

Wales Race Forum

11:15-12:15pm, Thursday 23 March 2023 – MS Teams

Attendance

Name - Organisation
Jane Hutt - Minister for Social Justice
Women Connect First
Kiran Cymru
Race Alliance Wales
Cytûn Churches Together in Wales
Clinks
Race Council Cymru
Women Connect First
NWREN North Wales Regional Equality Network
Chinese in Wales Association
Tai Pawb
Swansea University
Diverse Cymru
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 (Health, Social Care and Early Years)

Meeting notes

Discussion
<p>1. <u>Welcome and introductions</u></p> <p>The Minister for Social Justice (MSJ) expressed thanks and best wishes to the outgoing head of Cytûn on his retirement, and welcomed the new head of Cytûn.</p> <p>The MSJ talked about work of the Forum, the challenges in embedding Anti-Racism, of Covid, and the problems facing refugees.</p> <p>The MSJ described funding available to tackle the Cost-of-Living crisis, including the fuel support scheme.</p>
<p>2. <u>An Anti-racist Wales Action Plan (ARWAP)</u></p>

Head of ARWAP Team (HoAT) summarised the ARWAP's aims and gave the following update:

- The new External Accountability Group (EAG) held its first meeting.
- More ARWAP Implementation team members have been recruited and will join soon. This will enable some actions, such as the development of Regional Forums, to develop more quickly.
- We are finalising our tender to review our HR processes to ensure that the WG workforce reflects society better.
- Feedback on specific policy work related to the ARWAP is being carried out by officials in those areas.

Following the MSJ's invitation the following comments were made:

- The idea of local workforces representing local demographics is dangerous as in rural areas this might mean that there are no staff members from ethnic minorities.
- Lots of issues have been raised regarding a lack of information about progress with the ARWAP and how lines of communication would work.
- Staff using their lived experience need support as this can be traumatic.
- Intersectionality can be a problem, even senior leaders of organisations don't understand how this works, we must show how.
- Ignorance can stem from a lack of social interaction. The social process is ongoing, and we can challenge racism by promoting understanding.
- With the ARWAP we have a lever to push for social justice. 25 black healthcare workers have reported experiences of racism to RCC.
- Ethnic minority healthcare staff are treated poorly. Does the WG have an idea how far LAs have started implementing the ARWAP? There is little evidence on the front line.
- The MSJ said she was glad to hear that investigations into racism are being carried out by Healthcare Inspectorate Wales and Childcare Inspectorate Wales.
- The MSJ said bilaterals have been arranged with every Minister to discuss progress e.g. in Education, bursaries for BAME teachers will be offered from September. The focus is on action and implementation.
- The MSJ will also talk to local authorities about care providers and encouraged Wales Race Forum (WRF) members to be in touch with the WLGA.
- WG Official from Health, Social Care and Early Years said she is approaching leaders of professions at Health Boards to discuss problems, emphasising the need for listening, reporting and putting things right.

HoAT made the following points:

- We have not been contacting communities directly, but a newly appointed team member will be focused on community engagement.
- We are bringing in community mentors and are looking to replicate the same support available to staff members.
- The EAG will hold WG to account. We will be discussing the Forward Work Plan at the next meeting.

3. Criminal Justice Anti-Racism Action Plan (CJARAP) for Wales Community Engagement Network – followed by Q&A and discussion session

MSJ welcomed a representative from Clinks (Clinks' Rep) to introduce Community Engagement Network (CEN).

Clinks' Rep made the following statements after introducing Clinks as an organisation:

- Criminal Justice (CJ) isn't devolved but the CJARAP also reflects the ARWAP. The CEN will engage the Community.
- As CJ isn't devolved then agencies in Wales had to develop own plans.
- Clinks helps CJ agencies and communities to feedback on ARWAP and created a network for engagement.
- BH welcomed those on the call to engage with the network via the chat.

The MSJ noted the following matters:

- Attacks on Chinese communities in Wales.
- Gordon Brown's paper on devolving Youth Justice and Criminal Justice.
- Senior leaders will all be at the One Public Service senior leaders' meeting in May and need to engage.

4. Transport for Wales Taxi Bill White Paper - followed by Q&A and discussion session

The MSJ introduced this new Bill, currently up for consultation.

The Bill is a commitment to modernise the sector, cross-bordering, considering green issues, with a social justice dimension.

WG needs feedback from those working in the trade.

Officials introduced the consultation which is running until June and explained the aims regarding national minimum standards.

Concerns by taxi drivers were shared by WRF members including:

- Difficulty offering feedback for those uncomfortable writing
- Significant mention of electric cars which might price-out some taxi drivers.
- Concern about child slave labour in Africa making batteries for electric cars.
- A threat to the ability to cancel fares.

WG Officials responded as follows:

- WG are arranging events for drivers to feedback to officials.
- The Deputy Minister for Climate Change is meeting taxi drivers in Cardiff, through Unions and Cardiff Council.

- Unions are involved in the consultation process representing drivers.
- WG is not making a firm commitment to electric vehicles but are giving Ministers the power to bring in changes in future if necessary.
- The White Paper aims to open a discussion on cancellations. Customers complain cancellations happen too often.
- Electric vehicles are not a specific focus; other possibilities include hydrogen.

The MSJ acknowledged difficulties facing taxi drivers since Covid, and suggested submissions of responses via video message.

5. Any Other Business

In response to repeated concerns about local authorities' commitment to the ARWAP, HoAT confirmed the following:

- The MSJ has met all leaders and all Equality leaders of Local Authorities (LA), and they will meet again in April.
- WG policy leads are working with partners in LA and with the WLGA to arrange awareness raising sessions.
- WG is holding a One Public Service Summit in May, more communications will follow and more policy officials will join WRF meetings.

In response to concerns about the exclusion of the voluntary sector, HoAT said the following:

- WLGA training will be delivered via Third Sector Partners.
- The EAG will be able to address challenging areas and identify where LAs are not making progress.

A representative from RCC said significant event has been planned for the 75th Anniversary of the Windrush and invited any groups to join.