

Carl Sargeant AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gymunedau a Phlant
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children
Y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb, Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee
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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA (L) CS -5196-16

John Griffiths AM
Chair
National Assembly for Wales
Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

8th November 2016

Dear John

Thank you for your letter of 21 October following my attendance at the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee on 19 October.

I will respond to each of the specific points raised as requested below:

- Detail on the legal consequences of not publishing the national strategy on time;

The National Strategy was published on 4 November 2016.

- What is the legal status of the Delivery Plan and how will objectives/or requirements be enforced?

One of the requirements of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 ("the Act") is for the Welsh Ministers to publish annual progress reports of the progress made towards achieving the objectives in the National Strategy and of the progress made towards achieving the purpose of the Act in Wales by reference to the national indicators. These, together with the Delivery Framework will demonstrate how effective we have been in achieving the objectives set out in the Strategy.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400
Correspondence.Carl.Sargeant@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The content of the Delivery Framework is still under development and the legal status be decided during the development phase. The Delivery Framework will be developed on a collaborative basis with a range of representatives and with input from the National Adviser. It is anticipated that stakeholders will ensure that the delivery milestones and objectives are met on the basis that they will have had significant input into their development.

- What sanctions are provided for under the Act, or are available to the Cabinet Secretary, if Local Authorities fail to adhere to any requirements under the Act?

As stated within section 21(3) of the Act if the National Adviser requests that a relevant authority provides information for the purpose of the exercise of any of the Adviser's functions, the authority must comply with the request unless the authority considers doing so would be incompatible with the authority's own duties, or otherwise have an adverse effect on the exercise of the authority's functions. These powers can be used if there were any issues of compliance.

- The number of schools currently using the Good Practice Guide on Healthy Relationships and when local authorities will start reporting on the Act;

Estyn will be conducting a thematic review of existing healthy relationship provision during 2016/2017 academic year.

Within this financial year, we will also develop Regulations to place a duty on Local Authorities to report annually on the action they are taking, including within schools, to promote the purposes of the Act.

- The contractual arrangements of the National Adviser. This related to resources and contracted days per week;

Rhian Bowen-Davies took up her post as National Advisor on 28 September 2015. This statutory advisory role is a public appointment and therefore Rhian Bowen-Davies is not a civil servant and not an employee.

The National Adviser currently works 3 days a week (22.5 hours), the appointment is for 3 years and is due to end on 28 September 2018.

- The number of FGM cases identified in Wales and any further information on specialist services currently provided:
- I can confirm that the FGM Statistics reported between April – June 2016 was 9 and between July – September 2016 was 11 (although data is still being received for this quarter).

I look forward to receiving a copy of the report detailing the key issues emerging from the inquiry.

Yours sincerely



Carl Sargeant AC/AM

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Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children