Many have been asking what are the possible effects that the The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 will have on the third sector in Wales. Welsh Ministers are in the process of drafting the standards, and they are expected to be in place by the end of 2014. Gradually over the next few years these standards will replace statutory Welsh language schemes.

How will standards affect the third sector?
The Welsh Language Commissioner recognises the third sector’s role in promoting and facilitating the Welsh language. Third sector organisations often work directly with the public therefore it’s vitally important that they offer bilingual services in order to communicate effectively with the public.

Some third sector organisations are named in the Measure as bodies which will have to comply with standards. Other third sector organisations will have to comply due to the fact they are receiving over £400,000 of public Money, or if they are acting on behalf of another organisation which has to comply with standards. Traditionally, third sector organisations are innovative in identifying their service users’ needs and operating inclusively. Many third sector organisations operate bilingually even though there is no legislative pressure on them to do so. They understand that there are many advantages to offering bilingual services.

- It conforms to their national identity
- It’s good practice
- They want to provide a Welsh language service in order to respect the user’s language choice

As more Welsh speakers feel confident in asking for Welsh medium Services, there will be increasing pressure on organisations to provide bilingual services. The Welsh Language Commissioner aims to promote the third sector’s voluntarily use of the Welsh Language and to encourage Welsh speakers to make use of those services. The Commissioner will need to complete a gap analysis to gain a better understanding of any support that the sector might need.

The Welsh Language Commissioner is eager to work in partnership to avoid duplicating work in a difficult economical climate. The Commissioner will also provide training for organizations to prepare them for the change in legislation. The Commissioner’s third sector unit is in the process of preparing a work plan which will demonstrate how the Welsh Language Commissioner intends to work with the third sector in Wales 2013-2015. The Commissioner is eager to gain responses to the work plan, and will be advertising how you can have your say on its contents in a future issue of Network.
Making the Connections

The Making the Connections project aims to support the delivery of the Single Integrated Plan (SIP) through strengthening the capacity of third sector organisations to contribute effectively to public service design, development and delivery.

Are you a Third Sector organisation who delivers public services? Or would like to become more involved in public service delivery? If so please could you spend a few minutes completing this questionnaire?

Please click here https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/B97HRT

Also the Training and Support Needs Analysis survey will assist the Making the Connections Officer and other officers at your CVC to provide the right support to your organisation to enable you to become more involved in public service design. To complete the Training and Support Needs Analysis survey, Please click here https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/

Conwy and Denbighshire’s Local Service Board - FIT for purpose!

Financial Inclusion Together or FIT, is a local service board project supported by the European Social Fund through Welsh Government. Financial Inclusion Together aims to develop partnership working and improve people's access to the financial services, advice and support they need, ultimately reducing poverty. The FIT projects objectives are to:

- improve the strategic co-ordination and collaboration of services across Conwy and Denbighshire
- to ensure that financial inclusion is integrated and embedded into the normal service delivery of relevant public, private and third sector organisations
- improve access to quality financial inclusion information and advice services which will ensure that people in Conwy and Denbighshire are empowered to manage a challenging economic future.

The Making the Connections Officers are proud to be a part of this worthwhile project and were pleased to go along to the official launch on the 26th September. The event marked the release of the project’s Baseline Report and the launch of the pilot Awareness Raising Programme.

The morning was attended by the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, Jeff Cuthbert AM who during his speech said ‘The Welsh Government is committed to taking action to benefit people experiencing, or at risk of poverty. That is why it is so pleasing to see the work being done to ensure financial inclusion is integrated and embedded into the service delivery of public, private and third sector organisations’.

Andrew Bowden, Chair of the Joint Local Service Board, Chief Executive of Cartrefi Conwy and Project Board Member said ‘By December 2014 it is hoped that Conwy and Denbighshire LSB will have it's own integrated approach to financial inclusion and strong evidence of how such a model really is fit for reducing poverty and improving the lives of people within Conwy and Denbighshire’.

The emphasis of the project is firmly on partnership working between third sector and public sector organisations, building capacity and working with existing services to ensure effective referrals and sign posting. As the project moves into the delivery phase the launch was a great opportunity to recognise the valuable contributions from partner organisations and stakeholders to date.
Co Production

‘Coproduction’? Revolutionary or just another buzz word?

Why the co-production approach matters to all of us.

The needs of people and communities best met when they are properly valued, listened to and involved in service planning and delivery in their own communities. ‘Co-production’ is not just another buzz word for ‘working together’, in many ways it is revolutionary because it is about much greater equality between professionals and citizens.

The good news is that there are loads of amazing examples of individuals, families and communities helping to shape better public services including services for vulnerable families, young –people and people with dementia. All of our challenge is to take this kind of great practice to scale.

The co-production movement is gathering momentum in Wales with key Ministers promoting the value of democratising services. We want to make sure that RCT builds upon its rich heritage of mutuality and co-operation to be part of it. When people and communities are more widely recognised as part of the solution a whole wealth of latent potential will be unleashed. We know this because already some communities within RCT have coproduced radically reduced crime, improved educational outcomes and improved their local environment.

As well as disseminating great practice we are setting up a series of exciting action research projects with universities and local service providers. The projects will explore ways to make collaboration and coproduction easier for public services to mainstream. As this kind of climate is achieved, positive social outcomes will rapidly unfold.

- Is your organisation, or are the organisations that you know co-producing?
- To what extent are your service users/community members really, really valued as a sets (and NOT as a drain on resources)?
- How well do you know your service users, their skills and interest that they may want to use to achieve personal and social benefits?
- To what extent do you design and deliver services with community members / service providers?
- Do you have a ‘give and take’ relationship with your service users and providers? How do you thank people for their time / involvement?
- To what extent do you support peer support networks for active service users / community members to share knowledge and skills with each other?
- To what extent does your organisation break down the barriers between professionals and service users / community members?

DOES YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE SOME INSIGHTS INTO THIS? IF SO, WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! Contact Jenny 01443 846200 / johara@interlinkrct.org.uk
Workshops and Training

Campaigning Workshop

All CVCs in Wales were given the opportunity to work with the Campaigning charity, Sheila McKechnie Foundation (SMK) and supported by The Tudor Trust, to hold a workshop on ‘Introduction to campaign strategy and planning’. The Conwy and Denbighshire Making the Connections officers were thrilled at the opportunity to host this really interesting and informative event.

Fifteen organisations came along to find out more and were given the opportunity to explore the different ways to campaign, how to put a strategy in place, practice making a pitch to win support for your campaign and how to mobilise themselves to ‘influence change or prevent change’. Harmit Kambo, who facilitated the event from SMK, then gave small teams a task based on a case study, to develop a basic strategy, deciding the key aim of the campaign, who will be the target audience to make the change happen and agree the range of tactics you would employ to ensure success.

An expert panel attended in the afternoon, which included Ann Jones, AM and journalist Clare Savage gave their perspectives on the topic and stayed for a question and answer session to allow delegates to further explore how to use both political systems and the media to enhance their campaigning strategy.

The workshop was very well received. Feedback from attendees, they felt motivated to campaign and understood how to do this effectively.

Making the Connections turning the third sector green in Conwy and Denbighshire!

On 3rd October a training course on Environmental management systems was held at the Blind Veterans Centre as a joint venture between Making the Connections Project Officers in Conwy and Denbighshire and Business Wales.

Environmental management systems and policies are key to third sector organisations - they are not only required as part of the tendering process but also save the organisation money by reducing energy outgoings and resource wastage and of course reduce the impact of the organisation on the environment.

As well as discovering that Wales currently requires ‘3 planet earths’ to support our energy consumption, the group also looked at what can be done to manage their environmental impacts locally. Participants were given an outline policy to work on and an assessment workbook to identify where the biggest impact, both environmentally and in cost savings, could be made.

Following the training attendees reported greater understanding of environmental management systems and increased confidence in implementing environmental policies and systems. The team will now support these third sector groups to action their Environmental Management Systems.
Public Engagement Training

“A simple mechanism that can be implemented in community engagement”

CAVS, PAVS and CAVO delivered joint training with Participation Cymru on the 14th November in Hermon, Pembrokeshire. The training encouraged participants to look at the 10 National Principles for Public Engagement and Evaluation toolkit.

Feedback from the course was very positive:
- Thought provoking ideas that can be utilised in my practice
- Good mix of information and participation

Participants intend on using what they have learnt back at their organisations:
- Advocate engagement principles and practice
- Going to discuss potential for using the toolkit with new project

For a list of organisations that have endorsed the National Principles of Public Engagement, click here.

Consultations:

The South Wales Programme

In July 2013 the Making the Connections Officer in Bridgend worked with colleagues to organise a number of days to support the public consultation for the South Wales programme.

The South Wales programme consisted of six partner Health Boards who were reviewing the way in which some hospital services were provided across South Wales. This included the future of consultant-led maternity and neonatal care, inpatient children’s services and emergency medicine (A&E). The changes proposed could have impacted on the services currently offered within the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend.

Alongside the ABMU organised events, consultation days were organised by BAVO and these included forums, community groups, supermarkets, festivals, community centres, cafés and they were supplemented through use of social media in order to try and reach as many local citizens as possible and raise awareness of the possible changes. The Making The Connections officer managed to gain support of local volunteers, organisations, groups and staff within the hospital to support the awareness campaign.

There was an outstanding response for the consultation which received over 61,000 responses across South Wales. The majority of people had an understanding and appear to support the changes with the majority also opting for the 5 hospital model, but there was a difference of opinion as to which five hospitals the services would remain in.

BAVO has received commendation for its engagement expertise and the support which it offered to the consultation process within ABMU and at LSB level.

Due to the nature and amount of responses there has been a slight delay in decision making, but the outcome is due imminently. If anyone would like to look at information relating to this consultation or the feedback given you may go to: http://www.wales.nhs.uk/SWP/home
Over the last few months Geraint Jones, the GAVO Caerphilly, based Local Service Board Support Officer funded under the Making The Connection Project MtC has been working closely with The Parent Network (PN). PN is a third sector organisation working across Caerphilly Borough. The Parent Network (PN) was established in 2000 following a consultation carried out by parents for parents. PN now has a membership of over 500 parents and carers offering a unique opportunity for parents to get their voices heard in the planning and delivery of services that affect them and their families.

The MtC Officer initially offered support to PN to ensure that the organisation and its members were involved in the consultation for the Single Integrated Plan (SIP). Since then Geraint has advised the organisation on achieving representation at both the local Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee and the Local Service Boards Sub Group - which coordinates Citizen Engagement.

PN as an organisation had adopted the National Principles of Engagement and had been contracted by Caerphilly CYPP to develop a “Parent Participation Toolkit” for use by organisations when engaging with parents/carers. The Network used the National Principles of Engagement as the core of this document. The document is designed to be used as stand alone or to be used alongside the children and young peoples participation toolkit developed by the Caerphilly Youth Forum. It is hoped that this document will become recognised by Participation Cymru and PN will be able to deliver consultancy support to bodies who wish to use it.

“Working with the MtC Officer I was better able to understand the role and processes that the parents voice was able to feed into. Many thanks for your support with this.”
– Michelle Jones Project Manager

PN will be “a Living Case Study” at the upcoming National Principles of Engagement training event to be held in Hafodyrynys on Wednesday November 13th 2013.
Jeff Cuthbert AM, Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty spoke to a packed audience in the Halliwell Centre in Carmarthen, at the opening of a forum on Working Together for Service Delivery. He covered the Future Generations Bill, the need for communities to be at the centre, now and in the future, and the need to create jobs, enable growth and tackle poverty and sustainability.

Senior members of Hywel Dda Health Board were joined by Chief Executive Officers of County Voluntary Councils from the three counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, statutory sector colleagues, and Third Sector service providers. Discussions focussed on recent strategic developments in the Hywel Dda area and effective responses to the challenges of delivery.

The Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Network is run by the Health and Social Care/Wellbeing Facilitators in each of the three counties to raise awareness and feed into all healthcare planning, policy and strategy that could affect Third Sector healthcare providers in the Hywel Dda Health Board area.

The Making the Connections project officers work with and enhance the links between Local Service Boards (LSB), the voluntary sector and the community to develop services that meet local needs. This is part of the LSB Development and Priority Delivery Project which is funded by the European Social Fund, through the Welsh Government.

Gareth Coles, Public Service Delivery Officer in WCVA introduced his recently launched report on ‘Putting the People at the Centre’, a paper promoting ‘co-production’. Peter Llewellyn, Assistant Director of Strategic Partnerships, Hywel Dda Health Board introduced the Commissioning Code of Practice for Third Sector service contracts, which will be key to workforce and healthcare delivery planning in the Third Sector.

Talks were given on the implementation of legislation around the Welsh Language, Equality & Diversity and Safeguarding. These were of interest to the sector, as they will impact on planning for recruitment and training.

Dr Phil Kloer, Director of Clinical Services, Hywel Dda Health Board provided the latest information on the development of Population Health Management Groups, Hywel Dda Health Board’s new clinical planning groups.

This was followed by an opportunity to engage in three interactive breakout sessions where to look at Tendering and Procurement, housing related support, and Sensory Impairment.
The Making the Connections officer in Bridgend has supported Communities First in their new programme by facilitating their Cluster forum meetings across all 3 areas of Bridgend. Communities First Bridgend is a Community Focused Programme that supports the Welsh Government’s ‘Tackling Poverty’ agenda. The programme aims to build on the achievements of Communities First since its launch in 2001 and preserves the best of the previous programme.

The Communities First programme aims to contribute to narrowing the education, skills, economic and health gaps between our most deprived and more affluent areas. Meetings held in July in each of the three cluster areas focused on engagement and the Communities First involvement plan. The officer promoted the ‘Principles of community engagement’ and facilitated a range of workshops and gave people the opportunity to express their views on the delivery of the programme in line with those principles.

In November 2013 the Making the Connections officer again facilitated the Communities First clusters Learning events where local residents, elected members, third sector organisations and local authority staff could hear more about the learning opportunities within their area, meet the new Communities First team and take part in workshops which discussed community need, identified stakeholders and opportunities for partners to work together.

The support offered has been a valued contribution and ensures that cross sector organisations are aware of the work taking place in each cluster and ensures the work of the Communities First programme fits in to the wider strategic aims of the local service board in Bridgend.

Lynne Berry Partnership and integration Manager emphasised ‘The C1st programme in Bridgend is actively focusing on partnership working with communities, the third sector and partner organisations. By working in partnership with BAVO to plan, organise and deliver the C1st Cluster meetings we were able to bring a wide range of knowledge and experience together to engage communities on the delivery of the programme. Feedback from the meetings has been positive and we hope to continue this partnership to make future events.'
Partnership Working:

Third Sector Partnership Workshop

The Third Sector workshop ‘Pathways to Delivery & Engagement on 26th September was a success with 32 people in attendance. The workshop was based around Training Needs Analysis and identification of Outcomes being delivered against the Single Integrated Plan.

The results of the Evaluations and analysis are currently being looked at and will then direct my work to where it is needed based on the organisation results. Evaluations & the Analyses look very positive in the first instance, with organisations ready to become involved.

The information that the organisations have provided will also be shared with the Local Service Board and the Network to be identified on the Action Plans and Exception reports.

The current work will enable third sector service deliverers to publicise their organisation and enable the LSB to hear voices from the voluntary sector and establish routes from the organisation involved to a sustainable commissioning and procurement process.

Evaluation quotes for 26th September

- ‘I found it interesting & it was good to spend time exploring the SIP & Identifying services that we deliver.’ NYAS
- ‘Very informative, learned a lot of new information.’ Age Cymru Gwent
- ‘At the moment we know very little, but we are learning. We found it interesting and feel we may be able to help.’ St. John Ambulance
- ‘Informative Event, organised well considering 2 speakers were unable to come.’ Homestart Blaenau Gwent
- ‘Really great to be able to talk to other voluntary organisations about the Single Integrated Plan.’ Citizen’s Advice Bureau
- ‘A very informative event, clearly stating what the Integrated Plan means.’ Gwent Cancer Support

Outcomes of the event:

- Co-production was highlighted as the most needed training/information with sustainable service design being second.
- About 20% of the organisations would like to increase or change the services they deliver.
- The information mostly needed by organisations was around the LSB and their structure and how service users could be involved.
- About 25% of the organisations did not have the confidence to work in collaboration/consortia.
- The support rating for the ‘Making the Connections officer’ was skewed slightly as my job title of ‘Local Service Board Support Officer’ was confusing but 70% rated it Good or Excellent. With the other response as ‘don’t know’.
- 80% said the support had improved opportunities to be involved in service design.
- 90% were aware of the National Principles of Engagement but of these 80% said that they did not know if their organisation was signed up to them.