

Students and Young People

Bethan Jenkins: I welcome the chance to debate this issue at the National Assembly for Wales. We debate certain issues with regard to young people, but providing facilities for them is probably one of the most important aspects of youth involvement. I echo some of what Leanne Wood said with regard to this Measure. Providing more facilities for young people will take the stigma away from what are perceived as negative outcomes of young people's behaviours.

As a child poverty spokesperson for Plaid Cymru, this is a vital area for me. I have tried to visit as many youth facilities as possible in the time that I have been the child poverty spokesperson. I visited the Gilfach Goch Communities First partnership, where the youth officer is on continual redundancy leave because the partnership does not have enough funding. Therefore, regardless of the fact that there are statutory requirements on local authorities to provide facilities for young people, there are still many problems in this sector and a lack of flexibility with regard to seeking funding. Most youth facilities seek funding from various organisations, much of which, as we know, has been taken away to fund the London Olympics.

We know that 1,000 youth facilities are run by the public sector, but 4,000 are not. Although I accept the Minister's sentiments with regard to the provision that is out there, there is a large disparity between what is provided via local authorities and what is done perhaps by churches, the private sector and third sector, voluntary organisations. That must be addressed.

I am a member of the Petitions Committee, and we received a petition from Viva!, which is in the Rhondda, last week. Viva! encourages young people to take part in youth activities in the Rhondda area and it has 100 young people waiting to access facilities in the Rhondda alone. There are only a few organisations of its kind in Wales and it also targets disabled children. There are large pockets of areas where people cannot access the facilities that they should be able to access.

Going back to child poverty, some young people cannot access provision when facilities are provided due to travel costs, particularly in rural areas, and because they may have to pay for access to a particular facility. Therefore, I think that that should be taken into consideration if any Measure goes through.

The only problem that I may have with this proposed Measure is that it is quite vague. I would like Peter Black to go back and better define, perhaps, the provision of youth services, because we could say that a football pitch is youth provision. Therefore, where do you draw the line? I would be happy to support it.

Peter Black: Thank you for giving way. This is a Measure in principle. If the Assembly passes this, I can go away and hold a wider consultation and come back with a detailed proposed Measure at that point.

Bethan Jenkins: That is fine. I accept that.

I also echo Nick Ramsay's comments about duties being put on local authorities. If more duties are put on local authorities, not only must they be encouraged to provide more facilities for young people, they must be made to do so. We do not want to be in a situation where we are debating again in four years' time whether or not more provision should be made for young people.

I would also like to see what cost implications this would have on local authorities and whether we could facilitate more interaction with the voluntary sector and with big charities that currently give funding so that this provision has a streamlined basis

Myfyrwyr a phobl ifanc

Bethan Jenkins: Croesawaf y cyfle i drafod y mater hwn yng Nghynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru. Yr ydym yn trafod rhai materion sy'n ymwneud â phobl ifanc, ond mae'n debyg mai darparu cyfleusterau ar eu cyfer yw un o'r agweddau pwysicaf ar gynnwys pobl ifanc. Ategfaf rywfaint o'r hyn a ddywedodd Leanne Wood ynglŷn â'r Mesur hwn. Bydd darparu rhagor o gyfleusterau i bobl ifanc yn cael gwared ar y stigma y mae pobl yn ei gysylltu â'r hyn yr ystyriant yn ganlyniadau negyddol ymddygiad pobl ifanc.

Fi yw llefarydd Plaid Cymru ar dlodi plant, felly mae hwn yn faes hollbwysig imi. Yr wyf wedi ceisio ymweld â chynifer â phosibl o gyfleusterau ieuencid yn ystod fy nghyfnod fel llefarydd ar dlodi plant. Ymwelais â phartneriaeth Cymunedau yn Gyntaf Gilfach Goch, lle mae'r swyddog ieuencid ar gyfnod diswyddo parhaus oherwydd nad oes gan y bartneriaeth ddigon o gyllid. Felly, er gwaethaf y ffaith bod gofynion statudol ar awdurdodau lleol i ddarparu cyfleusterau i bobl ifanc, ceir llawer o broblemau yn y sector hwn o hyd a diffyg hyblygrwydd o ran chwilio am gyllid. Mae'r rhan fwyaf o gyfleusterau ieuencid yn chwilio am gyllid gan wahanol sefydliadau, ac mae llawer o'r cyllid hwnnw, fel y gwyddom, wedi'i arallgyfeirio er mwyn ariannu Gemau Olympaidd Llundain.

Gwyddom fod 1,000 o gyfleusterau ieuencid yn cael eu rhedeg gan y sector cyhoeddus, ond nid yw'r un peth yn wir am 4,000 o gyfleusterau eraill. Er fy mod yn derbyn sylwadau'r Gweinidog o ran y ddarpariaeth sydd ar gael, ceir gwahaniaeth mawr rhwng yr hyn a ddarperir drwy gyfrwng awdurdodau lleol a'r hyn a wneir, o bosibl, gan eglwysi, y sector preifat a'r trydydd sector, sef cyrff gwirfoddol. Rhaid mynd i'r afael â hynny.

Yr wyf yn aelod o'r Pwyllgor Deisebau, a chawsom ddeiseb yr wythnos diwethaf gan Viva! o'r Rhondda. Mae Viva! yn annog pobl ifanc i ddefnyddio cyfleusterau ieuencid yn ardal y Rhondda, ac mae ganddo dros 100 o bobl ifanc yn aros i ddefnyddio cyfleusterau yn y Rhondda'n unig. Dim ond ychydig gyrff o'r fath a geir yng Nghymru, ac mae hefyd yn targedu plant anabl. Ceir ardaloedd eang lle na all pobl ddefnyddio'r cyfleusterau y dylent allu eu defnyddio.

Gan ddychwelyd at dlodi plant, hyd yn oed pan fydd cyfleusterau'n cael eu darparu, ni all rhai pobl ifanc ddefnyddio'r ddarpariaeth oherwydd costau teithio, yn enwedig mewn ardaloedd gwledig, ac oherwydd ei bod yn rhaid iddynt dalu, o bosibl, i ddefnyddio rhai cyfleusterau. Credaf, felly, y dylid ystyried hynny os byddwn yn bwrw ymlaen ag unrhyw Fesur.

Yr unig broblem sydd gennyf o bosibl â'r Mesur arfaethedig hwn yw ei fod yn eithaf amwys. Hoffwn i Peter Black ddychwelyd ato a diffinio darpariaeth gwasanaethau ieuencid yn well, o bosibl, oherwydd gallem ddweud bod cae pêl-droed yn ddarpariaeth i ieuencid. Ym mhle, felly, yr ydych chi'n tynnu'r llinell? Byddwn yn fodlon ei gefnogi.

Peter Black: Diolch am ildio. Mesur mewn egwyddor yw hwn. Os bydd y Cynulliad yn ei basio, gallaf fynd ymaith a chynnal ymgynghoriad ehangach a dod yn ôl gyda Mesur arfaethedig manwl bryd hynny.

Bethan Jenkins: Dim problem. Yr wyf yn derbyn hynny.

Ategaf hefyd sylwadau Nick Ramsay ynglŷn â'r dyletswyddau a roddir ar awdurdodau lleol. Os rhoddir rhagor o ddyletswyddau ar awdurdodau lleol, nid dim ond eu hannog i ddarparu rhagor o gyfleusterau i bobl ifanc sydd raid, ond eu gorfodi i wneud hynny. Nid oes arnom eisiau bod mewn sefyllfa ymhen pedair blynedd lle byddwn unwaith eto'n trafod a ddylid sicrhau rhagor o ddarpariaeth i bobl ifanc ai peidio.

Hoffwn weld hefyd beth fyddai goblygiadau hyn o ran cost i awdurdodau lleol, ac a allem hwyluso rhagor o ryngweithio gyda'r sector gwirfoddol a chydag elusennau mawr sy'n rhoi cyllid ar hyn o bryd, er mwyn creu sylfaen syml i'r ddarpariaeth hon.