

Third sector representatives meet with Minister for Rural Affairs

Twice a year representatives from third sector organisations have the opportunity to meet with each of the Welsh Assembly Government's cabinet ministers. The autumn meeting with Elin Jones, Minister for Rural Affairs, discussed reports from the Welsh Assembly Government on the Rural Development Plan, the Bovine TB eradication programme and the Rural Affairs departmental action plan, and contributions from the third sector on fuel poverty in rural areas and rural aspects of domestic abuse.

The third sector organisations representatives expressed concern at the funding arrangements for the Rural Development Plan which make no provision for funding in advance and are particularly difficult for third sector organisations with limited cash reserves. The Minister confirmed that the European Commission had ruled that advance payments cannot be made under the RDP or any other Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) funded programme but agreed to seek to raise the advance payments issue at the next CAP round.

Following discussion of the third sector paper on rural fuel poverty the Minister said that she is working with the lead Minister, Jane Davidson AM, to explore the rural dimensions of the proposed Strategy. The findings of a Deep Rural study was being published in December which included details of energy consumption in deep rural areas.

The Minister also said that she would raise the Third Sector's concerns regarding WAG's new Violence against Women and Domestic Abuse Strategic Action Plan with colleagues in the Department for Social Justice and Local Government.

You can find copies of the all papers and minutes of ministerial meetings at

http://www.wcva.org.uk/policy/dsp_paper_ministerial.cfm?0=0&display_sitetextid=174&sub=3 or

http://www.wcva.org.uk/policy/dsp_paper_ministerial.cfm?0=0&display_sitetextid=174&sub=3&lang=cy