

**Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act
Strategic Implementation Group
Tuesday 4 August 2020,
Summary of meeting**

1. Welcome and Introductions

WG welcomed everyone to the meeting.

WG reminded the group that in April the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services agreed to pause the implementation project for two months to allow the team to take stock and carry out contingency planning as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The Deputy Minister was grateful to members of the group for their positive response to resumption of the project in June.

Royal Assent had been achieved on 20 March 2020 with the law due to commence on Monday 21 March 2022.

2. Minutes and actions of previous meeting (3/02/2020)

The minutes of the meeting on 3 February 2020 were agreed. It was noted that terms of reference of the implementation groups and meeting summaries had been, and would continue to be, published on the Welsh Government website.

3. Implementation Status Update:

WG provided an update on implementation and key developments.

4. Recommendations from the Out of Court Disposals Task and Finish Group

WG thanked all the organisations represented on the Out of Court Disposals Task and Finish Group for their work.

WG summarised the group's recommendations on development of an approach to out of court disposals and diversion scheme, developed through discussion during four meetings of the Task and Finish group, and visits made to each of the four police forces. The recommendations had been developed with full consideration given to the prioritisation of children's safeguarding.

Members discussed funding and resources; partnership and multi-agency working; the approach to any reports involving parents under 18 years old; and the wider context of the implementation programme within which diversion sits. The wider context includes the family support and preventative work already carried out in Wales, including through parenting programmes, and the work the Parenting Expert Action Group is doing to review current provision; and the *Parenting. Give it Time* campaign which provides information and advice at a universal level on positive parenting, including positive alternatives to the physical punishment of children.

The group asked for further detailed work to be carried out before deciding on the approach to a diversion scheme.

5. Communications Update

WG provided an update, covering the impact of the pandemic on plans for the start of the awareness raising campaign; current status; and work underway to re-design the communications campaign. Royal Assent was achieved on 20 March, following which lockdown occurred and the campaign was paused, allowing Welsh Government communications to focus on key Covid-19 related information.

6. Closing discussion & AOB

WG thanked the members for their time and continued help and support. WG confirmed that at the next meeting, it was anticipated an update would be provided on the wider communications strategy; and the Data Collection and Monitoring Task and Finish Group would provide advice on the response to the letter of 11 December 2019 from the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services to the Chair of the Strategic Implementation Group, regarding the potential content of a post implementation review report.