

Period Dignity Roundtable meeting

Date: 30 November 2022

Time: 11-12:30

Attendees:

Minister for Social Justice
Colegau Cymru
WINGS Wrexham
Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales (FTWW)
Colegau Cymru
Padmap Kenya
NHS Wales
Plan International
Love your Period campaign
Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)
KIRAN Cymru
Children in Wales
Period Dignity Lead, Denbighshire County Borough Council

Guest Speakers:

Women Together Network, Welsh Government
Hey Girls
Wales Netball
Welsh Hockey

Welsh Government:

Welsh Government Equality officials
Social Partnership and Fair Work officials

Item 1: Welcome

The Minister for Social Justice thanked everyone for attending the meeting and highlighted that there are a number of guest speakers attending the meeting to share further information with the roundtable on the work they do.

The Minister shared her hope that this would lead to a fruitful discussion on how the roundtable can use this knowledge to achieve their shared ambition for a Period Proud Wales.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed by the roundtable.

Item 2: Women Together Network discuss Welsh Government Estate Pilot

The Minister introduced the co-chair of the Welsh Governments Women's staff network.

The Minister explained that one of the ambitions in the Period Proud Wales action plan is to encourage employers to make period products freely available as well as to create a culture where period dignity is considered through policies and can be openly discussed.

It was highlighted that the Welsh Government has a duty to lead by example and was pleased that the co-chair of the Welsh Governments Women's staff network will be discussing how the network has worked to ensure that a free period products pilot will be rolled out across three of the Welsh Government's estates.

The Minister shared her hope that Welsh Government can communicate this learning with other organisations to encourage them to follow suit.

The co-chair of the network explained that in January a one-year period dignity pilot led by the Women Together Network will be launched, running across three Welsh Government office locations – Aberystwyth, Cathays Park and Llandudno Junction.

They went on to say that while most people can track and plan for their period there are occasions when the unpredictable happens. This can be embarrassing, cause distress and upset and often leaves people with no choice other than to leave the workplace that day.

Therefore, through this pilot they want to ease that distress and potentially enable people to stay in the workplace should they wish to do so.

Through a group of volunteers, bundles of emergency supplies have been made available in the first aid rooms at all three offices. These contain heavy-duty sanitary products, changes of underwear and washcloths or wet wipes.

Issues/queries raised by roundtable included:

- Whether any of the products included were plastic free or reusable
- If any health information would be provided alongside the products
- If there would be an evaluation of the pilot

The co-chair of the Welsh Governments Women's staff network explained that the pilot would be evaluated, and the hope was that this would provide sufficient evidence for the scheme to be taken on corporately rather than being volunteer led.

The Minister invited them to return to the roundtable to talk through the evaluation.

Item 3: Welsh Women's Netball and Welsh Hockey lead to discuss promotion of Period Dignity in Wales

The Minister then welcomed Welsh Women's Netball and Welsh Hockey, to discuss their ideas for how they can promote period dignity in Wales as two of the most prominent sports for women.

They delivered a presentation to the roundtable which highlighted the following points:

- There are 200 Netball Clubs and 67 Hockey Clubs in Wales with 13,000+ regular players
- As National Governing bodies they have a presence in every secondary school in Wales (182)
- They want to help Welsh Government deliver the Period Dignity agenda
- They have strong strategic partnerships and can activate a local workforce easily
- Ability to educate men and boys alongside women, girls and other genders
- They are committed to embedding period dignity topics into all their courses (Approx 30 titles)
- They could be fully mobilised and deliver results in 18 months
- They receive no funding from Sport Wales that allows them to support this agenda currently

They are currently working to put together a proposal to Welsh Government on a program of activity.

Item 4: Hey Girls Period Products App – broadening into Wales

The Minister invited Hey Girls to share information with the group on their Period Products app. They have been working with the Scottish Government, with local authorities, and business across Scotland and are looking to broaden this work into Wales to make it easier for people to access products through use of their app.

The app – called **Pick Up My Period** – was devised by Hey Girls in collaboration with Scottish Government. The free app allows people to find period products on the move or products closest to home. Users can search for plastic-free products within the app.

The app includes accessibility information, opening hours, and the type of products available for all locations, and is free to use but is not currently bilingual.

The app currently links to over 700 venues in many communities where free products are available in Scotland – and the number is expected to grow where further local authorities join the app.

The Welsh Government are currently working on a free period product Map, powered by DataMap Wales, which will sit on the NHS Bloody Brilliant website. However we have received feedback from children and young people that they would also value having an app to help locate products. An App will be easier to use on a mobile device and therefore working on expanding the pick up my period app into Wales could be a useful next step in helping those in Wales to access products.

Item 5: Publication of A Period Proud Wales and the complementary campaign

The Minister invited the Head of Gender and Disability Policy to provide an update to the roundtable on the publication of the Period Proud Wales plan and complementary campaign.

It was highlighted that -

- Since the last meeting in July work on finalising the plan based on feedback from the consultation has been ongoing as well as preparing for publication.
- The plan is now shorter – as actions that were already completed have been removed and the remaining actions have been streamlined from 50 to 10 – whilst maintaining the commitments.
- The plan was due to go to Cabinet to receive clearance from all Ministers in September, but unfortunately this was the same day as the bank holiday for Her Majesty the Queen's funeral and so was cancelled.
- A Cabinet slot has been reallocated for January and depending on the number of changes we're now looking at a late January/ early February publication.
- In the meantime, work on progressing some of the actions within the plan has been progressing, including developing a communications campaign to support publication, procuring an evaluation into the grant that is issued to local authorities and creating a map to free period products.
- M.E.L research has been awarded the contract for the grant evaluation and the inception meeting was held last week. Interim findings are expected in March to help inform next year's grant and the final plan will be ready in October.
- M.E.L Research want to engage with the roundtable throughout the evaluation and may invite some members to take part in a steering group or they may attend one of the roundtable meetings.

The Head of Gender and Disability Policy handed over to Equalities Official to provide further information on our communications work and DataMap Wales.

It was explained that work on the free period product map, powered by DataMap Wales, is nearing completion but that work on updating locations will be ongoing in partnership with local authorities who are responsible for delivering the period dignity grant. The Map is bilingual and also contains information on where the nearest public toilets are available.

As part of the campaign to publish the plan, the Welsh Government have been working with Edicis, to create lived experience videos highlighting different women's experiences of having a period and what a Period Proud Wales means to them.

Item 6: Task and Finish Group on Communications/campaign work

The Head of Gender and Disability Policy thanked the members of the roundtable who have already volunteered to take part in the task and finish group and indicated that this would be established in early 2023.

Item 7: Any other business

The Minister updated the roundtable to say that the Period Dignity Leads from every local authority met yesterday in a meeting arranged by WLGA. The purpose of this meeting was to share learning and best practice as well as to decide who from that meeting would attend Period Dignity Roundtable meetings as their representatives. The Minister added that she would like to see these meetings happen at least a week before round table meetings to ensure feedback is consistent. If members agree, the Minister indicated that they could have a standing agenda item to allow the chosen Period Dignity lead representatives the opportunity to feedback key themes to the group.