

Concise Minutes – Equality and Social Justice Committee

Meeting Venue:

This meeting can be viewed

Video Conference via Zoom

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

Meeting date: Monday, 4 October 2021

<http://senedd.tv/en/12445>

Meeting time: 13.28 – 17.44

Remote

Attendance

Category	Names
Members of the Senedd:	Jenny Rathbone MS (Chair) Jane Dodds MS Altaf Hussain MS Sarah Murphy MS Sioned Williams MS Ken Skates MS
Witnesses:	Steffan Evans, Bevan Foundation Cerys Furlong, Chwarae Teg Lisa Hayward, Welsh Local Government Association Sara Burch, Gateway Credit Union Leanne Herberg, Cardiff & Vale Credit Union Lee Tiratira, Ethnic Minorities & Youth Support Team Wales Claire Savage, Credit Unions of Wales Karen Davies, Purple Shoots Rob Simkins, Shelter Cymru Daniel Arrowsmith, Association of British Credit Unions



Committee Staff:	Rhys Morgan (Clerk) Claire Fiddes (Second Clerk) Yan Thomas (Deputy Clerk) Aled Evans (Legal Adviser)
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1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting of the Equality and Social Justice Committee.

1.2 The Chair stated that if for any reason she dropped out of the meeting, the Committee agreed that Sarah Murphy MS would become Temporary Chair in accordance with Standing Order 17.22.

1.3 No apologies were received from Members. Jenny Rathbone MS and Sarah Murphy MS declared an interest for item 4 as both are members of credit unions.

2 Debt and the pandemic – public services

2.1 Apologies were received from Will Henson, Community Housing Cymru.

2.2 Members received evidence related to debt and the pandemic. During the session, Shelter Cymru agreed:

- To share their report 'Life in Lockdown in Wales'.
- To provide further evidence on how they signpost people to the services and specialist help they provide.
- To provide details of the correspondence they have had with police forces and Rent Smart Wales regarding illegal evictions.
- To share more information on the lessons learnt from the moratorium on evictions and debt collections.

The Welsh Local Government Association agreed:

- To write to the Committee about the number of council tenants who have fallen into rent arrears since the pandemic.

3 Debt and the pandemic – impact on groups with protected characteristics

3.1 Members received evidence related to debt and the pandemic. During the session, Chwarae Teg agreed:

- To share information on debt across housing and council tax and how the statistics break down into protected groups.

4 Debt and the pandemic – affordable credit

4.1 Members received evidence related to debt and the pandemic.

5 Debt and the pandemic – think tanks

5.1 Members received evidence related to debt and the pandemic.

6 Papers to note

6.1 **Correspondence from the Gender Network regarding gender equality – 15 September 2021**

6.1a Members noted the correspondence.

6.2 **Correspondence from the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee regarding the protection of classified information – 21 September 2021**

6.2a Members noted the correspondence.

6.3 **Correspondence from the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee regarding the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill LCM – 22 September 2021**

6.3a Members noted the correspondence.

6.4 Consultation response to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action and the Wales Governance Centre

6.4a Members noted the consultation response.

7 Motion under SO17.42(ix) to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting

7.1 The motion was agreed.

8 Consideration of evidence – debt and the pandemic

8.1 Members considered the evidence received under items 2,3, 4 and 5. Members agreed to write to Community Housing Cymru and the WLGA for further information.

9 Consideration of the Armed Forces LCM

9.1 The Committee discussed and considered the draft report and LCM. Subject to minor changes, they will agree the report electronically.