

Activities during the listening exercise

A discussion document setting out some thinking about what specific duties could be imposed by Welsh Ministers, *Advancing Equality across the Public Sector*, was published in July and presented to a meeting of the Welsh Equality Reference Group hosted by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government.

During the listening exercise, due to end on 16th November, we will be working with our key partners to attend a number of events, focused forums and presentations at network meetings to talk about the development of these duties.

The Government Equalities Office has already hosted a consultation event about the Equality Bill focusing on the public sector equality duties and age discrimination elements of the Bill. The event in Cardiff was held on 1st September and was attended by more than 90 delegates drawn from the public and Third Sectors.

The event was hosted by Michael Foster MP and Counsel General for Wales, Carwyn Jones AM who contributed to the question and answer session in the morning. The afternoon session included sessions presented by officials from the Welsh Assembly Government and the Equality and Human Rights Commission in Wales, who are working with us to develop the specific public sector equality duties in Wales.

Points and views raised in discussion included:

- The work that has been done by Value Wales to build equality into public sector procurement through guidance;
- The need to build expertise and capacity in equality across the public sector;
- Current provisions within the Disability Discrimination Act to involve disabled people in policy development has worked well and needs to be retained;
- A duty requiring public authorities to undertake equality training is important and should be included;
- The value of Equality Schemes to track progress, or failing that the need to integrate equality objectives into the local government performance improvement programme;

If you are aware of an event or network meeting that you would like to discuss the Equality Bill and the equality duties that will come into force, please contact Stephen Chamberlain at:

The Welsh Assembly Government
Advancing Equality across the Public Sector in Wales
Listening exercise
Government Buildings Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Telephone 029 20 825761
Fax 029 20 801067

Stephen.chamberlain@wales.gsi.gov.uk

If you're using a text phone (sometimes called a Minicom), Text Relay will connect you. It's a fully automated service so, when required, relay assistants provide a text-to-voice and voice-to-text translation service. To start a call, dial 18001 then the full phone number as shown above. Charges should be at the service provider's normal rate.

A sample of some further engagements at which this work will be highlighted are set out below, but this is not a comprehensive list of the events taking place during the listening exercise.

| Event | Date |
|--|----------------------------|
| Welsh Local Government Association Elected Members Equality Champions Llandrindod Wells | 18 th September |
| Disability Wales Right to Control Consultation event Wrexham | 21 st September |
| Welsh Assembly Government consultation Event on the Gypsy Traveller Strategy Llandrindod Wells | 21 st September |
| Welsh Assembly Government Ministerial Advisory Group on Disability Cardiff | 24 th September |
| Wales Council for Voluntary Action Equality Coalition meeting | 28 th September |
| Disability Wales Stopping Abuse...together we can event in Cardiff | 29 th September |

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Disability Wales Stopping Abuse...together we can event in Llandudno | 1 st October |
| Faith Communities Forum hosted by the First Minister Cardiff | 1 st October |
| Welsh Assembly Government consultation Event on the Gypsy Traveller Strategy Cathays Park Cardiff | 5 th October |
| Wales Council for Voluntary Action Funding conference Cardiff | 7 th October |
| Welsh Assembly Government consultation Event on the Gypsy Traveller Strategy St Asaph | 22 nd October |
| Fair Trade Conference organised by AWEMA Swansea | 10 th November |
| NHS Confederation annual conference Wales Cardiff | 12 th November |