

**Wales Race Forum Meeting
28 March at 3.30pm – 5.00pm
Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay**

Attendees:

Deputy Minister and Chief Whip	
Rosa Brown	Show Racism the Red Card
Rocio Cifuentes	Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST)
Aled Edwards	Faith Communities Forum Representative
Riaz Hassan	Community Cohesion Regional Co-ordinator, Swansea Bay
Daniel Hurford	Welsh Local Government Association
Uzo Iwobi	Race Council Cymru
Mutale Merrill	BAWSO
Maria Mesa	Women Connect First
Robert Moore	Welsh Equality Group
Shahien Taj	Henna Foundation
Shavanah Taj	Wales TUC

Welsh Government Officials in Attendance:

Alyson Francis	Communities Division
Paul Dear	Equality Team
Emma Small	Equality Team
Bailjit Gill	Equality Team

Apologies:

Isaac Blake	Romani Cultural and Arts Company
Tracey Sherlock	Welsh Refugee Council
Sunil Patel	Show Racism the Red Card

Presentations:

Chief Superintendent Mark Warrender, Gwent Police, Chair of the Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board Cymru

Welcome and Introductions

The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip (DMCW) Jane Hutt welcomed members to the meeting. The DM stated the FM would make reference to the Wales Race Forum in his weekly press conference. Tackling racism is at the forefront of the FM and DMCW's agenda. The Welsh Government issued a statement following the horrific attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand, and both attended a vigil on 15 March.

Item 1: Minutes from the last meeting and update on actions

The minutes of the last Wales Race Forum meeting (21 May 2018) were agreed. All actions were marked as complete.

Item 2: Feedback from the 4 February meeting between DMCW and BAME organisations

The minutes of a meeting between DMCW and some members of the Wales Race Forum on 4 February 2019 were also agreed. Actions from that meeting were discussed:

Action 1: (further meeting) – Complete (today's meeting)

Action 2: (report of review) – Complete

Action 3: (WRF meeting) – Complete (today's meeting)

Action 4: (E&I funding split) – Initial exercise has been completed in relation to 2018/19 but members asked for a longer time frame. **Officials will consider this further.**

Action 5: (Meeting Minister for Education) – Completed but a further meeting will be scheduled

Action 6: (Public appointments) – The DMCW said there is now a clear plan in place regarding diversity in public appointments. This supports a FM Manifesto commitment.

Action 7: (Share information on review of SEP) – Complete

Action 8: (Plenary debate) – a debate has been set for 7 May, and the DMCW is going to be seeking a joint motion with Plaid and Welsh Conservatives.

Action 1: Officials to consider options for analysing WG funding for protected characteristics over a longer time frame and provide an update.

Action 2: DMCW private office to share the proposed joint motion with Shavanah Taj (as vice chair of BAME Welsh Labour).

Action 3: DMCW to meet with the Minister for Education and Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services.

Members raised a number of issues arising from the meeting on 4 February, as follows.

- A request for information on the number of BAME businesses that have benefited from the Welsh Government Economic Contract. The DMCW agreed this needed to be looked at, and the issue of BAME female entrepreneurs. She said she would be sharing the minutes of this meeting with all Ministers to highlight issues relating to other portfolios.
- Concern that it is no longer mandatory for schools to report racist bullying to Local Authorities and that racist bullying isn't being sufficiently acknowledged. Members thought there had been mandatory reporting until 2011, and weren't sure why this had changed. They wondered if it could be brought back, and asked if the DMCW could raise this with the Education Minister. The DMCW asked them to write to her with the information they had.
- This gave rise to comments about culture within some schools – children saying they 'don't rat' – there were a number of examples given from different schools in Cardiff and comments that schools weren't addressing the issues which had arisen from recent events in Christchurch and not supporting children to deal with traumatic situations. There was a general feeling that schools were in denial about bullying and racist bullying within schools in Wales.
- A suggestion that there was research that teachers weren't engaging in things like Prevent, preferring to try to deal with things themselves.

- Feedback on a discussion about schools in rural Wales where someone said 'there is no racism here' because the majority of the school was white. Reportedly inappropriate language was also used at an event where there was a WG official in attendance.
- Daniel Hurford, WLGA said racism was on the agenda for the next meeting of ADEW. He would flag the issues raised with colleagues in WLGA, and would welcome a tripartite discussion between DMCW, WLGA and the Minister for Education regarding tackling racism in schools.
- Discussion also touched on primary schools and universities. In relation to primary schools, Show Racism the Red Card said they were now being asked to do sessions for early primary school children and consider that racism is on the increase in many schools.
- Some schools had requested more resources so that they could have classes on tackling racism. Show Racism the Red Card workshops were good but schools could not afford to have them regularly, and they needed something they could use at other times.
- There were comments about Cardiff University, saying that Muslim women students in particular feel that their complaints aren't being heard (or dealt with), and that they are experiencing racism, including from lecturers.
- Concern at the levels of abuse experienced by taxi drivers. Taxi drivers would welcome better engagement with South Wales Police via UNITE – they would welcome a message from SWP and Welsh Government regarding zero tolerance that they could display in their cabs. The DMCW acknowledged this issue and said when we explore the solution we should look at the licensing procedures of Local Authorities.
- Members were encouraged to attend a forthcoming session (4th April) with senior Welsh Government officials working on the new school curriculum.

Action 4: Secretariat to seek information on BAME businesses benefiting from the Economic Contract and report back.

Action 5: Show Racism the Red Card to write to DMCW with information regarding mandatory reporting of racist incidents in schools

Action 6: Equality officials to meet with Welsh Government officials working on taxi licensing and report back to the Forum

Action 7: Daniel Hurford to contact officials with a proposal for a tripartite meeting.

Item 3: Race Hate Crime

The DMCW said that last week she announced £840k additional funding over two years from the European Transition Fund to tackle hate crime, particularly race hate crime, during the EU Withdrawal period. £360k of this would go to expanding the capacity of Victim Support. £480k for a grant fund to BAME organisations for tackling race hate crime

and she would like this grant to be co-designed with stakeholders, starting at this meeting today.

Chief Superintendent Mark Warrender said that this year would mark 20 years since the MacPherson report on the Stephen Lawrence case. There is much still to be done to improve BAME representation in the police workforce. Progress has been made on the stop and search processes in Wales, with all four Welsh Police Forces signed up to using best practice.

He outlined the systems already in place in Wales to enable victims to report hate crime and seek support. The systems in Wales are seen as best practice across the UK and across the World, as reflected in an Inspection report last year. Victim satisfaction levels are very high. Our Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board Cymru plays a key role, as does the National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre, and the Regional Community Cohesion Programme, both funded by the Welsh Government. However, he said that there is still more that can be done to encourage victims to come forward to report and seek support (although the proportion of victims contacting the police is already higher than most other crime types). We need to particularly encourage people to report who are currently tolerating “day-to-day” abuse.

The DMCW noted the statistics in Paper 3 that show Muslim and Asian/Asian British communities in Wales experienced the highest rates of hate crime (a combination of both racially and religiously motivated).

The DMCW asked members to bring forward suggestions on the best use of the £480k grant fund (spanning two years). Paul suggested the secretariat circulate a questionnaire for members to complete to gather their views. The DMCW said we needed to be strategic, targeting funding especially on areas that would help with prevention of hate crime. She said ideas already discussed in this meeting included resources for schools, work with taxi drivers and a zero tolerance campaign. She emphasised the importance of co-design and co-production for this scheme.

Members noted that a lack of diversity of staff in support agencies (such as Victim Support, Citizen’s Advice Bureau) meant victims of race hate crime found it harder to talk about their experiences and issues.

Regarding the MacPherson report, members said that we need more positive action to get diversity in the workforce, and that it was time to have a debate on positive action and positive discrimination. It was suggested that each police force should at least have one dedicated BAME person who could advise other hate crime officers on race hate crime,

Members commented that getting more BAME representation in public life was also vital – e.g. Welsh Government, Commissioner’s offices. The Welsh Government could require that the Commissioners have a staff that is representative of the diversity in Wales.

It was suggested that we need to have a funded organisation in Wales that can support people who are making complaints of institutionalised racism.

There was a discussion on whether Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and anti-Sikhism should be considered as part of race hate crime or religious hate crime, or whether funding for

tackling these issues should be separated. It was noted that, while Sikhs and Jews are recognised as an ethnic group, Muslims were not. Aled Edwards agreed that this was legally correct but said faith leaders were working with Welsh Government, through the Wales Race Forum, to develop positive cohesion and inclusion messages, and that all major faiths where people were suffering abuse were included.

Following discussion, the consensus was that flexibility is needed. The members concluded that it would be very difficult, and not fruitful, to try to separate out race from religious hate crime, as many people, especially those who are visibly from a minority ethnic group, are vulnerable to both types.

Action 8: Equality officials to send out a questionnaire to members seeking views on use of the £480k funding, collate responses and report back.

Item 4: EYST update on the All Wales BAME Engagement Programme

Rocio Cifuentes gave a brief update on the work over the last year, including the launch of the mentoring programme, the development of a joint paper on tackling issues in schools, the United We Stand conference on 21 March, and the recommendations that had been put to the Welsh Government in February under four themes

1. Racism and institutional racism
2. Race equality in schools
3. Race equality in employment and socio-economic issues
4. Representation in public life

She said that in the next year, the programme would develop a joint paper on tackling race inequality in employment, particularly for young people and graduates, and invited members to submit evidence. She also highlighted the importance of organisations working together, for example through Race Alliance Wales and the Third Sector Partnership Council.

The DMCW said she would like to see more mentors from the Police and from Local Authorities in the next EYST mentoring programme. Mark Warrender said he could help recruit mentors from the Police.

Shavanah said she would share a recent Unison Wales report on discrimination and racism in employment. The Social Partnership Act was looking to develop the Public Sector Equality Duty and tackle discrimination in employment in that way. She wondered if the portal for public sector jobs could help to encourage a greater diversity of applicants for jobs. The DMCW said the Social Partnership Act was a priority for the First Minister.

Action 9: Shavannah Taj to share the Unison Wales report

Action 10: EYST to work with MW to explore mentors from the police in the next round of their mentoring project.

Item 5: Review of the Wales Race Forum

The DMCW said that it was vital that Welsh Government got its mechanisms right for engaging with BAME communities in Wales, and that she would be discussing this with the First Minister. She said that she wanted to see real progress this year – with a focus on progress *between* Wales Race Forum meetings. She said that the debate in Plenary on 7 May, the 22 June Windrush events, the Sanctuary in the Senedd event next week, and the review of the Strategic Equality Plan all added to the momentum. She reported that ‘standing up and being counted’ was part of it, and also that at the Muslim Council for Wales dinner earlier this week, an attendee from Lebanon said Wales was remarkable in that people could come together in this way. The DMCW said we needed to build on that solid foundation of shared values to make real progress and that she wants people, and the members of the Forum, to feel that there is a real opportunity to make a difference.

The DMCW sought and received agreement from the members that

- There is a need for a multiplicity of modes of engagement in addition to the Forum, in different regions and with different groups
- 2019/20 should be seen as a transition year, between the current arrangements and the arrangements that will be put in place when the new Strategic Equality Plan and Equality and Inclusion funding begin next year
- Members were happy with the arrangements for consulting on the Strategic Equality Plan and future funding programme
- The membership of the Forum needs to be refreshed

Items 6 (Windrush funding) and 7 (Review of the Strategic Equality Plan) were deemed to have been covered already during the meeting.

Action 11: Welsh Government to consider new membership and draft Terms of Reference and share with the group

Prior to close: Round table discussion

The DMCW invited each member to make a final comment before the meeting closed. Points raised were as follows:

- It is good that Welsh Government recognises institutional racism as an issue but we need to move beyond warm words and see Welsh Government tackle this head on. What is happening with the Welsh Government Apprenticeship programme and BAME Outreach work? Pleased that the DMCW says she wants to see practical action and will ‘bang on the doors’ of other Ministers.
- The expanded Regional Community Cohesion Programme provides a good opportunity to engage with more BAME communities and was happy to work with the Wales Race Forum on this. Riaz offered to share the findings from a survey he was running on people’s concerns about Brexit.
- Wales is facing increasing levels of racism directed at young people. Organisations need to work together so that we can make best use of resources.

- It is very difficult for the third sector equality councils to hold Local Authorities to account over delivery on their Equality Act duties. The DMCW said she would be happy to meet with Local Authority Chief Executives/ Leaders
- BAME organisations are really struggling with resources and capacity and that it is very hard to do the strategic work when you are also struggling to deliver services. More funding is needed to increase capacity so that we can see real action going forward.
- Concerns that public sector workers (police, social services, judges) were “often getting things very wrong” in case work. The DMCW said this needed to be addressed strategically via the WLGA. There was a discussion on whether the WRF needed therefore to include representatives from other public sector bodies, such as health. Members agreed to the suggestion that future WRF meetings should be themed so that relevant officials from public sector bodies could be invited.
- A question on whether Welsh Government intended to develop a strategy on race equality, and on tackling far right extremism. The DMCW said that this would be considered during the consultation on the Strategic Equality Plan this year.
- A suggestion that the Forum needed to identify and then focus on key priority actions for 2019-20 and then have progress reports at future WRF meetings on these actions. The DMCW agreed.
- Regarding the Windrush Day grant there was a suggestion to involve the Windrush elders on each grant award panel. Uzo also suggested that Iolande Banu from Race Council Cymru as an additional member of the Wales Race Forum. The DMCW said she wanted to make sure all the Windrush Day Grant was spent both regionally and nationally, and that it acknowledged the contributions of the Windrush generation in Wales. She asked Riaz to pass that message on to the RCCCs who are coordinating the distribution of funding in their regions. She asked her officials to try to book the Senedd for the 22 June.
- The development of a cross-party group on race was noted. John Griffiths AM has agreed to chair, with Bethan Sayed AM as deputy. The Terms of Reference will be agreed at the first meeting. The DMCW said that she wanted to work with the group on a joint motion for the debate in Plenary on race on 7 May, seeking the support of the whole Senedd for actions to take the agenda forward.
- Two upcoming events were noted: a briefing seminar at the Unite office on 1 April, looking at racial inclusion in the workplace, and the 4 April meeting with Welsh Government officials working on the new curriculum.

Action 12: Riaz to share findings from his survey in the Swansea Bay area of people's concerns about Brexit

Action 13: Welsh Government to look for an opportunity for the DMCW to meet with Chief Executives of Local Authorities and WLGA.

Action 14: Secretariat to propose a theme for the next meeting and invite relevant officials from public sector bodies, and to report on progress / action underway.

Action 15: Forum members to suggest key priority actions for the Forum in 2019/20, and Secretariat to seek agreement to these and then arrange for a progress report at the next meeting.

Action 16: Secretariat to seek to book space in the Senedd for a Windrush celebration event on 22 June

Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting (September) will be issued to members shortly.