

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Sixth Senedd Priorities Consultation

July 2021

In order to help inform our strategic planning and forward work programme, we are asking for your views on what you think, at this stage, our **main priorities should be during the Sixth Senedd (2021-2026)**. Where overlaps between committee remits exist, we will ensure that relevant issues are shared with other committees.

We are keen to start this work as soon as possible, to make sure our plans take account of your views. We know people take a well-earned break over the summer, and many education institutions also pause for a holiday, so we will run this consultation until **Friday 17 September 2021** to make sure everyone has the opportunity to contribute when they return to work. Please be aware that it may not be possible to take into account responses received after this date.

A key priority for us is to ensure that children and young people's voices are heard in our work. To do this in a meaningful way, we know that we need tailored and appropriate ways of engaging. In light of that, **this consultation is not aimed at children and young people. Instead, we will run activities with children and young people in the autumn to help us understand their priorities for the Sixth Senedd.** We will share the findings of this work with all Senedd committees. If you are – or your child is – under 16 and interested in being involved in this activity, please email us on SeneddChildren@senedd.wales to let us know. You can also use this mail address to send us your ideas on how you would like to see us engaging with children and young people – we have lots of ideas ourselves, but we're also interested in yours!

Information about consultations, which you should consider carefully before submitting a response, is available in our [privacy notice](#). Please answer questions 6-8 at the end of this proforma to enable us to process your response appropriately.

The Senedd has two official languages, Welsh and English. In line with the [Senedd's Official Languages Scheme](#), we request that you submit your response in both languages if you are able to do so. If your response is not submitted bilingually, we will publish in the language submitted, stating that it has been received in that language only. We expect other organisations to implement their own standards or schemes and to comply with their statutory obligation.

If you have any queries about this consultation, please contact the Committee team on SeneddChildren@senedd.wales.



1. Name:

Katie Palmer

2. Email address:

Katie.palmer2@wales.nhs.uk

3. Please tell us in what capacity you are responding to this consultation (Please select one answer only.):

Individual responding in a personal capacity (go straight to question 4)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual responding in a professional capacity (go straight to question 4)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual responding on behalf of an organisation (please answer question 3.1)	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.1. If you are an individual responding on behalf of an organisation, please tell us the name of the organisation you are representing and your job title:

Programme Manager Food Sense Wales and Co-founder and secretariat for Food Policy Alliance Cymru

Food Policy Alliance Cymru is a coalition of organisations and stakeholders building and promoting a collective vision for the Welsh food system. Through collaboration, engagement and research the Alliance aims to:

- Co-produce a vision for a food system in Wales that connects production, supply and consumption and gives equal consideration to the health and wellbeing of people and nature.
- Advocate for policy change to address the climate and ecological emergencies, the public health crisis and the rise in food insecurity.
- Ensure Wales is linked to UK policy, research opportunities and the broader Global system.

The Following member organisations of FPAC have contributed to this response:

- [Food Sense Wales](#)
- [Food, Faming and Countryside Commission](#)
- [Landworkers Alliance Cymru](#)
- [Nature Friendly Farming Network](#)
- [Social Farms & Gardens](#)
- [Sustainable Food Places](#)
- [Urban Agriculture consortium](#)
- [WWF Cymru](#)
- Simon Wright, Professor of Practice Trinity of Wales St Davids and one of the founding member of the Wales Independent Restaurant Collective (WIRC)
- University of the West of England Bristol

You can also read the Manifesto that Food Policy Alliance Cymru prepared before the 2021 Senedd Elections [here](#).



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4. Would you like to be added to the Children, Young People and Education Committee's contacts list in order to receive updates about our work? (Please select one answer only.)

Please note that you can unsubscribe by emailing SeneddChildren@senedd.wales

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>



5. What do you consider to be the main priorities or issues that the Committee should consider during the Sixth Senedd? Where possible, please set out your view about how the Committee could address them.

Please answer in relation to as many of the themes below as you are able.

Please keep your response to no more than 2000 words in total.

Theme 1: School-age education

Covid 19 has simultaneously demonstrated the vulnerability in our food supply chain and the crucial role schools have to play in ensuring adequate nutrition for our school age children. Despite large rises in the number of FSM-eligible children in Wales, we continue to see [more children in poverty missing out on free school meals than in any other UK nation](#). Additional safety nets Government put in place to ensure families eligible for free school meals were supported during the pandemic and the adaptations schools made to operate a safe meal service, have been vital. However, with many school meal services still constrained by operating safely in a Covid context, combined with increasing challenges in the food supply chain due to Brexit and the pandemic, the committee should consider how Government can ensure a secure and resilient school meal service that is delivering sustainable and nutritious meals to all children whilst benefiting the wider local supply chain.

1. A review of the role of food in the school day.

- To include a review of the social return on investment of integrating policy thinking and legislation across Government priorities such as developing the Foundational economy, Agriculture Bill and Community Food Strategy, progressing the Social Partnerships and Public Procurement Bill and reducing educational inequalities through increasing eligibility of and ensuring access to free school meals (lunches and breakfasts) that are sourced locally and sustainably produced.
- To include aligning the forthcoming review of the Healthy Eating in Schools (Wales) Measure 2009 with developing the Food Foundational economy, accreditation and ensuring all school lunches contain a minimum of 2 portions of veg.
- To include a review on the free school breakfast scheme and its ability to reach those children most in need.
- To consider how to protect children's food security in future pandemics or emergencies
- To consider how the school meal service can be effectively monitored
- To consider how the proposed review of the structure of the school day and school year could optimise dining experiences for children



2. A review of holiday provision including how the School Holiday Enrichment Programme can be optimised to help meet government's ambition of reducing inequalities. Considerations could include:

- How SHEP could be funded and administered moving forward to eliminate the constraints on programme development of single year funding commitments
- Whether SHEP should become a statutory function of Local Authorities as seen as part of their Socio-economic duty to ensure all children that need the provision can access a scheme
- How the programme could be expanded (increased reach, eligibility and to cover all holidays) to ensure all children that would benefit from the programme could be offered a place. This should include a review of how the programme can support vulnerable children.
- The role of SHEP in supporting the development of Welsh Government's community school programme.
- Whether Government should support other types of holiday provisions and review the impact of providing free school meal provision over all holidays during the pandemic.

3. Explore how food can be used in the new curriculum to ensure that every child in Wales is food literate and equipped to become good food citizens

There are some great examples of how schools are using food to support the curriculum – from growing and cooking food to budgeting and learning about the sugar content of junk food or animal welfare issues. However schools need the appropriate training and resources to support deliver consistently across Wales. There are many potential resources that could be built upon including Council Education catering departments and Dietetic teams. A few are listed here:

- Nutrition Skills for Life Programme – Including the School Holiday Enrichment Programme where teaching assistants are trained and resources are mapped to the curriculum for literacy and numeracy
- Veg Power - <https://vegpower.org.uk/ways-to-use-eat-them-to-defeat-them-in-schools/>
- Cardiff's Healthy Schools team have produced a Power Up Your Pupils with Veg resource pack for teachers and a Peas Please Parent Pack, to engage primary school children with veg
- For a case study on how education catering, schools, suppliers and dietitians worked together in Wales during SHEP see pg 23 of the Peas Please [Feeding our Future](#) report
- Organisations such as Social Farms & Gardens, through their [School Farms Network](#) (these are education settings that hold livestock and do much more than just have food growing areas), have worked tirelessly for years to bring 'food education' higher up the curriculum agenda and the network now boasts over 120 school farm members



N.B it is recommended that the committee take note of the recommendations made in [Feeding our Future](#) (pg 36) also of relevance to Theme 3.

Theme 2: Further and higher education

Consider how to build the capacity of further and higher Education to deliver the agro-ecological supply chain training needed to support the development of a resilient Food System

We need to ensure that food education in all its forms in further and higher education is attuned to a rapidly changing context. The most obvious example is in farming where the institutions need to set the pace in offering training that is appropriate to the kind of sustainable and regenerative farming we need to see in the future and that underpins WG policy objectives on climate change and biodiversity. To equip the next generation of farmers and growers with the skills they need for agroecological farming, a combination of on farm practical training and theoretical classroom learning is needed

Wales has a long and rich history in Wales of providing practical and class room support to our young farmers – mostly through further education settings and there are a number of colleges across Wales that deliver this blended learning which are a real stepping stone in to farming. However, Horticultural training at this level is very limited across Wales and is only available at a very small number of sites. One of these is the Neath Port Talbot Group of colleges and in particular their Newtown College Campus which is now offering a Level 2 Horticulture course. They are using the community gardens adjacent for some of the practical learning environment whilst also equipping our future growers with 21st century skills by linking to the Controlled Environment Agriculture pilot site and utilising this technology and infrastructure as part of the course. They are also in the enviable position of having the ability to directly link horticulture with their catering training college, their own on-site catering and their publicly available restaurant.

Tyfu Cymru, Landworkers' Alliance and Cardiff University are currently piloting a Wales wide agroecological horticulture traineeship network, as part of the [Resilient Green Spaces](#) partnership hosted by Social Farms & Gardens. Trainees are placed with agroecological veg farms across Wales, where they receive practical training and experience. This is complemented by theoretical training from multiple different farmers & trainers both online and at the farms, enabling trainees to get a broad understanding of growing in different environments and business models. **We encourage the Committee to review the learnings from this pilot after the project ends in September 2023**



There could be more emphasis on healthy and sustainable secondary food production to foster the kind of skills that add value to our agricultural produce and strengthen local economic activity and supply chains. Meanwhile catering and hospitality education (currently under review by Qualifications Wales) needs a complete overhaul to offer a more rounded curriculum, closely tied to farming and food craft and that recognises that the nature of eating out has become more informal, and more diverse in character. Enterprise and business understanding needs to be woven into the fabric of all these courses.

Theme 3: Health and well-being, including social care (as they relate to children and young people)

One in four of reception age children are overweight or obese (PHW 2021) and those from poorer backgrounds are more likely to be an unhealthy weight. The Peas Please report, [Feeding our Future](#) and the accompanying report [The State of the Nation Wales](#) highlights that children's veg intake remains well below the recommended intake.

1. Consider how to optimize the Healthy start scheme in Wales

Around 40% of beneficiaries are not taking up their entitlement in Wales. The committee could consider how public bodies are monitoring and supporting the uptake of healthy start vouchers locally and nationally consider what impact the scheme is having on providing nutritional support to low-income families.

2. Food environment / advertising

Welsh Government is due to consult on the food environment as part of Healthy Weight Healthy Wales. Priorities of the HWHW delivery plan for 2021–2025 include working with stakeholders to promote positive marketing and restrict advertising of unhealthy food and drink, and consulting on mandatory calorie information for the out of home sector. Additionally, they intend to work with the UK Government on how to improve marketing and labelling on infant food and drink – something the UK Government committed to consult on in 2019 but has not actioned. They have also re-committed to launch a detailed consultation on takeaways located near schools (previously delayed due to Covid).

Theme 4: Children and young people

Ensuring Children's Right to Food is upheld



In conjunction with the Equality and Social Justice Committee the committee should consider how Children's Rights Legislation and the Socio-economic duty can be deployed to ensure every child in Wales receives their Right to Food, eradicating children's food insecurity in line with the Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger by 2030. For example should there be accountability at a local authority level to measure, monitor and report on food insecurity and ensure strategies are in place to mitigate against it, as part of their socio-economic duty? The committee may like to take account of the evidence generated through the Welsh Government commissioned research on [strengthening and advancing equality and Human Rights in Wales](#)

The review of eligibility of Free School Meals is key to ensuring every child in Wales receives this right and the committee may like to consider research produced by the [Bevan Foundation and Antipoverty Coalition](#) and research from Sweden published in June of this year which shows that children that received free school lunches during their entire primary school period [went on to have higher lifetime incomes](#).

The Committee may also like to note the work of Children's Right 2 Food and their report – [A Year of Children's Food](#) – which includes work from Wales' Young Food Ambassadors and charts the progress in all four Nations of the UK in ensuring Children's Right to Food.



USE OF YOUR INFORMATION

In order to enable us to handle your information in accordance with our [privacy notice](#), please complete the questions below. We will be unable to process your response if these questions are not completed.

6. We have stated our intention to engage meaningfully with children and young people, in tailored and appropriate ways, in the autumn. However, if you are responding using this proforma and are under 13 years old, we will only be able to accept your response if your parent or guardian has confirmed that you can participate. They can do this by sending us an email to SeneddChildren@senedd.wales.

Are you under 13 years old?

I am under 13 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am 13 or over	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

7. Please choose one of the following options to confirm whether you would prefer that your name is not published alongside your evidence.

We will not publish the names of people under the age of 18.

I am aged 18 or over and I am content for you to publish my name alongside my evidence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I am aged 18 or over and I would prefer that you did not publish my name alongside my evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am under the age of 18	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Please choose one of the following options to confirm whether you have agreement from any third parties referred to in your evidence that you can share information that may be used to identify them and that they understand that it may be published.

I confirm that any third party I have referred to in my evidence has agreed that I can share information that may be used to identify them, and that they understand that it may be published.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I do not have the agreement of one or more of the third parties I have referred to in my evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have not referred to any third parties in my evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>

