

**Wales Race Forum Meeting
13 January 2015 at 9.00am-10.30am
Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff**

Attendees:

Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

Leanne Rahman	Black History Association
Shereen Williams	Community Cohesion Regional Co-ordinator, Gwent East
Mandy Burrows	Community Cohesion Regional Co-ordinator, North East
Rocio Cifuentes	Ethnic Youth Support Team
Shahien Taj	Henna Foundation
Uzo Iwobi	Race Council Cymru
Sunil Patel	Show Racism the Red Card
David Phillips	Welsh Equality Council
Daniel Hurford	Welsh Local Government Association

Welsh Government Officials in Attendance:

Kate Cassidy	Director of Communities and Tackling Poverty Division
Jo Glenn	Fairer Futures Division
Andrea Adams	Fairer Futures Division
Iwan Evans	Welsh Language Unit
Beverley Morgan	Tackling Poverty Division

Apologies:

Aled Edwards	Faith Communities Forum Representative
Isaac Blake	Romani Cultural and Arts Company
Beverly Stephens	Unity Project
Maria Mesa	Women Connect First
Melineh Essavy	ABCD Cymru
Hannah Wharf	Welsh Refugee Council

Welcome and Introductions

1. The Minister welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mandy Burrows joined the meeting via video conference from the Llandudno Junction office. The Minister invited introductions from around the table.
2. The Minister explained the Wales Race Forum is a way in which the Welsh Government can engage with strategic organisations across Wales with an interest in race equality issues and to look at challenges faced by BME communities in terms of integration and community cohesion in Wales.

Minutes of the last meetings

3. The minutes of the last two meetings held on 10 July and 13 March 2014 were agreed and the action points update was noted.

Agenda Item 1: Hate Crime Framework

Jo Glenn (Fairer Futures Division, Welsh Government)

4. The Minister invited Jo Glenn to update the Forum on the delivery of the Welsh Government's Hate Crime Framework. A paper regarding race hate crime was circulated in advance of the meeting.
5. Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents - A Framework for Action was launched during May 2014, alongside a delivery plan. The Framework sets out three strategic objectives to co-ordinate and drive forward the work on an all-Wales basis across prevention, supporting victims and improving the multi-agency response.
6. The Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty launched and chaired an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) during October 2014. The IAG includes representatives from the third sector. Representatives on the IAG will be gathering evidence from stakeholders during January to March 2015 to demonstrate what progress has been made during the first year of the Framework and to advise on the contents of the Delivery Plan in year two. A final report will be published from the IAG in May 2015.
7. The Welsh Government has funded the National Hate Crime Reporting Centre through Victim Support Cymru. In the first 7 months of delivery there have been 761 referrals to the National Reporting Centre – of which 554 were recorded as race hate crimes. In addition there are three funded Advocacy and Empowered Projects which are led by NWREN, SBREC and a collaboration project led by Race Equality First.
8. Jo asked the forum members for their views regarding what the Welsh Government should be focussing on and how could more extensive engagement and awareness be undertaken amongst race communities?
9. The members wanted to know how the Framework was being promoted to bring it to the attention of the wider public? Jo confirmed it was advertised during Hate Crime Awareness Week. During the week the publicity focussed on a single protected characteristic each day. Victim Support had also carried out a lot of publicity regarding their services.
10. Mandy explained in North Wales a successful radio campaign was arranged in Wrexham to get the message to reach the wider public. A local radio station, Calon FM and hospital radio have the potential to reach over 8.5 million people. In Wrexham, champions from local communities were engaged in its publicity and this was a great success in the area.
11. The members asked how is the hate crime reporting is promoted to refugees and asylum seekers in the communities? Jo confirmed the Welsh Refugee Council is represented on the Hate Crime Independent Advisory Group.

12. The members agreed the Forum has a role to play to use their networks and partners to encourage people to report hate crimes. Uzo said the Independent Advisory Group were going to use a questionnaire to gauge how the Framework was working within the communities. She provided a paper to the Forum on the work of the Independent Advisory Group of which she is a member.
13. Members also commented cyber hate crime was providing a significant challenge with recent examples of on-line hatred targeted against minority groups. They agreed more prosecutions for cyber hate crime could be a deterrent. Some members drew attention to the negative comments they had received on social media. Other members explained how they used the comments section on newspapers to correct inaccurate statements or to warn of the consequences of making statements which incited hatred.
14. Some members stated it was important to prevent hate crimes rather than putting the focus on victims to report. However, improvements could be made to referral forms to make them clearer and more training regarding recording race hate crime for police officers would be a positive step forwards. The Minister agreed there seems to be some reluctance from the public to report hate crimes, however, the message from the police is they want the public to report the crimes. She suggested it would be useful if a representative from the police came to the next meeting to explain the hate crime referral process.

Action:

- Information on how to report hate crime to be recirculated (Secretariat)
- The factsheet on Race Hate Crime to be recirculated (Secretariat)
- A representative from the Police to attend the next meeting to explain the hate crime referral process (Secretariat)

Agenda Item 2 : Hate Crime Projects delivered by organisations of the Welsh Equality Group (WEG).

15. The Minister invited David Phillips to give an update on the Hate Crime projects being delivered by the Welsh Equality Group.
16. David explained the WEG is made up from five equality councils across Wales. The purpose of WEG is to consolidate a national strategic network and between them to address significant gaps in service to the communities, raise public awareness of issues and present a united vision. WEG work together across Wales on discrimination casework and particularly hate crime.
17. WEG's hate crime programme has started with collecting evidence from across the communities. It would appear the evidence gathered

so far shows victims feel reluctant to report hate crime and do not generally understand their rights. The data collected will identify diverse demographics and this information will help future awareness raising programmes in the future. A report will be published on the research findings.

18. The WEG hate crime programme aims to increase reporting and conviction numbers and support the police to improve outcomes for victims. WEG will drive the programme forwards to build multi-agency working arrangements and to strengthen existing agreements with their partners and other agencies. WEG will recruit and train volunteers to development of community forums.
19. The Hate Crime Programme's legacy will provide twenty documented victim case studies; a report on the action research findings; a guide to good practice in delivering hate crime advocacy; a hate crime advocacy training package; a final conference and the final project evaluation.
20. Uzo asked if the Programme has gathered data to show the number of people who have reported a hate crime. David confirmed this information was not available at this stage as the project had only been in existence for six months. Uzo also asked if there was partnership working with Victim Support in place. David confirmed North Wales Regional Equality Network (NWREN) had a service level agreement with Victim Support and South East Wales Regional Equality Network (SEWREC) had a verbal agreement in place. There were no formal links between WEG and the four Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), however, Gwent police has set aside funding for a Victim Service Centre.
21. **Action:** The Minister agreed to write to the four PCCs regarding their hate crime priorities and will feedback to the Forum.

Agenda Item 3 – Child Poverty

Beverley Morgan, Head of Tackling Poverty Policy.

22. The Minister introduced Beverley to update the Forum regarding the development of the Revised Child Poverty Strategy for Wales.
23. Beverley explained the Welsh Government is consulting on a Revised Child Poverty Strategy for Wales. The Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 placed a statutory duty on Welsh Ministers to publish a Child Poverty Strategy for Wales and to set objectives for tackling child poverty and improving the outcomes of low income families. This duty was fulfilled when the 2011 Child Poverty Strategy was published, which covered the period 2011-2014.
24. The publication of a Revised Strategy for consultation enables the Welsh Government to re-affirm its commitment to the ambition of eradicating child poverty by 2020.

25. The Revised Child Poverty Strategy also reaffirms the commitment to achieve the three strategic objectives set out in the 2011 Child Poverty Strategy. These are:
- To reduce the number of children living in workless households.
 - To improve the skills of parents and young people living in low-income households to enable them to secure well paid employment.
 - To reduce the inequalities which exist in the health, education and economic outcomes of children and families by improving the outcomes of the poorest people.
26. Within the consultation document, there are specific references to the importance of linking with the equalities agenda, as certain groups (for example, those with protected characteristics) are more at risk of living in poverty.
27. Discussion took place around the importance of data on the outcomes of different ethnic minorities. In particular, concern was raised regarding the lack of data on the percentage of people living in low income households amongst ethnic minority groups. These data are only currently available at a UK level. There are different rates of poverty measured in the different BME groups.
28. Beverley welcomed the views of the Forum, highlighting it was also important to draw on research on poverty and ethnicity, such as that carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
29. The Forum felt there should be more of an emphasis on what the evidence tells us about ethnic minority families and child poverty in Wales. Information regarding poverty and low income households could potentially be sourced from Citizens' Advice Bureau and Credit Unions. There needs to be separate evidence regarding levels of poverty in Wales, rather than a focus on UK-wide trends.
30. Uzo invited Beverley to attend the next meeting of the Race Council Cymru.
31. The Minister thanked everyone for the discussion. She confirmed the Welsh Government's ambition to eradicate child poverty by 2020 and highlighted all Welsh Government Ministers have a focus on tackling poverty.
32. Actions
- Links to the consultation to be recirculated (Secretariat)
 - Beverley to forward membership of the Tackling Poverty External Advisory Group and the names of Local Authority Anti Poverty champions to be circulated to the Forum (Beverley Morgan)
 - Impact assessments to be shared with the Forum (Beverley Morgan)

Agenda Item 4 – Any Other Business

33. The Minister reminded members it was agreed at the Planning and Development meeting held on 21 August the theme of the next Forum meeting will be BME Health issues. If anyone has any thoughts on areas this issue could examine, forward these to the Secretariat.
34. The Minister drew everyone's attention to the papers which have been circulated for information by Race Council Cymru and the Welsh Equality Group. These provide an update to meetings they attend as representatives of the Wales Race Forum namely the stakeholder group to increase the numbers of under-represented groups in public life and the Budget Advisory Group for Equality (BAGE). These will be placed on the internet together with the other papers and minutes of the meeting.
35. The Secretariat has circulated a revised Terms of Reference to take account of the new membership of the Forum.
36. Uzo asked if the Third Sector Partnership Council could be a standing agenda item at future meetings.