

**Wales Race Forum Meeting
22 June 2015 at 11.00am-12.30pm
Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff**

Attendees:

Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

Samsunear Ali	BAWSO (Also representing Race Council Cymru)
Rocio Cifuentes	Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST)
Aled Edwards	Faith Communities Forum Representative
Isaac Blake	Romani Cultural and Arts Company
Cath Fortune	Unity Project
Maria Mesa	Women Connect First
Shahien Taj	Henna Foundation
Sunil Patel	Show Racism the Red Card
David Phillips	Welsh Equality Group
Daniel Hurford	Welsh Local Government Association
Hannah Wharf	Welsh Refugee Council
Mark Warrender	Gwent Police
Heather Powell	Gwent Police

Welsh Government Officials in Attendance:

Amelia John	Deputy Director Fairer Futures Division
Andrea Adams	Fairer Futures Division
Sarah Austin	Dept. for Health and Social Services

Apologies:

Uzo Iwobi	Race Council Cymru
Melineh Essavy	Hope2Shine (formerly ABCD Cymru)
Glenn Jordan	Black History Association
Shereen Williams	Community Cohesion Regional Co-ordinator, Gwent East
Mandy Burrows	Community Cohesion Regional Co-ordinator, North East

Welcome and Introductions

1. The Minister welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Minister invited introductions from around the table for the benefit of the additional invited attendees. The Minister explained Uzo would not be attending the meeting as she has had a recent family bereavement. The members conveyed their condolences to Uzo at this sad time.

Minutes of the last meetings

2. The minutes of the last meeting held on 13 January were agreed and the action points update was noted.

Agenda Item 1: Gypsy and Traveller Health Guidance

(Sarah Austin, Department of Health and Social Services)

3. The Minister reminded everyone it was agreed at the Planning and Development meeting last year the theme of the next Forum will be

BME Health Issues and asked the Forum for any thoughts on areas this issue could examine.

4. The Minister said *Travelling to Better Health* is a piece of guidance for healthcare practitioners on working effectively with Gypsy and Traveller communities. It is designed to meet the health objectives contained within *Travelling to a Better Future*, the wider Welsh Government strategy for Gypsies and Travellers. The guidance is accompanied by a set of supporting documents and is due to be published on the Welsh Government website this summer. These documents include a Bibliography, Useful Contacts and Resources, a series of six Annexes, such as a sample health needs assessment form and a series of Outcome Measures for Local Health Boards and Welsh Government. There will also be an advice note on cultural awareness which is jointly prepared with the Royal College of General Practitioners.
5. The Minister invited Sarah Austin to update the Forum about the *Travelling to Better Health* guidance.
6. Sarah said in general, research tells us, when compared to the general population Gypsies and Travellers live shorter lives, have poorer health, have higher rates of chronic ill health such as cardio-vascular disease, cancers, diabetes, asthma and other respiratory conditions, higher rates of still birth and have poorer mental health. Evidence is also emerging of increased substance misuse.
7. There are generally low levels of literacy amongst Gypsies and Travellers, and this means letters and other personal information may need to be read aloud by families and advocacy groups. The Unity Project and the work of the Romani Cultural and Arts Company provide an advocacy and support to Gypsies and Travellers. Gypsies and Travellers are generally suspicious of using mainstream services. It is important we are fitting services to people - not the other way around.
8. To address these issues the Welsh Government is shortly to publish *Travelling to Better Health*.
9. The guidance is presented in three main parts: advice on cultural awareness for the benefit of practitioners; advice on professional practice which could encourage greater participation in health and health services; and a summary analysis of the available research and evidence base which provides the rationale for the guidance. The guidance seeks to bring all these elements together and it is the first of its type to offer this information and advice to health practitioners.
10. The cultural awareness advice sheet will be available in every G.P. surgery in Wales. We know there are difficulties for registering as a permanent or temporary resident with G.P. surgeries for Gypsies and Travellers. However, it is a mistake and unlawful to assume a nomadic lifestyle should prevent different communities registering with a surgery. It is also a mistake to assume Gypsies and Travellers live

nomadic lifestyles – many now live in settled accommodation. Work is being done to improve ethnicity monitoring which will be to include the Census 2011 categories of Gypsies and Travellers within central NHS reporting systems. Without good data, services cannot be planned and designed to meet needs. Work will also be done to develop health promotion materials in accessible formats – this is one of the Welsh Government Outcome Measures. This work will be done with organisations working with communities and with Gypsies and Travellers themselves.

11. Welsh Government has consulted with a number of stakeholders, researchers and organisations with an interest in this issue to produce the guidance – the formal consultation resulted in 31 responses and the report of the consultation can be found at this location: .
<http://gov.wales/consultations/healthsocialcare/travelling/?status=closed&lang=en> .
12. In a year's time Welsh Government will write to Local Health Boards to assess the extent to which the Outcome Measures have been achieved: how have things changed/improved?

Agenda Item 2 : Hate Crime Referral Process (Superintendent Mark Warrender)

13. The Minister welcomed Superintendent Mark Warrender from Gwent Police and Chair of the Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board Cymru (HCCJB) to give an overview of the referral process. This was an action point from the last meeting.
14. Mark said the Hate Crimes and Incidents Framework is the bedrock of the work undertaken through the HCCJB. The HCCJB has its own Delivery Plan which feeds into the Welsh Government's overall Hate Crime Delivery Plan. The Board is represented by a number of criminal justice agencies such as Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioners, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation Wales and many other agencies.
15. Mark explained Police Forces in Wales want people to report hate crimes and incidents when they see it happening to others or when it happens to them. There are different ways of reporting hate crime, people can dial 101, however, for urgent or violent hate crimes people should dial 999. Wales also has a third party referral service through Victim Support Cymru who will offer an advocacy service to support victims. Often victims do not report the crime themselves, however, other family members, friends or neighbours will report it.
16. Race is more readily recognised and understood as unlawful by communities. Other hate crimes based upon protected characteristics of disability, religion, sexual orientation and transgender are not as well recognised by our communities; there is a challenge to raise awareness. Hate crime is often mistakenly reported as anti-social behaviour and this causes issues with identification and support.

17. The HCCJB is working through the delivery plan to consider ways to increase consistency of delivery across Wales and to share emerging practice and developments to increase greater flexibility for victims. For example, a pilot is being planned for a day to be set aside by the Magistrates Courts to hear hate crime cases to ensure victim services can be offered in once central point and to help improve consistency in sentencing.
18. Disability hate crime continues to be significantly under-reported and there is a real need to increase awareness across communities of the impacts. This is especially the case where scapegoating and harassment is being experienced in the current financial climate, where there are cases of people being called scroungers and benefit cheats. It is important to choose places to promote hate crime reporting where people with other protected characteristics use public and other services to ensure support and advocacy is visible.
19. Roccio stated EYST have experience with working with young people in primary and secondary schools and offered their experience to work together with the police to tackle this issue. However, they noted referral actions for individuals charged with hate crime offences are ad hoc and there is a need for greater consistency and structure throughout Wales.
20. Mark agreed there is a need to explore where there can be commonalities across systems to explore standardised approaches throughout Wales. The work of HCCJB is looking at ways to provide consistent approaches. Police hate crime training takes place with front line officers to ensure they can recognise signs of hate crime and support victims. There is a need for continued roll out of face to face training and complementary e-learning training available.
21. There are complexities for police officers taking statements from people with protected characteristics. Training ensures Police Officers are better informed of engagement with people and communities. However, there are complexities in recording and investigating a crime where the hostility element of the crime needs to be clearly evidenced. Gwent Police are in the process of developing bespoke training to help in the identification of disability hate crimes.
22. Normalisation of hate crime and fear of authorities, for instance with asylum seekers and refugees, can affect their attitude to reporting the crime. Community engagement to increase the confidence for people to come forward remains a significant priority.
23. Heather said consultation had been carried out previously in Gwent which identified fear of authority as a significant barrier to reporting for asylum seekers and refugees, and that a key part in challenging this was to build trusted relationships with individual police officers that people felt they could talk to. This year a scheme was piloted for Eastern European Migrants based on ESOL principles but exploring Police culture, which was designed to challenge some of the

misconceptions people from other countries may have about the UK policing system. It is hoped further courses will be run within other communities.

24. During the discussion the following points were made:
- Some BME women do not have confidence to report hate crime in person and go through other third sector organisations.
 - There are good examples of community cohesion and building trust with police forces to increase reporting knowledge in communities.
25. The Minister said she is pleased to fund the National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre through Victim Support Cymru. We want to see an increase in the reporting of hate crime in the short term to reflect under reporting. There are links to similar actions in dealing with modern slavery. Wales has led the way in tackling these issues, with programmes including the Think Project run by EYST.

Action: The Minister will write to the Home Secretary about issues with regards to the identification of hate crimes within the court system.

Agenda Item 3 – Review of the Equality Objectives

(Amelia John, Deputy Director Fairer Futures Division)

26. The Minister reminded everyone, since the last meeting, officials wrote to members to explain the implementation of The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, which requires the Welsh Government to engage with different groups and individuals in order to produce outcome-focused Equality Objectives. These were published in the Strategic Equality Plan 2012-16. The Welsh Government is now required to review the Equality Objectives and publish a new Strategic Equality Plan by 1 April 2016.
27. The Minister invited Amelia to give an update on the progress of the consultation of the review of the Strategic Equality Plan and the Equality and Inclusion funding.
28. Amelia explained the Welsh Government launched the consultation exercise on the equality objectives on 20 April, and in parallel we are also consulting on the Equality and Inclusion Funding Programme for 2017-2020. Both consultations will end on 10 July. We want to ensure the new equality objectives, for the next four years covering 2016-2020, reflect the priorities of those who are most disadvantaged in relation to protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. This approach will help to identify which objectives are most likely to make the biggest difference to tackling inequality and to explore current gaps in delivery.
29. The Equality and Inclusion Grant is due to end on 31st March 2017. The consultation seeks the views of all stakeholders on how funding for the Third Sector should be taken forward after this date. The aim of the consultation is to ensure the 2017-2020 funding is both strategic and

outcome focused and also meets the needs of people with protected characteristics in Wales.

30. Welsh Government has held four consultation events: two in Cardiff (with one further one to take place), and one each in Llandudno Junction and Swansea. Feedback from these events has been very positive. Already some ideas have emerged from the consultations such as introducing different ranges of project sizes and funding. The consultation documents can be found on the Welsh Government web site.
31. Some Equality Groups are holding focus groups with their stakeholders as part of the consultation, for which the Welsh Government is very grateful.
32. During the discussion the following points were made:
 - There are challenges with the consultation for small organisations to feed their views in because of other competing demands on their time.
 - Whilst some costs are met by the Welsh Government for focus groups, for example, venue hire, light refreshments, child minding and travel costs, the Welsh Government should invest more in organisations to get the views of diverse communities.
 - There are difficulties in getting diverse communities together during Ramadan.
 - Smaller BME organisations find it difficult to compete with larger organisations for grant funding.
33. As soon as the consultation closes, the responses and outputs from the workshop events and focus groups will be analysed before the Welsh Government starts drafting the revised Objectives. A summary of evidence and findings will be published on the Welsh Government website. Officials in Fairer Futures Division will work with Welsh Government Departments to ensure everyone knows the what, why and how behind the objectives and, most importantly, they need to know what it means for them in terms of their daily role and the contribution they can make. These officials will also facilitate cross-departmental working, where appropriate, identifying synergies.
34. The final Equality Objectives will be published on the Welsh Government website by 1 April 2016. The Equality Objectives are high level. Each objective will be populated with detailed actions outlining how Welsh Government will take forward that particular objective. These will be published in the Strategic Equality Plan. The Strategic Equality Plan will be supported and supplemented by other Welsh Government strategies focusing on specific areas of policy.

Action : The secretariat to re-send information about how to get involved in the online consultation.

Agenda Item 4 – Any Other Business

European Convention on Human Rights and Human Rights Act (Aled Edwards).

35. Aled introduced this item on the agenda. The UK Government announced it plans to scrap the Human Rights Act and replace it with a “British Bill of Rights”. The new Bill will ‘break the formal link between British Courts and the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)’. The implications are not certain, however, this could mean people who wanted to bring human right cases under the ECHR would have to go to a court in Strasbourg to be heard. It is also not clear whether such a new Bill of Rights would continue the obligation on public authorities to uphold human rights.
36. Repealing the Bill of Rights will be problematic. It was felt that we need to think of how in Wales we are preparing for this possible change. Disability Wales is lobbying for greater recognition of the rights of disabled people. Human rights legislation is built into the Scotland Act 1998.
37. The Minister said, the First Minister has made clear his position on the Human Rights Act on many occasions, including during First Minister’s question on 12 May 2015. The First Minister stated the Welsh Government would do all that it can to ensure the rights we all presently enjoy are not eroded by any proposals coming from the UK Government.
38. At an opposition debate on 3 June 2015, the Minister stated the Human Rights Act is a way for the people of Wales to challenge inequality and injustice, and the UK Government’s proposal to repeal the Human Rights Act would be a step backwards for equality and human rights. The Welsh Government will oppose any attempt by the UK Government to repeal the Human Rights Act. The Welsh Government will do all it can to ensure the rights our citizens presently enjoy are not eroded by any proposals coming from the UK Government.
39. Human rights are embedded in the actions of the Welsh Government. The Government of Wales Act requires the Welsh Government not to act incompatibly with the Convention rights set out within the Human Rights Act, and the Assembly cannot legislate in a way which is incompatible.
40. It is understood a Legislative Consent Motion is very likely to be needed to repeal the Act. As a matter of principle we would in any case expect the UK Government to seek this Assembly’s agreement to any proposals. A UK Bill of Rights which doesn’t command the support of the devolved governments and legislatures, at least in respect of devolved matters, could cause serious constitutional issues.

Action: The Minister will report back on any developments on Human Rights Act proposal.

Hate Crime Projects delivered by Welsh Equality Group (WEG)

41. David Phillips, on behalf of the WEG, gave a presentation at the last meeting about the progress of the Hate Crime Projects delivered by WEG. The secretariat has forwarded to members, on behalf of WEG, the Race Equality First newsletter containing an update on the progress of the projects.

Planning and Development Meetings

42. The Minister reminded members they would have received an email from the Secretariat, asking for nominations to join the Planning and Development Group. The Minister said she would welcome involvement on the Group as it supports the work of the Forum and identifies key issues to be raised at future meetings.

Race Council Cymru (RCC) Hate Crime survey and Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC)

43. RCC has completed a survey on behalf of Welsh Government, through the Independent Advisory Group, to build a picture of people's experience of hate crime and incidents. The findings have been feed to Welsh Government and RCC will continue to work in order to evaluate delivery. Gwent Police are funding RCC to conduct similar work with communities in Gwent.

44. Uzo will feedback about the TSPC at the next meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

45. The next meeting will be at Cathays Park on 21 January 2016, 11am-12.30pm.