

Date: **18 September 2026**

ATISN 27381 – Hope not Hate

Dear

Thank you for your request which we received on **20 August 2026**. You asked for information on the meeting of 4 June 2024, 9 August 2024 and 12 November 2025 with Hope not Hate.

Our response

Copies of the information that we have decided to release is enclosed at Annex 2. No information is held for the meeting dated 4 June 2024. Please note that only a draft of the 9 August 2024 meeting note could be identified, which has been provided.

I have decided that some of the information is exempt from disclosure under sections 38(1) and 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act and is therefore withheld. The reasons for applying these exemptions are set out in full at Annex 1 to this letter.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ
or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,

Annex 1

Application of exemptions

The Freedom of information Act provides a right for anyone to ask a public authority to make requested information available to the wider public. As the release of requested information is to the world, not just the requester, public authorities need to consider the effects of making the information freely available to everybody. Any personal interest the requester has for accessing the information cannot override those wider considerations.

I have decided to withhold the following information:

Information being withheld	Section number and exemption name
Names of individuals involved with the relevant meetings	S.40(2)– Personal Information
Third sector and community organisation names due to the risk of endangerment of health and safety.	S.38(1)– Health and Safety

This Annex sets out the reasons for the engagement of the exemptions set out above.

Engagement of section 38(1) (Health and Safety)

The Information Commissioner's Guidance on s38 states (inter alia):

'Section 38 provides an exemption from disclosing information if it would endanger any individual (including the applicant, the supplier of the information or anyone else). The exemption does not necessarily deal with what are usually thought of as health and safety matters, such as establishing the cause of an accident.'

We have considered whether the disclosure of related information would, or would be likely to – (a) endanger the physical or mental health of any individual, or (b) endanger the safety of any individual.

The Welsh Government believes that disclosing the names of organisations working on community cohesion and hate prevention would be likely to cause harm to individuals working for those organisations. This could include either physical or mental health harm or endangerment of safety. This harm could arise from harassment online or offline, or from physical confrontations, as well as the mental health stress that would be likely to arise from public disclosure for those affected. It

is important to note that FOIA disclosures are public and such harm could be perpetrated by anyone, not necessarily the requestor.

We have therefore consulted relevant third parties to assess concerns and to ascertain whether harm would be caused or be likely to be caused.

Section 38 is a 'qualified exemption' which is subject to the Public Interest Test.

Public interest arguments in favour of disclosure of information

The Welsh Government acknowledges that disclosure of information about engagement between Ministers and other organisations would have some public interest and could support increased public understanding of related issues which have been considered over time. Disclosure could provide additional transparency and increased public awareness about the Welsh Government's work in response to hate in Welsh communities.

Public interest arguments in favour of withholding

Officials have received evidence detailing how involvement with work to support cohesion, inclusion and equality initiatives has led to misinformation, targeting and abuse. This clearly evidences the harms that releasing this information would be likely to have on individuals, organisations and those they support. Third sector organisations have been targeted for abuse, both online and via threats, and the disclosure of this information is likely to escalate issues, resulting in the endangerment of both the physical/mental health of funded organisation staff, as well as endangering their safety. The Charity Commission recently (July 2026) published a report detailing the related increased hostility experienced by third sector organisations.

Balance of public interest test

In this case, we have decided that the health and safety risks of disclosure outweigh the public interest in disclosure for the reasons set out above. The requested information will therefore be withheld. For those who expressed Health and Safety concerns, we believe they should be exempt from disclosure.

Engagement of Section 40 – Personal Information.

Section 40(2) together with the conditions in section 40(3)(a)(i) or 40(3)(b) provides an absolute exemption if disclosure of the personal data would breach any of the data protection principles.

'Personal data' is defined in sections 3(2) and (3) of the Data Protection Act 1998 ('the DPA 2018') and means any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual. An identifiable living individual is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an

identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of the individual.

We have concluded that, in this instance, the information requested contains third party personal data.

Under Section 40(2) of the FOIA, personal data is exempt from release if disclosure would breach one of the data protection principles set out in Article 5 of the GDPR. We consider the principle being most relevant in this instance as being the first. This states that personal data must be:

“processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject”

The lawful basis that is most relevant in relation to a request for information under the FOIA is Article 6(1)(f). This states:

“processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller or by a third party except where such interests are overridden by the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject which require protection of personal data, in particular where the data subject is a child”.

In considering the application of Article 6(1)(f) in the context of a request for information under FOIA it is necessary to consider the following three-part test:-

- **The Legitimate interest test:** Whether a legitimate interest is being pursued in the request for information;
- **The Necessity test:** Whether disclosure of the information/confirmation or denial that it is held is necessary to meet the legitimate interest in question;
- **The Balancing test:** Whether the above interests override the interests, fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject.

Our consideration of these tests is set out below:

1. Legitimate interest

We recognise that there may be a general interest in understanding who attended the relevant meetings. However, we are not aware of any specific legitimate interest which requires disclosure of the names of individual meeting attendees, with the exception of the Cabinet Minister who had a clear public-facing role with a reduced expectation of privacy in the conduct of their professional responsibilities.

2. Is disclosure necessary?

We do not consider that disclosure of the names of individuals connected with the meeting is necessary to meet any legitimate interest. The meeting discussion can be understood without identifying individual members, participants or officials. Similarly, the content of meeting records, including discussions, decisions and actions, can be understood without naming individual civil servants or other individuals where their identity is not necessary to understand the substance of the business conducted.

3. The balance between legitimate interests and the data subject's interests or fundamental rights and freedoms

We have considered whether any legitimate interest in disclosure would override the rights and freedoms of the individuals concerned. We do not consider that it would. Disclosure under FOIA is effectively disclosure to the world at large. The individuals had an expectation that their personal data would not be published and have no control over any subsequent use of their personal data once disclosed.

In relation to civil servants, disclosure of names in connection with this meeting could expose individuals to unnecessary personal attention or targeting, including through social media or other online platforms. We are aware that individuals involved in this area of work may be subject to intrusive or upsetting contact, and in some cases the disclosure of further personal information online would be likely to create risks to personal safety. Welsh Government has a duty of care to avoid placing individuals at unnecessary risk where disclosure of their identity is not required to understand the work of the Group or the policy position of Government.

As release of the information would not be legitimate under Article 6(1)(f), and as no other condition of Article 6 is deemed to apply, release of the information would not be lawful within the meaning of the first data protection principle. It has therefore been withheld under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and not subject to the public interest test.

Annex 2

DC/JH-/00960/25 - Hope Not Hate - note of meeting 12 November 2025

Attendees:

Jane Hutt MS, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice (CSSJTCW)

REDACTED – SECTION 40(2) Special Advisor

REDACTED – SECTION 40(2), [Attendee 2] Welsh Government

REDACTED – SECTION 40(2) Welsh Government

REDACTED – SECTION 40(2) [Attendee 1] HOPE Not Hate

Points for discussion:

1. Hate Hurts Wales Oral Statement
2. Equality and Social Justice Committee on Social Cohesion and the establishment on an Expert Group
3. Hope not Hate work plans in Wales
4. Tackling misinformation/disinformation

Note of meeting:

CSSJTCW asked for an update on Hope Not Hate's work in Wales. She highlighted the recent Equality and Social Justice Committee inquiry into Social Cohesion and the publication of its findings. She said that Gaynor Legall has been appointed as chair of an Expert Group to push forward this work, and that there will be a debate about the report in the Senedd in December. CSSJTCW further outlined the challenges caused by the current climate and the prevalence of online mis/disinformation, which is resulting in heightened community tensions.

REDACTED – SECTION 40(2) [Attendee 1] highlighted some of the recent Hope Not Hate activity in Wales. He provided updates on ongoing research which has highlighted low level trust of public in authorities and politicians, as well as the rise of extreme far-right narratives. REDACTED – SECTION 40(2) [Attendee 1] requested information on the types of dis/misinformation which were causing issues in Wales.

REDACTED – SECTION 40(2) [Attendee 2] explained the purpose of the Welsh Government's For the Record Blog and its limitations. REDACTED – SECTION 40(2) [Attendee 2] summarised the types of challenging mis/disinformation impacting community cohesion and causing tensions.

REDACTED – SECTION 40(2) [Attendee 1] highlighted research which suggested the majority of people in Wales (region of 74%) like living in a multi-cultural community. He raised the importance of focussing on pride in place, social history, working class history, civic pride, and conservation when creating narratives to promote cohesion. REDACTED – SECTION 40(2) [Attendee 1] happy to share embargoed research.

CSSJTCW talked about the importance of community assets and highlighted the positive work of Cymunedoli Cyf in Gwynedd and at Dusty Forge in Cardiff.

DRAFT MEETING NOTE

First Minister, Deputy First Minister, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip meeting with community leaders, policy and third sector organisations on supporting the safety of people and communities

15.30-16.30 | 9th August 2024

A full list of those that were invited to the meeting can be found in Annex A.

Notes

The FM welcomed invitees to the meeting, noting the work of the Cabinet Secretary. The First Minister stated that there will never be a place for hate in Wales, or across the UK. WG continue to express our condolences in solidarity with the victims and families affected by the horrendous incident in Southport. Although we have not seen the level of disorder and violence in Wales as has been experienced in England over recent days, we cannot be complacent. FM said she wanted to reassure communities in Wales that WG are taking steps in response to recent events. We are working closely with police. Aware that ethnic minority people, and particularly Muslim people, have been made to feel fearful and changed their lives to respond to this fear. Highlighted the Hate Hurts Wales campaign.

The First Minister invited contributions from members orally and via the chat. This note summarises the key views and points raised during the meeting.

People

- **Experiences of racism, islamophobia and hate** – Members shared many personal and individual experiences from recent days of racism, islamophobia and hate. People are feeling fearful which is made worse by social media and fake news. The fear is tangible, and people are changing their daily routines to keep themselves safe. Every incidence of hate crime is trauma. Examples of buildings being vandalised were given. This included questions about defining islamophobia, and concerns about right wing extremism. Many cited an increase in racially motivated abuse noting that although people felt these had increased, they were going unreported at the moment.
- **Wellbeing of staff** – Concern was raised of the impact on staff with examples provided by attendees of dedicated staff sessions and worries about their own safety and in raising concerns within organisations. The role of the trade unions

as a source of advice rather than use of formal routes. Experiences are that it is difficult for those who are a minority in the workplace. Mental health support for staff in the sector is under resourced. Charities need funding. Staff are being advised to work from home and take certain routes on the way to work. Suggestions for communication on where employers (and workers) should access information about this (to inform how they respond)

- **Communications** - Welcomed non-complacent tone and approach to listening to communities from Welsh Government but feeling that communications from Welsh Government had been slow, with a concern that any messages are not getting through to the people and communities directly affected. Acknowledged the good message to Welsh Government and National Health Service Wales staff but how to get message out to wider public sector workforce, third sector and private sector (e.g. taxi drivers). Suggestions for a local communications network to join things up. The number of rumours and low awareness about where to find authoritative information (whether this is from police, local government or other sources) is adding to the worry facing both ethnic minority people and people working in settings who are at greater risk of violence, including retail and hospitality workers. Comments were also made and supported that whilst setting a balance is important and not fuelling fear, it needs to be understood that people are fearful and to be told "it's not as bad here" isn't right either. Attendees relayed how people are seeing things in the media, seeing elected politicians saying some very hateful things and echoing what the far right are saying.
- **Women** – The experiences of women during recent days were highlighted, and the First Minister was invited to hear the experiences of women.
- **Hate crime reporting** – It was noted that the Hate Hurts Wales campaign will have increased focus from w/c 12th August. Policing colleagues were keen to emphasise the importance of reporting hate crime incidents, and there was a call for more information to be shared. The Wales Hate Support Centre said they were not seeing the spikes, but there are natural peaks and troughs. But are seeing reports of street level hate language and increasing fear. Fear of unknown people as well as acquaintances who may have these views. Suggestion to bring together partners to look at reporting. Many, many people are reluctant to come forward to report, unfortunately this is the result of decades of trust being broken. People still reluctant to report via intermediaries.
- **Public discourse** – There were concerns raised about the discourse by certain Senedd members during recent days.

Relationships / collaboration

- **Cross sector engagement** - Reflected on good use of formal structures in place during Covid, which could be used in this current crisis.
- **UK Government** –Engagement with the United Kingdom Government is critical, on asylum seekers as widening of dispersal means comprehensive reach of services and support is difficult.

Key policy areas / public services

- **Public services** – Members shared examples and issues in how people are accessing services, either because they do not feel safe, and the impact on not attending appointments. Need to ensure people are not penalised for not attending appointments due to fear of hate crime etc.
- **Third sector** – Recognised role of third sector organisations, challenges of funding. Lisa Nandy MP (Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has written to civil society and youth organisations (8th August). The FM indicated willingness to follow this practice. Third Sector Support Wales committed to play a role in bringing partners. Call for funding to charities supporting grassroots communities to deal with increase in calls by volunteers.
- **Local government** – Suggestion for the First Minister to write to Local Authorities and social care providers. WLGA will be send out a message shortly. Recognised need for local communication networks.
- **Education** - Suggested additional support and communications for schools and community organisations. The role of schools when children return in September was highlighted and the need for educators to be supported to have conversations about the recent disorder, and in particular with Muslim children. It was suggested that the Cabinet Secretary for Education sends a message to the education sector. Need for strong direction from Welsh Government that it expects zero-tolerance. Link with work being done with schools under the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan. Important role for parents/guardians too.
- **Health** – Members of organisations remain very worried about attending hospitals after hours in the dark and all alone to tend to emergencies.
- **Asylum accommodation** – Concerns about individuals evacuated from asylum accommodation in England and lessons on how to support individuals who don't have access to cash or clothes.
- **Police** – Recognition of role of police in bringing perpetrators to justice. Representatives from each of the forces were in attendance. Policing colleagues

want to work with people to get as many hate crime incidents reporting. Desire to understand better communication routes and police forces are working hard to welcome feedback.

- **Sport** – Concerns were raised about supporting young people when faced with racism and hate crime at sports, and existing responses from sporting bodies.
- **Social care** – Ongoing dialogue about the risk of violence facing retail and social care workers in the relevant social partnership arrangements (the retail forum and social care fair work forum) which Welsh Government could use to communicate key messages to both employers and unions.
- **Charity Commission** – Engagement with the Charity Commission has included measures to allow charities to respond to current events e.g. by de-listing their address, providing governance support for Trustees, and concerns about contract compliance when managing risk to their organisation and staff.

Plans and strategies

- **Anti-racist Wales Action Plan** – Concern about people disengaging from the work on the plan. The First Minister gave reassurance on the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan and cross government commitment. Work on Anti-racism is not something new for Welsh Government. Concern about implementation by Local Authorities. Questions were raised about the process or mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the ARWAP. A recent public meeting held in Cardiff saw many educators informing the meeting that they saw no evidence of it in their schools and every single young person who was in attendance confirmed that they had not heard of it. It is important not to be complacent. It was relayed that a measurement framework to measure progress, impact and outcomes will be published in the autumn.
- **Nation of Sanctuary Plan** – Concern that asylum and refugee sector, often do not feel that their needs are being met. The Welsh Refugee Coalition, a body of 54 members wrote to Welsh Government to highlight that we were against the Nation of Sanctuary Action Plan, being rolled under the ARWAP. A request was made to review this approach.

Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Social Justice, Trefynydd and Chief Whip thanked the FM and members. Reassured that this is not a one-off meeting. Committed to write up what has been said and look for a strategic way to communicate and bring representation together. Highlighted role of ARWAP and the co-chairs role. Committed to share with the Cabinet and on key policy areas such as education.

Links and contacts provided in the chat include

REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).

Annex A

Below is a list of those invited to the meeting.

Organisation	Representation
REDACTED – SECTION 38(1).	REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).
Hope Not Hate	REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).
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REDACTED – SECTION 38(1).	REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).
Police Liaison Unit	REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).
South Wales Police	REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).
North Wales Police	REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).
Dyfed Powys Police	REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).
Gwent Police	REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).
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Welsh Government officials

REDACTED – SECTION 40(2).