weather so that we can have more active people. Looking at data sets and statistics, Minister, both the Football Association of Wales and the Welsh Sports Association have expressed some scepticism about the school sport survey and the active adults survey, which Sport Wales carries out every two years. Are you confident that that survey is providing robust figures at a national level, which enables us to take strategic decisions on a local level, in terms of participation and how we should structure sports activity for the future?

[23] **John Griffiths:** They are important surveys and they do provide us with valuable information. However, we need to take a very close look at the data that we generate—how useful they are, how specific they are to local circumstances and how broken down they are in terms of barriers to participation and different groupings in society. So, they are important data, but I guess, as always with data, there is a lot more information that could be provided. We have to look at how easy, difficult or costly it is to really drill down, to look at the benefits that would come from that drilling down, and then assess what we need to do in the future.

[24] **Peter Black:** Clearly, you have misgivings as well. Have you had discussions with Sport Wales as to how it can better structure this survey to achieve more useful data?

[25] **John Griffiths:** As I said, the surveys are useful, but we could have more useful information. I guess that is always the case. I have discussed these matters with Sport Wales, and it will be part of the early work for me as Minister to look with the department at what information we have, how it could be improved and how it could be used. I have no doubt that the work of this committee that we are involved in today will address these matters, and I would be very interested in the committee's views.

[26] **Peter Black:** One specific criticism is from Show Racism the Red Card, which has said that this data set does not properly reflect sport participation among ethnic minorities in Wales and is not asking the right questions and getting to the right people. Are you aware of that criticism, and have you looked into it to see whether it has any validity?

[27] **John Griffiths:** I am aware of the criticism and I met the other week with Show Racism the Red Card. We had an interesting discussion, and it has done some very good work in Wales. Obviously, it is very keen to drive the agenda forward to ensure that there is much better and greater participation in sport by our ethnic minorities. Obviously, that is an aim that is very much shared by the Welsh Government, Sport Wales, the governing bodies, local

authorities and others. There is a need for more information on the current situation and that will be part of that ongoing effort to gain better information and use it to good effect. Sport Wales has done some interesting work on sexuality and participation in sport and has given quite some attention to that, which is very valuable. I know that it is currently looking at more research into ethnic minority participation as well, so it is on the case, as it were, and we would very much encourage them to do that further research so that we can be in a more evidence-based position to take policy forward.

9.30 a.m.

[28] **Peter Black:** Just to be clear, given the Government's commitments to equal opportunities, you are looking to use Sport Wales to try to fill that gap.

[29] **John Griffiths:** With others, yes, because it is only part of the picture. Huw, do you want to come in at this stage?

[30] **Mr Brodie:** Thank you, Minister. We need to recognise that statistics can take you only so far. If you are trying to probe into the reasons why some particular groups of people are not as active in sport as the general population, you need to get into qualitative research, and that, indeed, is what Sport Wales has been doing. It has published its research on LGBT, and there is research on women. As the Minister indicated, it is doing research on the BME aspects. So, it is a combination of the statistical surveys and the qualitative research that you need to have to enable us to crack those issues. However, as you and the Minister are saying, it is about mainstreaming the equality issues into the achievement of the overall objective.

[31] **John Griffiths:** Sorry, Chair, I know that you do not have that much time to cover a lot of matters, but I would just come back very briefly to the work that Tanni Grey-Thompson has done. I really do think that if we can get it right in schools, it will be so important, right across the board, for all these matters, because it will be about making sure that every school pupil is engaged in sport, and the links are then made into the communities and to sports governing bodies. There will be a feeding through, and if we can get that right, I think that it will be very beneficial for all these matters.

[32] **Christine Chapman:** While you are on the topic, I know that Gwyn had a question about that, and Jenny wanted to come in afterwards.

[33] **Gwyn R. Price:** You have mentioned Tanni Grey-Thompson a couple of times this morning, Minister. What is your view on the sole recommendation that PE should be made a core subject in schools?

[34] **John Griffiths:** Members will perhaps not be surprised to hear me say that it would be premature of me to offer an opinion at this stage, because, obviously, we have just received the report and we have to go out to consultation. Other important work is going on around education, which, again, Leighton will be very familiar with, having taken it forward around the curriculum more generally. So, all of these matters have to be duly considered with due process, and, perhaps in the autumn, we will be in a position to set out how these matters are taken forward.

[35] **Gwyn R. Price:** Do you agree with Sport Wales, the Welsh sports associations and the NUT that if participation levels are to increase, teachers must be provided with better training to deliver PE in schools?

[36] **John Griffiths:** I think that that is an important issue, and, again, it is one of the major aspects of Tanni Grey-Thompson's report, because, if sport was made a core subject in the national curriculum, it would have implications for teacher training and continuous

professional development. So, yes, those are important matters, and that will form an important part of considering that report and how it is taken forward.

[37] **Christine Chapman:** I have not forgotten Jenny, but Jocelyn wanted to come in on this specific point. After that, I will bring Jenny back in.

[38] **Jocelyn Davies:** Of course, if it is done badly as a core subject, it can put people off for life, rather than turn them on for life. I know that you know what I am going to ask you about now, Minister, about sport in schools, and that is the dreaded PE skirt.

[39] **John Griffiths:** Oh, right.

[40] **Jocelyn Davies:** It is about girls having to wear that as compulsory, or boys having to wear shorts. It is about bare legs, and how kids look is a significant factor, as we know, in turning them off sport. I wondered whether, since yesterday, when I asked you in Plenary, you had given it any more thought. Is it not about time that we put that in the bin?

[41] **John Griffiths:** I have not given it that much more thought because, as we all know, Plenary ran on until rather late yesterday evening, did it not? However, as I said in Plenary yesterday, these are significant matters, of course they are, and you do hear it from a lot of adults, actually, that, in their time in school, they were discouraged from taking part in sport and physical activity because of those dress issues. So, they are important matters. I think that it is well recognised and understood in our schools now that those are matters that require a degree of sensitivity and understanding. I would therefore hope that there is not too much of the sort of practice that you mentioned, Jocelyn, going on now, but I would not claim to be in a position to know what is happening in every school across Wales. I am looking at Leighton again, because I am sure that he and our current Minister for Education and Skills would have an idea and a keen interest. So, it flags up the need for me, as the Minister for sport, to work very closely with the Minister for education and other partners to ensure that these issues are properly addressed. Coming back to Tanni Grey-Thompson's report, it is about how we get it right with sport and physical education in schools, and part of getting it right would obviously involve dealing with those matters.

[42] **Christine Chapman:** Mark, you have a brief point on this.

[43] **Mark Isherwood:** The NUT made the point to us last week—I do not know how you would respond—for the reasons that have just been highlighted, on a practical level, schools are already diversifying and delivering classes such as dance, for example, where there is demand, particularly from young women, because they are comfortable with that sort of activity and would be less comfortable doing a different activity, because of the adolescent concerns that young people have. Do you feel that that is an avenue that we could explore?

[44] **John Griffiths:** Yes, absolutely. It is an important part of physical education in schools now, understanding what pupils want to do, what demand there is, and responding to it. Dance is an important part of that, particularly for girl pupils.

[45] **Jenny Rathbone:** I am troubled by the adult outdoor recreation survey, because it simply does not correspond with any of my observed experience. There are people who have lived all of their lives within an hour of Snowdon who have never visited it; they have never been up it. In my constituency, there are huge numbers of people who never leave the small community in which they live. So, exactly who has been interviewed for this survey, and do we know what the breakdown is of car ownership, income and public transport use? There are a lot of barriers to doing vigorous outdoor activity. I really want to know a bit more about how cleverly we are looking at the target groups that are the most likely to have heart disease and early deaths.

[46] **John Griffiths:** In a moment, I will ask officials whether they can deal with some of those points about the composition of the survey and the socioeconomic groupings involved, and if they are not in a position to do so, I am sure that we can write to the committee. However, generally, I must say, Jenny, that I very much agree with you. We have an amazing outdoors in Wales; we all know that. It is not just about visitors and tourists; it is about the people who live here and their quality of life. Very often, people do take things for granted when they are on their doorsteps, whether they are mountains, the coast, the sea, rivers, lakes or whatever they might be. So, it is a big part of our effort to get people in Wales to enjoy the fantastic outdoors much more. They are doing some really good work at Plas Menai, for example, which looked at Brittany and its school of the seas activity. They have had a lot more children out on the water through Plas Menai National Watersports Centre over a period of time, and they look at the mountains as well.

[47] I know that the national parks have the Mosaic scheme in place, which looks at black and ethnic minority groups and tries to make sure that they are connected more with national parks, because that has not happened to the extent that it should over the years. Our coastal path is a fabulous opportunity. We said all along that it was not just about establishing the coastal path, but as we go on, we will improve it as a coastal path and link it with communities, particularly Communities First communities and other relatively deprived communities, with circular routes. So, there is ongoing funding that can help to deliver that. Again, we just have to keep working at it. I hope that the Active Travel (Wales) Bill will be important in encouraging people to walk and cycle more. There are various strategies that will help us, but I accept what you say that it is absolutely tragic, with the fantastic outdoors that we have, if we are not making sure that as many people as possible in Wales enjoy it and get the health benefits.

[48] **Mr Brodie:** Just to add to that, I think that all of these surveys have their limitations, particularly given that all of them are asking people to self-report the level of activity that they were actually undertaking. We can certainly provide the committee with a note on the details behind that particular survey, but we tend to look at trends. Whatever the weaknesses of a survey, if you can see a significant trend taking place, and if the trends from different surveys are all telling you something roughly consistent, you tend to have a sense of confidence that something is actually happening. Of course, as the Minister said in his introduction, the surveys are not, overall, giving us that level of confidence. In particular, in terms of the outdoor recreation survey, for instance, although—as the note that we put in says—there are some positive elements in it, the overall level of participation has not actually gone up between the two most recent survey dates. I should not want the committee to think that we are taking a false sense of optimism from the absolute level being reported in the survey. We tend to look at the trends, which is why the Minister was giving the message of concern that he has given consistently over recent months.

[49] **Christine Chapman:** We need to move on now. I have some questions from Leighton Andrews.

[50] **Leighton Andrews:** John, may I just ask you about the role of the Government in encouraging collaboration between local authorities on this, and what feedback that you are getting, particularly in the current financial climate, where there will be more and more pressures on local authorities in terms of the delivery of physical activity, resources and the facilities that they provide?

[51] **John Griffiths:** I think that these are key matters, Leighton. Obviously, working with the WLGA and the cabinet members, I am trying to drive forward that Simpson agenda as far as sport and leisure are concerned. There is a lot more that could be done. We do need to look across local authority boundaries. That is recognised by local authorities, but whether enough

action is taking place is quite another matter. There are some interesting ideas around smartcards and how they could be used across local authority boundaries, which I think are useful. A lot of the change responding to the difficult financial climate until now has been around things like co-location within local authorities. Libraries and leisure centres, for example, seem to have worked well, where you get new users from both aspects. Also, of course, some local authorities have outsourced, whether it is a trust or indeed a commercial organisation. We are seeing change, which is being driven, at least in part, by the current financial situation, but we need to see a lot more collaboration and joint working. That would be one of my early priorities: to try to drive that forward.

[52] **Leighton Andrews:** In the context of the cuts that are being imposed on local authorities as a result of the UK Government's austerity policies, are you getting more feedback from local authorities on the challenges that they are facing in maintaining leisure facilities? In that context, are you getting any more feedback in respect of further initiatives like Celtic Leisure in Neath Port Talbot, for example, which I think is a social enterprise model for running leisure and sport facilities?

[53] **John Griffiths:** Yes, and yes. We are getting considerable feedback from local authorities. We are very concerned about the financial climate and what is set to come at us, as it were, over the next years. There is a great deal of concern. I think that local authorities are very committed to sport and leisure. They want to go forward, not backwards. So, they are very concerned and, obviously, we share that concern in terms of our own financial situation and theirs. So, there is a pressing need to find new and better ways of doing things. I think that outsourcing agenda is one response. We see the transfer of assets to some extent, to community trusts and so on, and some of that is facilitated by lottery funding as well. There are possibilities of finding better ways of delivery, and I know that local authorities are thinking long and hard about those matters.

9.45 a.m.

[54] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Just on that, recognising that we are in a tough economic climate, we have to think of innovative ways, and I wonder what you are doing to persuade local authorities to look more at sponsorship. There are many leisure buildings that local authorities own that could facilitate some resources by private companies sponsoring the use of space. It is something that I used to raise a lot when I was in Conwy, and it was always on the agenda, but I have yet to see any real achievements on that. Have you thought of driving forward a sponsorship agenda across Wales, whereby some of our leisure buildings can have sponsorship from the bigger companies, like JJB Sports and those kinds of businesses?

[55] **Jocelyn Davies:** Other sport companies are available. [*Laughter.*]

[56] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** That was just an example, but other large sports manufacturers and retailers could help in this instance.

[57] **John Griffiths:** There is a great effort going on, right across Wales, throughout the local authorities in terms of looking at how they can lever in additional funding and find new and better ways of delivering right across the piece. They assure me that they are leaving no stone unturned. Exactly what the picture is on those matters, I am not quite sure, but—

[58] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** I would not mind you looking at it again. There is an avenue there of what I think is untapped potential.

[59] **Jenny Rathbone:** The response of schools to the whole community seems to be uneven. In some schools, you will get playing fields and gymnasiums used by anybody in the community who is prepared to clean up after themselves and lock up after themselves, and in

other schools you will have multi-use games areas that are closed at 6 p.m., even though it is not dark until 9 p.m. and people in the community are asking, ‘Why isn’t this open?’ So, how much feedback do you get about local authorities taking seriously the concept of a community-focused school?

[60] **John Griffiths:** I very much recognise the picture that you sketch, Jenny, namely that it is patchy from school to school and from local authority to local authority. These are matters that I wish to work closely on with the Minister for education. It is a pretty obvious thing to say, is it not, that at a time when finances and budgets are so pressured and capital is in such short supply, that it makes perfect sense to use our existing buildings to a greater extent for sport, leisure and physical activity? Seeing school buildings and grounds closed off at weekends, evenings and during the school holidays is frustrating. There are things that can be done. There is financing in place, for example, to pay for school caretaker services and so forth, so that activity can be taken forward without an impact on school budgets, and good links into community groups, sports clubs and so on. There is good practice that we can draw on, but it is patchy, and I would be keen, in working with the Minister for education, to look at how we can improve the situation so that there is much greater consistency across Wales.

[61] **Jenny Rathbone:** I want to highlight what the Welsh Sports Association said. It said that its members often report about community-focused schools, which are supposed to be reaching out to their communities, that they cannot get in there. There they are, offering hockey coaches or equipment to set up games outside school term time, and the community-focused schools are simply not even answering the phone or returning their call. So, I really think that that is an area where the Government needs to look at the detail of what the Welsh Sports Association is saying and chase such schools, because, if they are not even accepting the offers of voluntary organisations that want to increase the offer to young people, or indeed to adults in the community, then that is serious.

[62] **John Griffiths:** Obviously, we would want to have a careful look at the evidence that the committee takes, and indeed the committee’s findings. That addition to the general evidence base in that way is very important for us. In considering the evidence, if we think that action is necessary, then we can explore that with colleagues.

[63] **Christine Chapman:** We have less than half an hour to go and quite a few other areas to cover, so I will ask Jocelyn to come in.

[64] **Jocelyn Davies:** It has been covered, actually, Chair.

[65] **Christine Chapman:** Peter, did you want to come in?

[66] **Peter Black:** Just following on from Jenny’s question in terms of socioeconomic barriers, we have had evidence that people in deprived areas in Wales are much less likely to participate in sport. Witnesses have said that contributory factors include the variety of local authority provision for families on benefits, the lack and cost of suitable equipment, the lack of good facilities in communities in Wales—particularly rural communities—and the availability and cost of transportation. I am just wondering, in terms of socioeconomic barriers to sport, what specific outcomes you are looking to see from Sport Wales’s community strategy and child poverty strategy to address that. What sort of timescale are we looking at?

[67] **John Griffiths:** Those are obviously important aspects of Sport Wales’s policies with regard to a crucial agenda for the Welsh Government. I am keen in general to explore with Sport Wales how its programmes are evaluated and monitored, and the indicators and targets involved. For me, that is an early priority in terms of my relationship with Sport Wales and my requirements of it. It is absolutely right that we have a stronger picture in terms of

monitoring, evaluation, indicators and target setting, and I will be interested to look at how we can improve that picture around Sport Wales's activities. I mentioned the tackling poverty action plan earlier, and I am keen to see physical activity and sport mainstreamed within that agenda. Part of that will be looking at the most effective indicators and outcomes targets that we can set. So, we are doing work around that at the moment that I think will be significant.

[68] **Peter Black:** So, at some stage in the future, you are hoping to come back with specific outcomes from this strategy that Sport Wales is putting in place.

[69] **John Griffiths:** Yes. I think that we need to tighten up on that aspect of Sport Wales's strategies and make sure that evaluation, monitoring and target-setting indicators are robust.

[70] **Peter Black:** I have one more point in terms of the Welsh Sports Association. It said that the national governing bodies of sport are finding it difficult to engage with Communities First. Is that your experience, and have you looked into that particular suggestion as to how that can be put right?

[71] **John Griffiths:** Yes, we have been thinking about those matters. Links with Communities First are absolutely crucial, and that applies to the governing bodies, Sport Wales, and all the key partners. I am meeting with the Welsh Sports Association soon, and I will be keen to explore these matters with it.

[72] **Christine Chapman:** I have a small question from Mark, and then I will come back to Mike.

[73] **Mark Isherwood:** On how the Welsh Government might help to address these points by turning things upside down, there are a number of exciting initiatives happening—for instance, we heard in committee last week about street sports, and there is local area co-ordination, transformation networks, participation budgeting schemes, and so on. There is a lot of good practice springing up all over Wales to identify the assets that already exist within our communities and to get those communities themselves empowered to take control. This would mean working outside Communities First, which the Minister referred to, engaging with communities themselves to utilise the wealth that exists. How do you feel that can now play a role, and should you be engaging more with those projects?

[74] **John Griffiths:** Absolutely. Community development in any aspect works best when it is bottom up. Obviously, you have to work with the grain of what communities want to do, and want to see happen within their areas. StreetGames is a good example of that, working with the Communities First clusters and delivering doorstep activity. So, there is good practice, and there are new ideas and new energy around. Once again, a key role for the Welsh Government is to look at the general picture around Wales and spread good practice.

[75] **Mike Hedges:** Following on from what Peter Black said, I know that you cannot do anything about the weather, but it is fairly normal, between October and December, for junior football to disappear. It certainly disappears in January and February. The children get out of the habit of engaging in sport, as there might be three or four months where they might play only two games because of the weather and pitch unavailability. There is a solution to that, which we have talked about before, namely the development of 3G and 4G pitches. What discussions have you had with local government, sports associations and others to generate more 3G and 4G pitches, which save local authorities money, but also mean that, in those months, the children still get in the habit of playing sport every week, as opposed to getting a phone call telling them that their games have been called off? To ask a simple question on the point that Jenny just raised, what discussions have you had with the Minister for Education and Skills about changing the local management of schools to make those facilities available?

[76] **John Griffiths:** On the final point, obviously, that is something that I can explore with the Minister for education.

[77] With the 3G pitches, I have seen a number of new 3G pitches, and local authorities consider them to be delivering the expected benefits to an impressive extent. So, there is an increase in participation, and local communities and sports clubs greatly value the quality of the pitch. That is why they are an important matter for us to consider and to have a strategic approach to. So, the league of Wales has ambitions to make sure that all league of Wales clubs have 3G pitches. Sport Wales greatly values them as well and wishes to see more. As I said, local authorities have similar views. So, with those key partners and the governing bodies of sport—football, rugby and hockey, for example—there is a need to have an overview and to structure this. That is why Sport Wales is hoping to take forward a £3 million investment programme that does just that—it takes an overview, works with all of those partners and ensures that we get these new 3G pitches strategically placed around Wales so that they can deliver those benefits in greater participation that you described.

[78] **Christine Chapman:** I know that some Members want to come in, and there are some important areas that we have to cover. We have about a quarter of an hour left, so I will bring Janet in now.

[79] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Peter Black AM has already mentioned participation in sport by our ethnic minorities, but drilling down further, some serious concerns were raised last week that this issue needs to be tackled urgently. It was not just about increasing participation in sport for some of these protected groups; it was more about actual racism. Diverse Cymru has said that it is concerned about the severe lack of information regarding participation levels of protected characteristic groups, and Show Racism the Red Card has real concerns. You said that you have met the organisation recently, so my first question is this: what are you doing? I know that you have said that Sport Wales is undertaking some research, but have you put any timescales on that?

[80] We were all concerned, as a committee, by some of the comments coming forward. They went on to say that the Sport Wales advisory group, although made up of 14 members, has not one BME representative. The concern that was raised is that there is a tendency to simplify and band the BME community as being one, when there are differences in culture, background, values and religion, and that any research undertaken does not take that into account, nor do any outcomes or actions. It is a real issue.

10.00 a.m.

[81] I know that you mentioned that the research from across the schools would get into that, but what about older Asian ladies who want to participate in a particular sport and the way in which we engage with older members of the BME community, because, obviously, we cannot do that through the education system? Concerns were also raised that there was a severe lack of role models at a professional and coaching level, and that there was only one PE teacher in the whole of Wales from a BME background. How would you look to address that? To what extent would you recognise the genuine concerns from witnesses that there is a lack of information about the participation levels among protected characteristic groups, but more so about discrimination in sport? It is not something that any of us as Assembly Members want to learn about—we want to act on it—but we are very disturbed to learn of it.

[82] **John Griffiths:** The further research that Sport Wales is taking forward will be important on this. We are dealing with general societal issues here, are we not, about the proper integration of our ethnic minority communities right across the piece? If we had that, we would get better representation on all sorts of bodies. There is a Welsh Government drive

across the piece to look at these equality issues and to address them. So, we are part of that in terms of sport and physical activity.

[83] There are some positives around. I think that local authorities have, for a long time, recognised particular issues in terms of trying to provide what is necessary to get better participation from ethnic minority communities. I guess that we are all familiar with some of the swim sessions that many local authorities run for Muslim women, which are sensitive to their cultural issues and provide for them. I play in my local cricket league, and I must say that there is no shortage of participation by the local Asian community. In fact, as a bowler, I am sick of bowling good length and line and having them swing across the line and knock my bowling all over the park. They are certainly well integrated into the local cricket league.

[84] So, there are some positive aspects of this, but there are problems as well. We need to work with the governing bodies of sport, and I think that it is something that Show Racism the Red Card feels as well. I would be very interested in working further with Show Racism the Red Card on this; we fund it through the education budget and my department's budget, and it has a lot of expertise and advice to offer.

[85] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Minister, I would like some firm assurances that you will look into this as an urgent matter, because it is really concerning. They are saying that it needs to be dealt with urgently. We are talking about absolute discrimination here. So, I would like to be assured not just about what Sport Wales is doing—it is really good what it is doing—but that you as a Government are taking this seriously and that you will act on it.

[86] **John Griffiths:** We take it extremely seriously and, where there is any evidence of discrimination, we would require that to be dealt with in no uncertain terms.

[87] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** How would you respond to their saying that there needs to be a thorough investigation? Are you satisfied that the research that Sport Wales is carrying out will be the thorough investigation into BME communities that Show Racism the Red Card is asking for? Can you assure this committee that the research it is doing is the thorough investigation that is required?

[88] **John Griffiths:** What we would want to do is to wait for that research from Sport Wales, and—

[89] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Are you aware of how broad the research is?

[90] **John Griffiths:** Yes, but, obviously, there is a multitude of issues involved in these matters, and I am not going to pretend that what Sport Wales is carrying out is going to magically resolve all these matters. We will need to look at that research and its findings and see whether further work is required. These are issues that we will need to work at over a sustained period of time, I am sure, but the starting point is to get awareness and acknowledgement, I think, from all the key partners and governing bodies in sport that there are issues here that need to be recognised and addressed.

[91] **Christine Chapman:** If Members do not mind, because we have only 10 minutes left and there are a couple of other areas that some Members want to cover, I will ask Lindsay to come in now, because there is an area of disability sport and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups to cover as well.

[92] **Lindsay Whittle:** Minister, you said in your earlier opening comments about racism and homophobia in sport that Sport Wales was on the case. Are you on the case?

[93] **John Griffiths:** Yes, absolutely. Obviously, the Welsh Government has a leadership

role and has strategic responsibility. A real drive around equality is absolutely central to the Welsh Government, and I think that that is very clear from all our strategies and policies.

[94] **Lindsay Whittle:** What about the issue of sport in schools for disabled children, and perhaps their becoming involved with more able children, so that they are not seen to be competing separately?

[95] **John Griffiths:** I think that, generally, Lindsay, one thing that has come across to me very strongly, since I took on the role of Minister for Culture and Sport, is the progress that we have seen with regard to disability sport in Wales. Disability Sport Wales is doing a really good job. We have seen very impressive increases in participation generally, but I know full well that it feels, and we feel as a Government, that there is further work to be done and further improvement to be made. Part of that is about what happens in our schools and a more mainstream approach. Again, I think that Tanni Grey-Thompson's report is significant and important on these matters, because, if we get that right, it will address sport and physical education in schools across the piece for all pupils.

[96] **Lindsay Whittle:** Thank you for that, Minister. With regard to your comments about racism, we heard last week that there are no local BME players in Glamorgan County Cricket Club, for example, which I find very sad. That is our major cricket team—our only major cricket team in Wales. I agree with what you say about disability sports. The only recognised gay sports team in Wales is actually in rugby, can you believe it? That is the Cardiff Lions team in Cardiff. I think that we still have a long way to go to address all of those issues of racism, disability and homophobia. Could I ask one further question quickly, Chair? The national curriculum states that all 11-year-olds should be able to swim. That is not happening. Why not?

[97] **John Griffiths:** It may not be happening, but we are in a much better position than England is. I think that is, in part, due to our free swimming programme. We have seen a substantial increase in the number of pupils in Wales up to the age of 11 who are able to swim 25m. I think that is very encouraging. Obviously, we have further to go, but substantial progress has been made and, if we can continue with that, then we will be in a very good position indeed.

[98] **Lindsay Whittle:** Minister, a lot of us around this room are from a generation that went to freezing-cold outdoor pools. We look back at them with nostalgia, but, in reality, they were horrendous. In the town where I live, we now have three indoor pools that are really nice and warm. You need to start pushing people into the deep end to get this on the go here. *[Laughter.]*

[99] **John Griffiths:** Well, I am sure that the experience that you describe was very character-forming and that it turned you into the adult that you are today.

[100] **Lindsay Whittle:** It was almost life-changing. *[Laughter.]*

[101] **Christine Chapman:** Did you want to come in on any of this, Mark?

[102] **Mark Isherwood:** The questions have largely been covered, but we have heard figures that participation rates among children have fallen. We have heard evidence concerning the number of 11-year-olds who still cannot swim, despite the curriculum requirement. We have heard evidence of variance in local authority provision. How are you going to make a splash and address this? *[Laughter.]*

[103] **John Griffiths:** I will try to get into the swim of it now, Mark. *[Laughter.]* I think again that patchiness between local authorities is an issue. In my own area, Newport, my

experience as a child was very positive—not out-of-doors, but indoors in a heated pool. Then, and now, all pupils towards the end of their primary school education in Newport go to the local swimming pool for a week, solidly throughout the day for the week. Many have learned, and do learn, to swim through that programme. I think that we do need to make sure that there is more consistency at that level throughout Wales. In terms of the free swimming initiative, we have moved more towards structured sessions, so that it is not so much about splashing around and just enjoying yourself, but much more about moving children on so that they do learn to swim. I think that is relevant to the numbers that you mentioned, Mark.

[104] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. Mike is next, and then Jenny.

[105] **Mike Hedges:** Very briefly, on disability sport, it has been a huge success in recent years, and there has been a huge increase in participation, for which the Welsh Government must take some of the credit. The problem now, though, is that, if you live in Cardiff, it is brilliant, if you live in Swansea, it is not too bad, but, if you live in some of the rural areas, there are far fewer opportunities. What can be done to deal with that?

[106] I have another question on sport. We are having really nice things said to us by the sports association, the Welsh football association and the Welsh Rugby Union—all these people come along and say really good things. However, the reality is that most of these things are done by smaller county associations and local leagues. When we did the investigation into Welsh football, for example, somebody came along from Gwyn's area who said that, if you lived in the Islwyn bit of it, they would not let you play in the Caerphilly bit of it, even though it is next door, because they are different county associations.

[107] **John Griffiths:** Well, there we are. [*Laughter.*]

[108] **Lindsay Whittle:** It is a Glamorgan and Monmouthshire issue. We have to be very careful.

[109] **John Griffiths:** These are very delicate matters obviously, Mike. It goes back to Leighton Andrews's question, does it not, really, about joining up? It is not just a matter for local authorities; it is a matter for all the partners involved. At times, it can be very frustrating, but, in going forward, we will increasingly, I think, see less of that sort of attitude because of the pressing need around finances to co-operate and to work together much better.

[110] On the rural issues around disability, Disability Sport Wales has supported the placement of development officers in each of the local authorities in Wales, and that is to sustain grass-roots opportunities and to look at barriers. So, I hope that that will, in all parts of Wales, including rural areas, lead to further progress.

[111] **Jenny Rathbone:** The National Union of Teachers raised the issue of obesity and the link with physical activity and the fact that, unless diets change radically, physical activity is not going to tackle the obesity agenda. I wondered how closely you are working with the Minister for Health and Social Services on this, because it all starts at birth. It is not just about not eating things; it is about them not eating the right things, so they do not even have the energy to do physical activity.

[112] **John Griffiths:** I very much agree with you, Jenny, that, when we look at lifestyle issues, we have to deal with them in the round. I am very pleased that the new executive group that I mentioned earlier brings me together with Mark Drakeford and the Chief Medical Officer for Wales to look at physical education and sport as part of a wider picture. Also, Change4Life is very important in these matters, because it deals with lifestyles in the round; it is about diet and it is about exercise. I think that around 76,000 people or so are now registered as part of Change4Life; it is social marketing and it is an ongoing effort from year

to year. So, these issues are being joined up in terms of Welsh Government strategy and policy, but, again, we have to keep working at it. Changing lifestyles is very difficult and being preachy, as people describe it, does not always work either. So, you have to find new and better ways of getting key messages across.

[113] There are many other levers that we are familiar with as well, some of which are in UK Government hands, some in ours, in terms of the food industry and how the food industry operates. So, there are lots of matters to be considered around these issues, but we do have important joining up taking place within Welsh Government to address them.

[114] **Jenny Rathbone:** That is excellent. On the Active Travel (Wales) Bill, how much are you collaborating with the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport on ensuring that it is not just about how we walk to school or work, but that it is also about the tourism agenda and promoting more leisure activities?

[115] **John Griffiths:** Joint working with the Minister for economy on the Active Travel (Wales) Bill is very strong indeed. Obviously, the Minister's transport responsibilities include active travel, so it is very much a joint effort on our part. So, I can assure Members that that aspect of joining up is absolutely in place.

[116] **Jenny Rathbone:** Finally, can I request a note from your office on the StreetGames project? That sounds really interesting and is something that we could perhaps visit during the recess if we know exactly where these things are happening.

[117] **John Griffiths:** I am very happy to do that.

[118] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. That is perfect timing. Thank you, Minister, and your officials, for attending today. It has been a very interesting session, which has stimulated a lot of discussion and further questioning. We will send you a transcript of the meeting so that you can check it for factual accuracy, but thank you very much for attending.

[119] **John Griffiths:** Diolch yn fawr.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10.15 a.m. a 10.27 a.m.
The meeting adjourned between 10.15 a.m. and 10.27 a.m.*

Ymchwiliad i Lefelau Cyfranogiad mewn Chwaraeon—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 8 Inquiry into Participation Levels in Sport—Evidence Session 8

[120] **Christine Chapman:** If you are all happy to do so, we will start back a few minutes early.

[121] I welcome Edwina Hart, Minister for Economy, Science and Transport. With her is Rob Holt, head of tourism strategy. Welcome to you both.

[122] You have sent us a paper, which the Members will have read. So, if you are happy to do so, we will go straight into questions.

[123] **The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport (Edwina Hart):** Yes, Chair, I am, but I think that I should make a few remarks before we go into questions. We are very lucky today that Rob is here, because he is heavily involved in golf and tennis. So, we will have somebody who has a great deal of interest in the committee's inquiry.

[124] I think that it would be quite useful to look at the issues of participation in sport,

because I need to make it clear that that is not the primary role of my department in relation to major events. Major sporting events can serve a number of purposes, which, from our point of view, concentrate on economic, social and cultural wellbeing, providing opportunities to secure and enhance international reputations, contributing to a sense of place, and inspiring and engaging communities. I see the primary role of my department in major events as one that increases the economic impact of those events, particularly given the difficult economic climate and the significant budget pressures that we all face across the public sector.

[125] The major events team in the Government was set up to lead a coherent approach to major events, to act as a focal point for event owners considering holding events, and proactively to identify event opportunities. Its role is in event co-ordination, capacity building and increasing impact—it is not an event deliverer. Since taking responsibility for this area, I have had to look closely at it and consider whether events have a significant impact on Wales's economic development, its reputational profile, and whether we have the right profile of events. For example, do we have enough conferences, which also make up a very influential market?

[126] I thought that they were important points, Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to set out the context before I answer any questions from the committee.

[127] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you, Minister. I just want to pick up on some of those points that you raised. I wonder whether you could give us an update on the programme for government commitment to ensure that more major events are hosted in Wales in the future.

[128] **Edwina Hart:** In 2013-14—I think that I am correct, Rob—there are about 40 events that we are supporting. There are a number of key, major international events, such as the extreme sailing series, the ICC champions trophy, which has been successfully undertaken, and the rugby league cup final. Looking further ahead, we have the senior Open championships, Ashes tests 2015, and Rugby World Cup 2015 games, because we are picking up some of the matches from England, which will prove enormously successful—I think that we have eight games, have we not, Rob? We also have the Volvo ocean race in 2017-18, which is important. So, we are definitely upping the profile.

10.30 a.m.

[129] It might be of interest to Members to know that I have been on a number of trips recently. I was in Japan and I have to say that everybody I met there knew about the Ryder Cup in Newport. That was a significant development, on which Rob led from our side of the house. It shows that it does make a difference. The nicest thing was that I met with quite a large company and its board members had visited Wales for a meeting, because they wanted to play on the Celtic Manor golf course. So, I think that we are assured to keep that investment in Wales, because of the excellent golf facilities at Celtic Manor. So, you can understand how these major events brand across the world and draw people's attention to Wales.

[130] Therefore, we are content that we are looking at a major events programme, going forward, but we also need to recognise, Chair, that there is talk of other major events, such as the Commonwealth Games, which we have also been looking at, as a Government.

[131] **Christine Chapman:** Could you tell me, Minister, how does the major events unit decide which events to focus on? What methodology would you use?

[132] **Edwina Hart:** We have approaches from individuals and we look at what events are available to go for. I could give you an illustration and Rob will probably do the same. We have a relationship with the Welsh Rugby Union, which goes into schools and promotes

activity levels, which I know is of interest to the committee. The Welsh Rugby Union then decides what it might want to bid for and what it thinks would be good news, in terms of bringing things into Wales. Then, we would look at how we could assist, even if it is just lobbying on its behalf, looking at structures that need to be in place for any win. I do not know whether you want to take Members through how we go about it, Rob.

[133] **Mr Holt:** It would be a mixture of approaches. It could be that an event owner would approach the unit and say, 'We would like to bring this event to Wales'. It might be something a bit more proactive in terms of the natural environment, such as with cycling and the Tour of Britain, in which we are looking to promote the great countryside from mid and north Wales to Caerphilly. We also want to put the Cardiff International White Water centre on the world map as a tourist attraction, so we have recently looked to attract the second year of the Canoe Slalom World Championships. So, it depends on whether it is linked to the natural environment. We have the world cliff diving event at the 'Blue Lagoon' in Pembrokeshire—fantastic images of which are beamed around the world, supporting the coast path and our tourism strategy. Beyond that, we have the built infrastructure, as the Minister suggests, in terms of the Millennium Stadium. So, we look at events in a variety of ways. We are only talking about the sports events at the moment, but clearly, there are major events on the cultural side, such as the World Music Expo coming as well. So, it is a mixture.

[134] **Christine Chapman:** Do you feel that you are able to pick up most of the sports that are available, or are you building these up through relationships?

[135] **Mr Holt:** The Minister will be aware that, recently, the team was at the SportAccord convention, which is the biggest sports rights holders' event and will have been talking to the event owners. For example, a couple of years ago, we would have had the first meeting with the owners of the Tour de France. Unfortunately, we did not win that bid, but that relationship began at SportAccord. So, it is a mixture of us going out and asking, 'What are the events that Wales would want?' and 'What is available?' Clearly, in the current economic circumstances, there is also an element of 'What is the return on that investment and aspiration?', because budgets are tight.

[136] **Edwina Hart:** It is important that we recognise where our strengths are, because it links into our tourism potential as well. If you look at some of the things that we have done around the tourism strategy, and where we looked at how we can sell Wales. You can sell Wales in terms of all the mountain bike riding routes that we have in Wales. So, we have concentrated a lot on cycling tournaments, and we would have liked to have been involved in the Tour de France. There were issues around how we tried to get in on that, when that leg went, which the committee might be interested in, Rob.

[137] **Mr Holt:** We worked very hard with UK Sport to put together a British bid and, unfortunately, we lost out—the event owners decided that they were going to hold it in Yorkshire. However, it is something that remains on the agenda, going forward, I am sure, because it would be a great opportunity.

[138] **Gwyn R. Price:** Minister, you just touched on the 2026 Commonwealth Games, to which we are all looking forward. We will also be working with partners in relation to the Glasgow 2014 Games. Could you tell me the outcome of the initial feasibility study in respect of working with these partnerships?

[139] **Edwina Hart:** Obviously, we do have partners, such as Cardiff Council, Sports Wales and the Commonwealth Games Council for Wales, which, I think, has been particularly helpful in terms of the dialogue that we had initially when we looked at the Commonwealth Games. We did the feasibility study for technical advice on potential venues because the issue around this—and we have to look at future work—is, of course, the costs

that are associated with the Commonwealth Games, just in terms of changing and looking at venues. So, we looked at whether venues were capable of being extended et cetera, rather than building new venues. Also, we have now gone on to look at the Glasgow model, in real terms, and to consider the regeneration issues around that, which other Ministers are particularly keen on in terms of the regeneration. If you look at creating a sports village, it is a question of what that is used for in the future. Obviously, it will be used for housing in the future, so it could be a valuable infrastructure project. To be frank with you, we are doing some more work on this, which we are taking forward. We are very conscious of the budgetary position as we move into any of this agenda. The other issue, of course, is transportation, when you look at the whole issues around what you require. Participants require being within easy reach of where they have to compete and so on—I think that it is a maximum of an hour that they were looking at, Rob.

[140] **Mr Holt:** Yes, an hour.

[141] **Edwina Hart:** We have to take all of these issues into account. I know that it seems like plenty of time to 2026, but we have also asked people to look at what sporting venues in that period, in an ideal world, need to be replaced, as part of the normal process of replacing venues, so that you could put it into the timescale. It is quite a complex agenda, and we are working through it with partners.

[142] We are working across portfolios particularly well. I know that the Minister for Housing and Regeneration is very keen on this regeneration aspect. He sees that as a type of legacy issue—what is the legacy that you leave behind? We have to look very carefully at what legacies will be left behind by the Olympics and what real benefits there are to ordinary people. It is not just the glory of the event but, at the end of the day, what is left for people to say, ‘They did well. They did that, and that has actually helped us within communities’. There is no point in us having new stadia and so on that cannot be utilised by young people for sporting activity. So, we are working our way slowly through, but I think that the main issue, Chair, will be the finance and, in these tight times, whether the public purse can even afford to kick start some of the process in terms of what is required, as we see with the impact of the comprehensive spending review.

[143] **Mike Hedges:** I have two questions. First, on the Tour de France, I hope that you will keep on bidding, because it is making its way around. Secondly, in terms of major sporting events—you mentioned many of them—I can tell you that the major sporting events next year will be Swansea City and Cardiff City playing against the likes of Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea. Those are far more major sporting events than anything that you mentioned, apart from the Ryder Cup. How do we build on that? When Swansea played Manchester United—and it was on the television—it had viewing figures that the Commonwealth Games do not even touch.

[144] **Edwina Hart:** Interestingly enough, we have started to do a strand of work in relation to the major clubs in the premiership and where their supporters are based. We discovered, when I was on a trip to Norway, that clubs like Manchester United have a large number of supporters in places like Norway. The Norwegians regarded supporting football as a family outing. So, we will be looking at whether there is an issue for charter flights into Cardiff for major events where they have big sporting interests. So, that is an area that we will definitely look at.

[145] In terms of the big events, we have our corporate arrangements now, both with Cardiff and Swansea. We have boxes there, and we have advertising on the ground. We use our boxes to encourage our partners, whether it is new business or whether they are here already, to keep them happy. Also, we occasionally share the box with Swansea because we might have a mutual interest in someone coming in. We now have the same arrangements in

place with Cardiff, because we recognise that, in terms of the Premier League, this is big business. Swansea's report indicated that it was £50 million, possibly, into the local economy as a result of the issues around Swansea. I have no doubt that Cardiff will also be in on it. There will be sufficient growth. I obviously do not want to get into the difficulties of Swansea/Cardiff in this discussion, because I realise that there are supporters of both around this particular table. I have to be even-handed as Minister, in terms of ensuring that we maximise the benefit of both of them in the Premier League. We need to make sure that, if we can get people in to watch football from the other clubs in the premiership—bearing in mind that, in terms of the tourism market, our biggest market is England—we make a success of bringing them in for those events. It is then a matter of taking them on so that they say, 'Next time I come, I will have a few more days' or, 'I will return to Wales for a holiday'. Do you want to add to that, Rob, as you have been dealing with negotiations on this?

10.40 a.m.

[146] **Mr Holt:** As soon as Swansea went up, we did a deal with it, so you will have seen that the stand is branded Visit Wales. We also have branding in the visiting spectators area and you will have seen, during the live games, that the Minister has secured advertising on Sky during the breaks. So, it is a good working relationship. Swansea council, when it knows that Newcastle is coming down, for example, would look to do some work with the local papers to try to encourage people down to stay not just for the game, but for a little longer. It has worked well, and we hope to do the same with Cardiff going forward.

[147] **Mike Hedges:** Briefly, may I say that Holland and Denmark have substantial numbers of Swansea supporters?

[148] **Peter Black:** And Spain.

[149] **Christine Chapman:** I have a few Members who now want to come in. I have Lindsay, Mark and then Leighton.

[150] **Lindsay Whittle:** I am all in favour of attracting major sporting events to Wales. I attended the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh—I think that it was in 1985—which was a magnificent event to attend, and, every year since 1985, I have returned to Edinburgh for my holidays, and I am going again in August.

[151] **Edwina Hart:** It does work.

[152] **Lindsay Whittle:** So, it does work; that is evidence. However, what I am concerned about is that if we are investing—if we have any money to invest—in a new stadium et cetera in these austere times, how do we ensure that those people who cannot afford to get into the events can do more than watch them on television, and be in the stadium to be part of them, because that is part of the excitement as well? A friend of mine attended a rugby international recently with his wife and three sons. It was £400 before they had walked through the front door. That is a lot of money. If he was unemployed, he would never have been able to afford it.

[153] **Edwina Hart:** I think that this is an issue of balance. We have to understand that these are commercial people who are running these events and having our support, and we have to recognise that they will need to make a profit. However, we try to engage, particularly on major sporting events, about what we would like to do and whether they can help in terms of ticket costs and packages. Rob can outline some of the issues.

[154] **Mr Holt:** The event's rights holder usually retains all the income, so that becomes an issue, but during the Ryder Cup, for example, on the Tuesday and Wednesday, we gave out

thousands of tickets for schoolchildren to go along to the event. It was great to see them all wandering around on the practice days. As I understand it, with the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, they have a pricing structure that allows a lower level of entry. The key is to try to build that into the discussions at the beginning with the rights holder. It is the same as when you are looking at participation—you need to build it into the discussions at the very beginning, as we did with the Ryder Cup in terms of legacy funding et cetera. It is part of that initial discussion; you cannot just add it on at the end. Those are the elements.

[155] At the canoe slalom world championships the other week, 750 under-18-year-olds went out on the water to try paddling as part of the event. At the seniors event at Royal Porthcawl Golf Club, there was coaching for juniors and there was a pro-am for the youngsters as well. It needs to be built in at the beginning by having that working relationship with the event organisers to make that happen.

[156] **Lindsay Whittle:** That is encouraging news; thank you.

[157] **Mark Isherwood:** Bala Town's international victory in Rhyl may be considered major by some people, but how big does an event have to be to qualify as major? I think, for example, of the rugby league world cup at Glyndŵr or, starting today, the world cup for wheelchair rugby teams that England is hosting. Would they be classed as major and where is the line drawn?

[158] **Mr Holt:** There are different levels. There are major events, signature events and growth events, so it depends on the nature of the event. We are funding the rugby league world cup, as you are probably aware, through the major events unit. We are happy to look at any events. We would look at economic impact and profile and the ability to grow an event—look at Hay, where that came from to where it is now, and at the Green Man festival and others that have grown up from smaller events. The major events unit's criteria are available. I am happy to send them through so that you are able to have a look at them and see which events qualify to apply.

[159] **Edwina Hart:** In addition, in terms of events, you have to look sometimes at events that might take off very much in the future, and we do look at that. Sometimes, we support quite small events, because they are of regional significance and help a wider strand in terms of the development of policy. We also have to recognise that other organisations can help events, not only us. The arts council, for instance, would be helping Brecon jazz as opposed to us, and the sports council helps others, but, at the end of the day, it is all our money, or public money in terms of the lottery, so it is important that we know and put the appropriate things in in terms of how we fund.

10.45 a.m.

[160] It is a strategy across the piece, and I am sure that committee will be interested in what the arts council and sports council are doing in this regard, and how they put their money in to support events. Does that actually support the agenda that you are looking at in terms of participation in sport? That is another angle as well.

[161] **Christine Chapman:** That is a good point. We need to make a note of that.

[162] **Leighton Andrews:** I would like to make the point that some of us actually pay for our own tickets to these events. [*Laughter.*]

[163] I wanted to raise the issue of what cross-departmental collaboration there can be around the promotion of major sporting events. For example, in respect of higher education, there is the attractiveness of the major cities in Wales and, now, the Premier League teams, of

course, and the benefits that that can bring when recruiting for overseas students is substantial. We have had some very good connections with higher education institutions and your department over that. I just wondered if you wanted to explore that for a moment.

[164] **Edwina Hart:** We see this as a key area, and we have only to look at the example of the ownership of one major premier league club, and the number of students who are therefore attracted from that particular nation, not just to Cardiff, but to south Wales. We do look at these issues strategically if there is a particular interest in sport. When you see some sports trying to expand into other areas, particularly in the far east, if we are supporting that sporting body or event in Wales, then we might get a spin off into FE and HE. The Member makes a very good point. We have to look at this holistically. We obviously have a close working relationship with the Minister for Culture and Sport, and with education. Sometimes, there is a wider community issue, in that you are locating somewhere that actually helps other people—local authorities and other groups as well. We see it as a holistic role that we take in terms of how we deal with the funding of major events.

[165] **Mr Holt:** I think that education colleagues have done some work in talking to the community trusts about Swansea City and Cardiff City, and that needs to be taken further. Swansea and Cardiff have good outreach programmes into the community looking at the corporate social responsibility agenda. You will see that the Premier League takes that very seriously as well, so it is something that we can explore further.

[166] **Peter Black:** Just going back on the legacy issues, and this cross-working issue, you have talked, Minister, about your main interest being the economic legacy, and you talked about regeneration and working with Carl Sargeant. I am just wondering to what extent you evaluate the impact of events on the wellbeing of individuals and communities. You may not do that yourself, but do you work with other departments to do that?

[167] **Edwina Hart:** I would not say that that was our primary focus in terms of evaluation. On the other hand, work does go on elsewhere, and it is a strand of work we have considered doing more on as I look at the role of major events in collaboration with others. It is important that you look at the benefits of an event in a wider way than perhaps we have looked at them historically. If somebody came to an event with me from a company and then said that they would invest in Wales, I could say that the event has brought so many jobs, or I could say that people are happy. Some can be can objective and some quite subjective.

[168] When you look at some of the issues around the Olympic games and outcomes, if you look at how many people actually watched the torch relays, I know this sounds silly, but probably one in four were attracted to that, and that is quite significant, because it is an unprecedented level in terms of public involvement and engagement, and some of those are bound to want to engage in something else again. We had about 24 national training camps and all these people, and that significantly helped local economies in terms of what those people spent. Then you can look at the 11 football matches that came to the stadium, and we could probably say what that did in economic development terms, and the fact that they were there for an event that was based in London. Of course, they were expensive to go to if you were in London, but it was much cheaper in many ways to come here. My only sadness about the football stuff at the Olympics was that we had to deal with the Olympic people rather than being able to do something ourselves for a more localised population, so that you have the benefit for communities and everything. We have also looked at the positive stuff that came out of that. I think there were 68 or 70 Welsh companies that had contracts out of it, so you have to look at all these issues. There is a point—Rob, I do not know if you want to cover this—about doing more evaluation on this.

[169] **Mr Holt:** It needs to be horses for courses, because with some of the smaller events, if you are going to do an economic impact study and get someone external in to look at it, it is

expensive. It also takes staff resource to do it, to get people around the site in order to give out handouts, and so on. Each event that we fund uses the industry standard events impacts tool, which was developed by UK Sport and the University of Sheffield and is the industry standard in terms of events. With regard to the bigger events—and I will go back to the Ryder Cup, if I may—we did an economic impact study in 2005, before the event, to have an understanding of what we might get from it and how we could maximise that. We did the actual study in 2010, which said that the impact was about £82 million. We are also—and this is unique—feeding into the study for 2014 and asking people in Scotland, when they go to Gleneagles, if they went to Wales and whether they have been back to Wales. Also, beyond that, we still have in place the golf tourism monitor, which is monitoring the number of golf tourists coming to Wales after the event. So, this is the third year for which we will have this in place after the event. So, there is a level of monitoring, but it needs to be catered to the standard of the event. The Commonwealth Games is very different to, for example, the food festival in Conwy, or something similar, which we fund. It needs to be tailored.

[170] **Edwina Hart:** We are aware that there was criticism about the benefits of golf. You have heard some evidence on this, have you not? I think that Pembrokeshire was complaining that it had not had a significant increase in terms of golf memberships, and so on. However, Pembrokeshire has not necessarily engaged in the way some other areas have, has it, Rob?

[171] **Mr Holt:** Golf Development Wales—and I declare an interest as the chair of Golf Development Wales outside the office—is working with Pembrokeshire. The four clubs in Pembrokeshire are working together for, I think, the first time. So, Golf 4 Pembrokeshire is looking to market itself and also looking to share equipment. Tenby golf course had a legacy fund grant and had a three-hole course, which has contributed hugely to trying to get people to participate. As it says in our paper, there are 40 legacy fund facilities for golf across Wales as a result of the Ryder Cup, with almost 200 holes, which are spread all around Wales. So, I can go to most places in Wales and still be welcomed, despite some people saying that it would not benefit the whole of Wales. As I said, you have to plan in at the beginning what you want the legacy outcome to be, and it is before, during and after an event that you need that legacy participation element to be built into it.

[172] **Edwina Hart:** The independent report calculated that there was about £80 million of direct benefit to the economy from the Ryder Cup and the direct benefit for south-east Wales was about £8 million, which is not insignificant. However, the point is—and this is another issue—that it came in to Wales, it did good and people saw it. Another benefit of some of the stuff that came out of the Olympics was the number volunteering there. Volunteering starts to be a very important aspect, as people get hooked on the game. We have been looking at some of the issues relating to volunteering and how this can promote volunteering. The Olympic Games promoted volunteering, and we also had 1,000 or more volunteers for the Ryder Cup, did we not, who were going to golf events? That has given them an interest. Therefore, you can see that there is something coming through from the game. So, what you are delving into as a committee is a very complex area in terms of the relationships, the wins, the gains, and everything else. It is not as straightforward as being able to say, ‘I have had 100 jobs as a result of this’. It is nothing like that.

[173] **Peter Black:** Putting the Ryder Cup to one side, because it does appear to be an unique event, when you come to plan a major event, such as a rugby league or a football event, or another sporting event, as this comes under your orbit, do you talk to John Griffiths’s department about how that will impact in terms of increased participation at a club level, and is that planned together with John’s officials as part of that event planning?

[174] **Mr Holt:** Yes, we definitely consult with John’s team. The key issue, though, is for the event owners and the governing body to be talking. Event owners can be the ones who act as the catalyst to put in place a programme, which they need to link into the national

governing body. I will go back to canoeing; getting the Welsh canoeing union and the British Canoe Union involved in the event, and getting schools in with the event is what you need to do. Without the event owner's engagement, you cannot have that participation level. For some events, such as Ironman and the Cardiff half marathon, the sports elite and the mass participation elements will be together, but you have to work between the event owner and the governing body in order to deliver a participation agenda.

[175] **Edwina Hart:** I also believe, in terms of events and the governing bodies, that we have to recognise that there is a different level of expertise and experience in some governing bodies. For instance, if you talk to the Welsh Rugby Union and others, they have invested significantly over the years in understanding how to manage events and how to maximise capacity to get the benefits. There is sometimes an issue with smaller groups that we deal with in that they do not necessarily have the skills within those bodies even for that engagement. That takes an awful lot of time, Peter, in terms of us having to work through some of those issues with them. So, the development of skills in the managing bodies of sport is quite important, if there are events within their area, in terms of knowing what to attract. They have to be up to the task of negotiating and dealing with this, only with the support of Government, because, if they are not taking the lead in wanting the event and do not have the experience or expertise, we do not get a sniff at getting it.

[176] **Mike Hedges:** I have two questions. Can you think of an event better than the Ryder Cup to promote Wales in north America? Secondly, certainly in my lifetime, we have never had the British Open Golf Championship in Wales; I do not believe that we have ever had the British Open Golf Championship in Wales. I know that you could not get it in the near future, because a lot of work would need to be done to some of the links courses for it to happen, but is that on the long-term agenda?

[177] **Edwina Hart:** I will ask Rob to answer. I prefer a good walk, so he can cover it.

[178] **Mr Holt:** Any decision in terms of the open is with the Royal and Ancient Golf Club; we could not pre-empt its views on it. However, the fact that we have the Senior Open Championships—the first time that Wales has had a major championship—at Royal Porthcawl next year is a great positive. We have showcased Celtic Manor, but Royal Porthcawl is probably one of the great links courses of Europe. Having the likes of Colin Montgomerie, Jimenez, Davis Love III, Corey Pavin and other Americans will help.

[179] In America, an American businessman once told me that we should buy a baseball franchise and call it 'Wales'. However, in my view, golf is one of the key ones, as the Minister indicates. If we can attract an American football game to the Millennium stadium, that might resonate in America, but America is a very tough market to crack.

[180] **Jenny Rathbone:** Moving on slightly, the Active Travel (Wales) Bill is a key plank in the Government's agenda for getting more people to be more physically active in their daily lives. Once John Griffiths has steered the legislation through the Senedd, what role does your department have in ensuring that local authorities deliver improved pedestrian and cycling routes?

[181] **Edwina Hart:** In terms of the Active Travel (Wales) Bill, as you rightly indicated, John Griffiths is taking the lead. My departmental officials are assisting him in terms of how he is taking the legislation through. We have an excellent and close relationship on it, and we will be working with John to ensure that we deliver the benefits of the Bill to all our activities.

[182] **Jenny Rathbone:** So, what role does your department have in supporting local authorities to deliver?

[183] **Edwina Hart:** In real terms, I have a role, because I have the responsibilities for it, but John will be primarily taking the lead with my support on these issues.

[184] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay, but I am keen to find out whether getting the Bill through is going to make any difference at all, because authorities can map existing provision, but are we going to see any improvements?

[185] **Edwina Hart:** At the end of the day, my role and function on the Active Travel (Wales) Bill is to support John. My role and function with regard to the major events unit has nothing to do with the Active Travel (Wales) Bill.

[186] **Jenny Rathbone:** True, but, in terms of your tourism and transport responsibilities, what input do you think that you may have to make this a success?

[187] **Edwina Hart:** Well, I have the input that I have. John is taking the lead, and I will be guided by John and his views on how to take these matters forward. We will work collaboratively on this particular agenda. The First Minister ensured that John took up an issue that he was really interested and passionate about seeing through in terms of Government, and I have supported John all the way and will continue to support him. However, I will be taking his help and advice, and having discussions with him about how all this can be implemented practically. The Government is absolutely committed to the Active Travel (Wales) Bill, and, at the end of the day, we will take matters forward.

[188] **Jenny Rathbone:** What impact do you think that it will have on the roads development strategy?

[189] **Edwina Hart:** Can you be more specific in your question about that?

[190] **Jenny Rathbone:** Well, obviously, improving the safety of cyclists and pedestrians has some impact on other road users, namely cars and buses. Therefore, how do your plans for improving roads for vehicles tie-in with the Active Travel (Wales) Bill agenda?

[191] **Edwina Hart:** I am currently reviewing my position regarding what roads I will be dealing with. I have got my commitment in terms of what I do regarding cyclists as part of my wider portfolio. Forgive me, Chair, but we are now getting into very detailed issues around my transport budget and everything that I did not assume that I would not be asked about in relation to this particular inquiry.

11.00 a.m.

[192] **Jenny Rathbone:** Well, it is about sports and physical activity, and this is a key part of how we are going to get more people active.

[193] **Edwina Hart:** I did preface my remarks about my involvement in this agenda and my responsibility for the major events unit. Forgive me, Chair, I am not normally like this, but I do not wish to be drawn on some of these issues at this stage, until I have actually gone through all of the issues that surround this and the impact of the Active Travel (Wales) Bill. I currently have to give major consideration to my budget position on all of these matters, and I would not want to pre-empt discussions that I might be having elsewhere.

[194] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. Jenny, do you want to follow up any questions on the inquiry?

[195] **Jenny Rathbone:** I think that it is going to be difficult to go much further on this.

[196] **Christine Chapman:** Janet is next.

[197] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Earlier this morning, we talked about Sport Wales and surveys that it is carrying out. What work has the Welsh Government undertaken to measure the impact of the Olympic and Paralympic Games? Really, the question is on levels of participation in sports, but in relation to the wider agenda that you are responsible for.

[198] **Edwina Hart:** Looking at the impact of the Olympics across the piece is quite a difficult area. I think, in terms of it being a national event and focus, the impact was definitely there. There was the concentration that Visit Britain did on looking at the tourist strands and how the UK was marketed everywhere—we were part of that campaign, and I think that we had additional cash as well. That was very positive in terms of building the image. I have to say that, when I was in Japan, they were very excited because they are bidding for the Olympics. They are one of three possible locations and there will be a decision between Japan, Turkey and Spain, I think. They were really interested in how it had all been managed, because they saw it as being so successful on their screens in terms of the transport infrastructure working and the fact that the stadia were full. That had a good impact, I have to say, on business discussions, because they were interested in how things had been done. There might be business opportunities quite clearly emerging from that because they were so interested in the flow and so on. So, that is an aside. That is almost not measurable, but, if they get the bid, I think that they will make links into companies that might have done work here—they might not be Welsh companies, but certainly they will be UK companies—about how those things were managed and they have taken on that wider experience. We found that quite good, but I am not sure, in measurement terms, how we can deal with some of the issues.

[199] **Mr Holt:** I think that we cannot, as the Olympics was a UK agenda, effectively, which we got more than our share of. As I understand it, Department for Culture, Media and Sport did some work last year, which, from memory, I think was published in November, in relation to an evaluation which said, ‘Yes, great medal haul, great infrastructure, we delivered it well.’ My understanding was that DCMS is doing some further work on the wider outcomes, which it is going to publish this summer. I say that from memory of information on a DCMS website some time ago, but that was my understanding. So, the lead on it, I think, is at a UK level. As the Minister indicated, the ‘Great’ campaign drew on the fact that we were promoting Britain abroad.

[200] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** So, your department has not spent any funds on carrying out any—

[201] **Edwina Hart:** No. We would be more than happy to make inquiries of DCMS if it would be helpful to the committee, Chair, to see what work is available from it and when it is likely to publish that work, because I think that there is general interest in this. For instance, if any one of the home nations ever hosted a World Cup or anything like that again, it would be useful to see it. We will probably do some work on the basis of the Rugby World Cup, in terms of the fact that England hosted and we took eight matches. We will probably look at what impact those eight had on us in very real terms and that relationship. However, I am more than happy for officials to find that out, if it will help the committee’s inquiry.

[202] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** My final question is that your paper says that

[203] ‘the challenge for us all is to ensure that we use large scale sporting events as a catalyst to help encourage people of all ages, gender and social groups to volunteer or take part in sport in such a way that is long-term and sustainable.’

[204] What practical steps can you say that your department is taking to address this?

[205] **Edwina Hart:** I think that it is a very important point that the Member has made about promoting volunteering. When you look at the number of volunteers that were involved in the Olympics and other events, it is increasingly important that people will want to volunteer, because, as a volunteer, you can, of course, view these events and be part and parcel of them, in terms of the guide system and everything. We would want to encourage that and I think that we would want to encourage perhaps not the usual suspects in terms of volunteering. There are certain people who will always volunteer to do things in life and, really, you want to try to get people from different backgrounds to volunteer, different social classes to be actively involved in it, and so on. We have been doing some work in the area, Rob, have we not?

[206] **Mr Holt:** Certainly, the major events team, when looking at events, will talk to the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, Sport Wales and local authorities about volunteering. I think that, down in Porthcawl, we need 100 volunteers, and when it comes to the Wales Seniors Open, I think that that number increases to 500 to 600 volunteers. So, we need to draw on the pool of volunteers. There will be volunteers in Glasgow next year, which will, hopefully, come off the back of the Olympic Games, which includes some Welsh people. We need to draw on the knowledge that is out there. Some people need to be qualified in different areas, but, if we can extend it more widely, as the Minister indicates, that would be brilliant.

[207] **Janet Finch-Saunders:** Great. Thank you for your response.

[208] **Edwina Hart:** Also, Chair, I think Janet Finch-Saunders has hit on an issue that fits very well into the tourism strategy. When we market Wales, it is very important that we market a product that is about Wales; that it is friendly, and so on. With destination management issues, you do not just look at where places are. To use your example of your constituents in Llandudno, people come to Llandudno, because it is ideal, but, if we are going to put more effort in on the tourism side for individuals to be helpful, you can look at guides, who are enormously helpful, but I also think that there is a programme for people who work in shops in the town in terms of understanding that the person who comes up to their checkout might be a tourist, and when they help and assist them around the shop to find what they want, they could help them to gift wrap the stuff as well.

[209] I know that it is tangential, but it is all part of the same thing, because we want our volunteers not only to understand how they take tourists to the golf course and where the hole is and where they are going, but also to speak about the locality and how beautiful it is and ask them, 'While you are here, what about seeing something else?' So, there is a wider issue in volunteering, which is actually the marketing of Wales. Every volunteer, really, is a salesperson for us, as a nation, in trying to get people back in. So, that experience is something that we have to start to work harder on in terms of looking at issues across portfolio.

[210] **Christine Chapman:** May I ask about the skill levels? I know that that issue probably now sits with the new Deputy Minister, in terms of training for people, locally, to take up these jobs. They might start off as volunteers, but it is about having that sustainable impact. What work is being done on that?

[211] **Edwina Hart:** Go ahead, Rob; I want to talk about a language issue afterwards.

[212] **Mr Holt:** It is also about that whole welcome host type of thing, as the Minister alludes to. For example, we have the Wales Rally GB, which received such a warm welcome in north Wales that we are now basing it there; that is one of the reasons. It is certainly something that the major events unit needs to talk more about in terms of the skills associated with volunteering. We are looking at an event industry website, where we can better engage

with the industry out there, because events are growing. We have talked about national governing bodies; they are employers and events are employers. Even when you look at golf clubs in Wales, most of them probably employ 20 people, so they are SMEs; they are businesses. These days, sports clubs, in order to survive, have to treat themselves as businesses and they employ people. So, that skills agenda is an important one in terms of the events industry.

[213] **Edwina Hart:** One of the areas that I would like to look at is volunteers' linguistic skills. That is quite important, if we host international events. If we have people coming from other countries and you have volunteers with relevant linguistic skills, they can do a good job in terms of selling. Linguistic skills is one of the issues that we have been looking at in terms of cruises, in terms of whether, when people come off the ships, they have a guide who can speak to them in their own language, especially as we are now trying to do a lot of work with Germany in this regard, so we have to make sure that there are German-speaking guides. Also, if we are interested in the wider market, such as Russia or elsewhere, we will need people who speak those languages. So, this is a very pertinent point and it might be a good idea, in light of the Chair's comments, to ask the Deputy Minister perhaps to look at issues around the linguistic skills of hosts and volunteers at major events, to ensure that we can maximise the potential of the money that we put in. I will certainly take that up, and, of course, if the committee wants to make that observation, I would be more than happy to respond.

[214] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. I think that most of the questions have been answered. I know that most of the areas have been covered. I thank the Minister and her official, Rob Holt, for attending today. We will send you a transcript of the meeting, so that you can check it for factual accuracy. Thank you very much.

[215] **Edwina Hart:** Thank you very much indeed, Chair.

11.09 a.m.

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog Rhif 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd
Motion under Standing Order No. 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public**

[216] **Christine Chapman:** I move that

the committee resolves to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Standing Order No. 17.42(vi).

[217] I see that the committee is in agreement.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 11.09 a.m.
The public part of the meeting ended at 11.09 a.m.*