

**Disability Equality Forum
COVID-19 Meeting**

2.00 p.m. Tuesday 23 June 2020 via Video Link

Minutes of the Meeting

Present:

Jane Hutt MS, Deputy Minister and Chief Whip (Chair)

Forum Members

Rhian Davies	Disability Wales
Kate Young	All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers
Catherine Lewis	Children in Wales
Ross Thomas	Tai Pawb
Nicola Hollister	Wales Council for Deaf People
Owen Williams	Wales Council for the Blind
Karen Robson	Action on Hearing Loss
Rhian Stangroom-Teel	Leonard Cheshire
Emma Burke	Leonard Cheshire
Nathan Owen	RNIB
Ruth Fabby	Disability Arts Cymru
Jan Thomas	The FDF
Zoe Richards	Learning Disability Wales
Andrea Gordon	Wales Vision Forum / Guide Dogs Cymru
Joe Powell	All Wales People First
Wayne Crocker	Mencap
Daniel Hurford	WLGA

Welsh Government Officials

Deputy Chief Medical Officer

Jon Luxton

NR

Alyson Francis

NR

Professor Chris Jones
Specialist Policy Adviser
COVID19 Shielding Response
Deputy Director Communities Division
Disability Policy, Equality Branch
Equality Branch
Equality Branch
Knowledge and Analytical Services

External Speaker

Dr Simon Hoffman

Swansea University

Apologies

Jo Fashan

Fiona Reid

Geraint Rees

Whizz Kidz
Disability Sport Wales
EHRC

scheme is not in place at the moment, this is something that needs to be looked at to allow disabled people equal access to public appointments.

- 3.6 Andrea Gordon (AG) also supported the comments made by other members and reiterated the importance of managing people's right to freedom. As an example, AG highlighted Cardiff Council's proposal to separate wider pedestrian areas by visual indicators which is not a good solution for people with sight loss.
- 2.7 Nathan Owen (NO) agreed with Andrea's point. He added that although it was good to see the Welsh Government's recently published guidance on 'creating safer public spaces' is very clear that the needs of disabled people must be considered in the early planning stages, this currently isn't translating into a material difference on the ground in terms of accessible design. The speed of implementation as more measures are relaxed means equality considerations are not prioritised.
- 3.7 The DMCW thanked members for their comments and agreed there is a need to consider the impact of Covid-19 on disabled people as a whole, bringing together the different sectors, to enhance the work towards recovery. The DMCW suggested issuing a position statement from the Disability Equality Forum in response to the evidence collated by the various organisations across Wales on the impact of Covid-19 on disabled people. The paper could follow a similar model of the statement produced by the Race Equality Forum and include examples from across Government policy e.g. Health; Transport; Employment; Education; Housing; Digital Inclusion; etc. to demonstrate what's happening on the ground and capture lived experience. This can be used to support discussions and decision making across Government.
- 3.8 The DMCW asked JL to lead on this piece of work in partnership with Disability Wales.

Action 4: Jon Luxton to work in partnership with Rhian Davies, Disability Wales, to draft a position statement on behalf of the Disability Equality Forum in response to evidence collated on the impact of Covid-19 on disabled people.

- 3.9 A number of members had examples evidence that could be used to feed into this paper – Emma Burke (EB) explained that Leonard Cheshire have undertaken a UK wide survey which has been broken down by region so data for Wales can be provided. Ruth Fabby (RF) of Disability Arts Wales highlighted their social media campaign #wewillnotbeforgotten, which trended at number one in Wales the previous week.
- 3.10 The DMCW welcomed these suggestions and was pleased to hear about the success of Disability Arts Wales' media campaign. A request was made for any surveys, discussions, reports to be submitted to officials so this can be pulled together in one place and used to inform the position statement.