Meeting Notes of the Working Group on Banning Conversion Practices

Session 2, Formal Meeting

Subject: Working Group on Banning of Conversion Practices

Date: 28 February 2023

Time: 14:00

Chair: [redacted]

Supporting officials:

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

Opening and welcoming the Working Group for Banning of Conversion Practices:

Members were welcomed to the second formal meeting of the working group.

Notes from the previous meeting were agreed. Members were given until 3rd March to email any amendments prior to the notes being published on the Welsh Government website.

Updates were agreed on action points from the previous meeting and members were thanked for their contributions.

Extending Working Groups Membership

- The group acknowledged the challenges associated with engaging with some groups and organisations that are primarily volunteer led. Issues such as lack of capacity, lack of resources, concerns around vulnerability and safeguarding of members were discussed.
- The option of engaging in different formats was discussed to increase engagement, if necessary, as the work of the group progresses.
- Members were invited to submit any further suggestions for membership expansion to Welsh Government.

Brief review on the recent launch of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan

- The launch took place on the 7 February 2023.
- [redacted] delivered an Oral Statement at the Senedd.
- The LGBTQ+ Action Plan was well received by community groups and the media, including social media.
- The LGBTQ+ Team attended the Plenary Session at the Senedd in the Public Gallery for the Oral Statement along with various stakeholders. It was an

important milestone and was supported by numerous ministers within the Senedd.
- There was a small number of negative comments.

Discussion: Welfare and Transparency.

- Discussion with reference to social media and linking to the working group members, all have received the welfare support package. Group members thanked officials for their support and officials asked group members to keep them updated of any concerns.
- Reminder that Welsh Government's commitment to transparency was discussed with the group. Notes of meetings, which do not attribute comments to individuals, are published on the Welsh Government website and will be updated accordingly.

Sharing of data or reports

- Members to share data from research which includes figures from Wales and reminded members that any further reports or data are welcomed. Please forward to Welsh Government Officials.

Presentations: Conversion Practices.

Two presentations were given to the group:

Presentation 1- Galop. Report sponsored by Galop titled "Experiences of Conversion Practices: what is conversion practice".

Presentation 2- Victim Support – Experiences of Conversion Practice and Hate Crime.

Discussion: Presentations.

A clear consensus from the working group: not all people or professionals recognise conversion therapies/practices – or consider it as harmful practices. Clearly identified is a need at nation level for education and training across all sectors, especially public sector.

- To provide training and education to all professionals and members of the LGBTQ+ Community so they can better understand and identify the abhorrent practices of conversion therapy/practices, regardless of the setting where they take place.
- Signposting victims to access appropriate support and empowering them to feel safe, believed and affirmed in the gender identity or sexuality.
- Progress needed in terms of prosecutions and criminal justice.
- Children, young people and adults are not recognising abuse or abusive behaviour, until the damage is profound.

Draft Definition: Working group members discussed TOR definition for clarification.

- Group identified that Conversion practices/therapy are not to be confused with support services or “Exploration/Affirmation” of gender and sexual orientations.
- “Predetermined mindset” to change a person’s gender Identity of sexual orientation. Not all members agreed to add “predetermined purpose” to the definition but suggested to consider it.
- “Any and all predetermined intentions”
- “Any and all settings”
- Some wanted clarity on what practices came within conversion practices or therapy, particularly in relation to Faith settings.

Agreed that a clear definition will help with this and that the group will agree a definition over the course of future meetings.

AOB:

Actions

1 Update the Banning Conversion Practices Website with ToR and Minutes.
2 Update draft definition to reflect suggested changes and share with the Group.
3 Next meeting, 28 March. Topic of Meeting: advising on the design of a campaign to educate on the dangers of conversion practices and highlight support service.