

Wales Race Forum

12:00 – 1:00 pm, Monday 17th March 2025 – Via Teams

Attendance

Name - Organisation
Jane Hutt MS - Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip
Welsh Local Government Authority (WLGA)
Travelling Ahead
Women Connect First
BAWSO
North Wales Regional Equality Network (NWREN)
Race Equality First
Gypsies and Travellers Wales
KIRAN Cymru
Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team (EYST)
Show Racism the Red Card
Chinese in Wales Association (CIWA)
Diverse Cymru
Privilege Café
Romani Cultural & Arts Company (RCAC)
Networking for World Awareness of Multicultural Integration (NWAMI)
South Wales Police
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 – Cabinet Division)
WG (FMG – Special Advisors)
WG (CSI - Statistical services Division)
WG (EET – Bus & Streets)
WG (LGHCCRA – Local Government Policy)

Meeting notes

Discussion
<p>1. <u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>CSSJTCW welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.</p>

CSSJTCW explained the meeting would focus on agenda items missed from the previous meeting (on 3rd Feb) due to the shortage of time and continue the discussions on the impact of social media on race organisations.

CSSJTCW noted with regret the closure of the Romani Arts and Cultural Company (RCAC) on 31st March. CSSJTCW wished to record her thanks to the representative from Romani Cultural & Arts Company (RCAC) for their dedication to promoting the Romani and Traveller culture. RCAC are kindly donating elements of their collection to Amgueddfa Cymru to ensure that their work continues to contribute to the national and international discourse surrounding Gypsy, Roma and Traveller culture.

CSSJTCW updated the forum on the actions from the last meeting:

- CSSJTCW has spoken to the Chair of the Cross-Party Group about reconvening the Cross-Party Group for Race. A meeting is being organised following Easter recess.
- Secretariat has shared the link to the Oral Statement on Nation of Sanctuary.
- Update to take place at a future meeting regarding the independent public inquiry following the Southport attacks and the National Audit into Group-Based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

Action: Secretariat to share the Misinformation toolkit.

2. Diversity and Inclusion Section 30 guidance – update

An official from the Senedd Reform Team provided an update on the recent consultation and next steps: The team have published a summary of responses to the consultation and are now using the feedback received to inform the final guidance aimed to be published this spring.

CSSJTCW highlighted the importance of this guidance to support political parties to have a diverse range of candidates represented at the 2026 election. CSSJTCW also referred to the work of the Equal Power Equal Voice partnership which provides mentoring and support to ensure diversity in political and public life.

A Forum member queried whether the guidance includes information on combating discrimination and suggested advisory processes. Part 1 of the guidance includes actions that organisations should take and details on organisational culture that will cover these points.

Action: Secretariat to share the guidance with Forum members when it is available.

3. Equality and Inclusion Grant scheme

CSSJTCW outlined the plans to launch two new grant schemes over the next financial year. In advance of the planned launch of these grants by May 2025 views of members were invited.

The Head of Strategic Equality Human Rights and Delivery Planning gave a broad outline of the new grant schemes.

Feedback on the grant schemes was provided, including:

- A Forum member discussed their organisations policy on not bidding for funding under 10k. Costs for smaller organisations mean smaller amounts of grant funding isn't worth it. There is an additional problem of recruiting staff. In N Wales there must be access to funding to empower communities to bid for resources.
- Welcome small grants but these do need to be alongside longer-term support. Focus and resources need to support capacity building, representation and empowering communities themselves - the ARWAP regional work should be able to help map and identify what might be needed.
- A forum member asked if the grants will be administered by Welsh Government, and CSSJTCW confirmed that they will.

Officials will meet with organisations who need support. The regional convenors are working with the team leading on the grants so will be available to assist anyone that needs help.

Action: Officials to share details about the new grant schemes more widely with the group.

Action: Regional convenor for N Wales to follow up with Forum member.

4. Impacts of social media on race organisations

CSSJTCW asked members for any further updates on the previous discussion about misinformation and the effects being experienced on staff and organisations as a result. CSSJTCW asked what steps were taken with safeguarding and personal alarms. The following comments were made:

- A Forum member discussed their experiences with social media misinformation and hate for a number of years, including racist and Islamophobic posts. It is important that when these issues are reported action is taken by Police. Forum member to contact Head of Sanctuary Policy to discuss.
- One organisation has not recorded any immediate threat. They have written a strong policy on lockdown which is supported by the equality department in North Wales Police.

- A Forum member noted the number of organisations removing themselves from social media. Although strong voices are needed on social media it is hard to do that when threatened.
- There is a need for organisations to do risk assessments for their usual activities such as drop ins.
- In addition to the Misinformation Toolkit it would be helpful to have regular sessions or a support group with advice on how to deal with issues that come up.
- It would be useful to have criminal justice colleagues at the next meeting.
- Discussion was held over a channel on X targeting Senedd Cymru. Recently this channel was used to target Mudiad Meithrin and an individual.
- There has been a rise in Freedom Of information requests being received by Welsh Government and Welsh local authorities.
- At a recent conference, local authorities highlighted the rise in social media activity and similar issues are being faced by corresponding networks in local government. Local government staff feel targeted and are also vulnerable.
- Discussion was held over recent social media activity on X.com.

Action: A Forum member was appointed to contact Head of Sanctuary Policy.

5. Any Other Business

CSSJTCW noted that Saturday 15th March was the International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

CSSJTCW attended an Iftar event at the Senedd and will be attending another Iftar later in the week. CSSJTCW noted the importance of Ramadan and Iftar.

CSSJTCW noted the forthcoming UN Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination event on 24th March at the Senedd. CSSJTCW will be in attendance and speaking.

CSSJTCW requested that a Diversity and Anti-Racism Professional Learning (DARPL) representative should attend the next Wales Race Forum meeting, in addition to criminal justice and Police colleagues.

Action: DARPL to be invited to the next meeting.

Action: Next meeting to take place in June. Secretariat to send diary marker in due course.

Summary of Actions

No.	Action Item	Owner	Deadline / Status
1	Share the Misinformation Toolkit with Forum members.	Secretariat	As soon as possible
2	Share Diversity & Inclusion Section 30 guidance with Forum members once available.	Secretariat	When published (Spring 2025)
3	Share details about the new Equality & Inclusion grant schemes more widely with the group.	Welsh Government Officials	Ahead of grant launch (by May 2025)
4	Regional Convenor for North Wales to follow up with Forum member regarding support.	Regional Convenor (North Wales)	In due course
5	Forum member to contact Head of Sanctuary Policy regarding social media-related experiences.	Appointed Forum Member	As soon as possible
6	Invite a Diversity and Anti-Racism Professional Learning (DARPL) representative to the next Wales Race Forum meeting.	Secretariat	Before next meeting
7	Arrange next Wales Race Forum meeting in June and send diary marker.	Secretariat	By June 2025