

Wales Race Forum

09:45 – 10:45 am, Thursday 15th June 2023 – Via Teams

Attendance

Name - Organisation
Jane Hutt MS - Minister for Social Justice & Chief Whip
His Majesties Prison and Probation Services (HMPPS)
Swansea University
Gypsies, Travellers Wales (GTW)
Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC)
North Wales Regional Equality Network (NWREN)
Race Equality First
KIRAN Cymru
Churches in Wales Together
WG (Equality and Human Rights)
WG (Race, Faith and Belief and Gypsy and Roma and Traveller Policy Team)
WG (ArWAP Policy Team)
WG (Cohesive Communities Policy Team)
WG (Strategic Equality and Mainstreaming)
WG (Cabinet Secretary Private Office)
WG (FMG – Healthcare Inspectorate Wales Division)
WG (FMG – Special Advisors)
WG (CSI - Statistical services Division)
WG (EET – Bus and Streets)

Meeting notes

Discussion
1. <u>Welcome and Introductions</u> The Minister (MSJCW) welcomed everyone to the second full meeting of the year and expressed gratitude to all participants for attending the anti-racism summit. The Minister extended thanks to the Head of ArWAP Team (HoAT) and his team, as well as the partnership with Criminal Justice in Wales. She emphasised the need for focused collaborative partnership action to achieve the vision of Wales becoming anti-racist by 2030. MSJCW acknowledged the preparations for the upcoming Windrush 75 celebrations, recognising the significant contributions of the Windrush generation to various

aspects of Welsh society. She mentioned the upcoming event in the Senedd next Thursday, where the First Minister will be speaking.

2. Anti-racist Wales Action Plan (ArWAP) Update followed by Q&A

The Head of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan (ArWAP) Implementation Team (HoAT) summarised the ArWAP's aims and gave the following update:

- Introduction of new and existing members of the ArWAP team, provided an update on recent bilateral meetings with other ministers to assess progress on the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan. Highlighted the positive feedback received from the One Welsh Public Service Anti-racist Summit on 17th May 2023 - a full report will follow.
- Establishment of the External Accountability Group and the Internal Support and Challenge Group, which aim to ensure progress and learning within the plan. He mentioned the formation of subgroups in areas such as education, housing, health, and culture to leverage expertise and coordination. HoAT mentioned that the current action plan focuses on the next two years, with plans to co-produce goals and actions from June 2024 onwards. He informed participants about ongoing work on Regional Forums and the upcoming publication of a progress report.

MSJCW highlighted the significance of the bilateral discussions with colleagues and Ministers. These discussions yielded outcomes that surpassed the goals and actions outlined in the action plan, which is a positive development.

MSJCW met with local government leaders who have embraced social justice, including anti-racist measures, as key objectives. This integration is not limited to the cabinet but extends to local government and the health service.

MSJCW invited the group to raise any questions or points they may have.

Representative from North Wales Regional Equality Network (NWREN) emphasised that the message may not have reached all ethnic minority groups in North Wales. Only one of the six groups they had recently contacted was aware of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, particularly among those who do not speak English or Welsh.

MSJCW acknowledged the point, stating that there is still a long way to go in reaching out to minority populations. However, a discussion on the progress made in this regard would take place at a later time when updates on regional forums are available.

Representative from Race Equality First expressed interest in learning about the additional areas incorporated into the Action Plan and highlighted the exclusion of youth work from the final version of the plan and requested more details to hold relevant stakeholders accountable.

MSJCW emphasised on the upcoming meeting with the First Minister to provide an overview. And assured that RH would be involved in sharing the developments and goals of the plan with the External Accountability Group.

MSJCW acknowledged the importance of cross-government collaboration and reiterated the need to report on broader progress. She asked HoAT to comment on the reporting mechanism for the wider issues before moving on to agenda item 3.

HoAT gave the following update:

- Outlined the new areas that would be included in the plan, such as International Development, Climate Change, and Transport for Wales, highlighting the discussions held at the ministerial level.
- HoAT mentioned that rural affairs, specifically the food and business chain sector, would also be incorporated. He assured the Minister that they would be kept informed of the progress as they moved forward with the plan's development.
- HoAT then informed the group that all Ministers had agreed to attend the Extended Accountability Group meetings, demonstrating their commitment to the cause.

3. His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Positive Action Initiative – followed by Q&A and discussions

MSJCW welcomed two representatives from His Majesty's Prison and Probation Services (HMPPS) to discuss HMPPS Positive Action in Wales.

They gave an overview of Positive Action Initiative and highlighted:

- The significance of one of the HMPPS representatives' appointment as the first positive action officer across prison and probation services in the UK.
- HMPPS as an organisation, employing nearly 3000 staff across Wales, primarily in five public prisons and six regional probation offices.
- The HMPPS representatives elaborated on positive action, clarifying that it is not positive discrimination or based on quotas but rather aims to level the playing field by providing fair opportunities for individuals who may have faced disadvantages in the past.
- The HMPPS representatives emphasised the importance of community engagement and highlighted negative perceptions, stigma, and lack of knowledge about HMPPS as factors contributing to under representation.
- The 5 areas that they are working on: legitimate and fairness, attraction and recruitment, workplace culture, lived experience and Welsh language.

- Some of the feedback they have had include lack of role models, negative perception of HMPPS and lack of confidentiality.
- Going forward looking to do outreach and engagement, support, public and third sector partnerships.
- Further support by introducing buddying system, online webinar/workshop, Cardiff commitment, expressed interest roles.
- An attendee, a senior administrative officer within HMPPS, shared his personal experience and expressed the need for support and development networks within HMPPS. He would like to support/be involved in the Positive Action and the buddying system.

MSJCW thanked the senior administrative officer for his valuable input and expressed appreciation for the insights provided by the two representatives from HMPPS.

MSJCW asked the group for any questions that they may have for HMPPS colleagues.

- A representative from KIRAN Cymru expressed their interest in collaborating with the HMPPS. She left a message in the message box to explore potential collaboration opportunities.
- One of the representatives from HMPPS left their contact details in the chat for anybody to get in touch.

4. Anti-Asian racism Research Project – Followed by Q&A and discussions

MSJCW welcomed an Associate Professor (AP) from the School of Culture and Communications at Swansea University, to present on the Anti-Asian Racism Research Project.

MSJCW commended the AP's expertise and the importance of their ongoing research.

The AP gave a presentation and provided an overview of the project, which highlighted and focused on:

- topics such as ethnic categorisation, the model minority syndrome, and the need for collaborative efforts.
- the diverse Asian communities and the confusion caused by categorisation based on physical characteristics versus cultural expressions and identifications.

- explaining who EC are - fastest growing, amongst Asian.
- ESEA, gender racialised, stereotyping, during pandemic and online bullying, sparsely documented. This caused depression, mental health issues.

MSJCW expressed appreciation for the AP's presentation and acknowledged that members had received a copy of their initial report, and eagerly awaiting the full report.

MSJCW emphasised the significance of academic expertise and understanding the experiences of Southeast Asians in combating racism.

5. Bus Bill Consultation Update – Followed by Q&A and discussions

MSJCW confirmed that due to meeting being overrun, item 5 will need to be in the next meeting agenda. However, she asked a WG official from Bus Services to give a brief update.

The official expressed eagerness to consider the impact of the potential new bus services on all protected characteristics through an integrated impact assessment.

The official also highlighted the importance of inclusivity and accessibility in the implementation of the bill.

MSJCW requested that the official should share their email address in the chat for further communication.

MSJCW expressed gratitude for the collaborative and inclusive approach adopted by the team throughout the meeting, ensuring that all voices are heard and that the new bus services system is accessible to all.

6. Any Other Business

MSJCW requested officials to share their oral statement on Refugee Week, which focused on the theme of compassion.

MSJCW acknowledged the presence of far-right groups in Wales opposing engagement with refugees and emphasised the need to recognise and address this issue.

MSJCW asked for one more question before closing the meeting.

A representative from Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC) shared her observations regarding the influx of Latin American refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers who have contacted her since her involvement with Women Connect First. The representative highlighted the significant number of individuals and families she encountered, emphasising the lack of cultural understanding and acknowledgment of the Latin American community in Wales. The representative specifically

mentioned the presence of a sizable Latin American community in Swansea and Cardiff and expressed the need for recognition and support.

MSJCW thanked her for her dedication and highlighted the significance of addressing the discrimination and challenges faced by individuals mentioned. Key is using the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan to overcome this.