

**Children (Abolition of the Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill
Strategic Implementation Group
Park Plaza, Cardiff
Monday 23rd September 2019
Summary of meeting**

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Strategic Implementation Group (SIG) board meeting. The key objectives for this meeting would be to:

- provide updates on the work of the task and finish groups so far, and on the communications and awareness raising work and
- consider how best to share information between the task and finish groups, the SIG and the Deputy Minister
- consider the work plan for the Strategic and task and finish groups.

2. Minutes and actions of previous meeting

Minutes were agreed. The Terms of Reference for the Strategic Implementation Group were agreed as circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed that Welsh Government (WG) seek to recruit members from additional relevant organisations/sectors and compile a comprehensive action log and share with Strategic and the task and finish groups.

3. Update on the Progress of the bill

The Chair provided an update on the progress of the bill: following the General principles debate on 17 September, when the Senedd agreed and passed the general principles, the Bill had now progressed to stage 2 scrutiny, during which the Bill may be amended.

4. Update on the work in progress of the task and finish groups

Communications and awareness raising update

WG provided an update on communications and awareness raising. It was explained that since the introduction of the Bill, activity has included social media activity, release of a Bill explainer video, establishing a newsletter to provide updates for stakeholders, and public relations.

Engaging with stakeholders, particularly those who will be responsible for implementing the new law, or who will be touched by the new law in their professional capacity, is and will continue to be an important part of the awareness raising strategy.

WG has set up an expert stakeholder communications group to advise on the communications strategy. WG confirmed it will provide regular updates to the SIG on the awareness raising campaign and the social research undertaken to inform it, and will take on board the Group's views, including in relation to raising awareness among stakeholders.

It was agreed that WG would work with professionals and members of the groups to produce relevant materials for those working with parents and families. The explainer video was shown to the group and received positive feedback and it was agreed to circulate the link of the video to all members.

Parenting Expert Action Group (PEAG) update

The Parenting Expert Action Group (PEAG) has been re-formed. It was previously involved in creating the Parenting. Give it Time campaign and resources.

The PEAG's objectives will be to:

- support the expansion of the Parenting Give it Time campaign to 0-18 years of age and develop new resources relevant to the expansion;
- Strategically oversee the practical and effective implementation of possible additional provision to support the change in the law

The PEAG will help determine what additional parenting support, advice and information is required to support behaviour change to support the change in the law, as well as identifying any gaps in current provision.

Data Collection and Monitoring Group update

The aim of the group is to consider methods for collecting data across organisations to monitor the impacts of the legislation. The group have met twice to develop an understanding of current processes and key points for potential data collection. A key priority initially would be working with police and social services to put in place arrangements for data collection to establish a baseline prior to commencement of the legislation.

Out of Court Disposals and Diversion Scheme Group update

The purpose of the group is to provide advice and recommendations on options for use of out of court disposals and to develop options for a diversion scheme.

To date the group had focused on understanding the current adult out of court disposal landscape in Wales and what diversion schemes currently operate in each police force area.

The group had also considered some of the overriding principles for any diversion scheme including needs assessments, rehabilitation, parenting and support.

The group broadly identified several options for a diversion scheme including:

- National provider
- A bespoke diversion scheme
- Refer into existing schemes
- Refer to existing parental support

Wales has a national approach to diversion schemes for under 18 year olds and it was felt that the approach to those who are parents under 18 and accused of physical punishment should enhance what is already in place. It was agreed WG would discuss this with Youth Justice Board to ensure tie in with the Youth Justice Blueprint for Wales.

Operations, Guidance and Training Group update.

The group had initially focused on understanding the current processes operating within organisations, with members providing information on guidance, training and contact points with regard to prevention and using advice and information to target parents.

5. Work-shop – Consideration and approval of the high level work-plan

Members split into small groups to consider the work plan and feedback comments. Following the feedback, the work plan was agreed subject to adding in a timeline with key tasks and dates for the communications and awareness raising work. The work plan would be a living document and may be revised as the work progresses. The process for reporting into the SIG by the task and finish groups was also agreed.

6. Closing Discussions

The Chair thanked members for their input and comments.