**Minutes of the additional meeting of the EHRC Wales Committee**

**20 July 2023 (11:00 to 11:45)**

**Online via Teams**

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**Attending**

**Committee Members**

Eryl Besse (Chair)

Chris Dunn

Martyn Jones

Mary van den Heuvel

Bethan Thomas

**Officers**

Marcial Boo, Chief Executive Officer

Ruth Coombs Head of Wales

Melanie Field, Chief Strategy and Policy Officer

Graham Wheaton, Senior Associate, Governance (Secretary)

**Observers**

Victoria Mearns, Senior Associate, Governance

# **1. Chair’s welcome and apologies**

* 1. The Chair welcomed attendees to the additional Wales Committee meeting.

# **2. Apologies for absence**

2.1 Apologies had been received from Helen Mary Jones and Mark Sykes, who both sent in written feedback ahead of the meeting.

# **3. Declarations of interest**

3.1 Martyn Jones advised that he had been appointed as a trustee of All Wales People First and as a Deputy Lieutenant for Mid Glamorgan. He was congratulated by all present.

# **4. Wales Impact Report (EHRC WC 20230720-01 and 20230720-01a)**

4.1 The Head of Wales introduced the papers, asking that members advise on the draft report and its annex, identify any key omissions or items to be deleted and provide a steer on the items to be listed as highlights. The Committee were advised that the report would go to the Senedd after summer recess and that Jane Hutt MS, Minister for Social Justice, had asked for updates on progress.

4.2 The consensus of the Committee was that the report clearly demonstrated the significant amount of work being delivered in Wales by a small team with limited resources but that it needed to focus more on impact reporting for the target audience (Senedd members) rather than the current descriptive format (i.e. differentiate between activity and impact).

4.3 Members advised giving the report greater structure e.g. the context in which we work (including limited resources); our regulatory activities; what do those activities achieve; how do we know what we’re achieving (how we measure impact), how are we learning and improving (where do we need to improve qualitative and quantitative measures).

4.4 Members advised reducing the number of highlights to five, to include our work on the Anti-racism Plan, our inquiries, our involvement with the SED, key legal outcomes, and our work on the Human Rights Bill.

4.5 Members also advised that the report should be more visually attractive and should include stakeholder feedback, perhaps in graphical form. The focus should be on how stakeholder feedback evidences the impact of our work in Wales.

4.6 The following comments and observations from members were noted:

1. in the highlights, including more about how the EHRC influenced the development of the Anti-racism plan and how it is scrutinising the plan;
2. describing the importance of using the strategic leverage of procurement to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty; referring to the work on the Social Partnerships and Procurement (Wales) Bill.
3. considering the implications of the potential Human Rights Bill for Wales, in the context of the Commission being a 3 nation organisation;
4. our advice on strengthening the Social Economic Duty across the whole of the Public Sector in Wales;
5. adding more detail in the section on Legal Interventions;
6. good examples of the impact of our work can be provided with the work we did with Boxing Wales and Afro Hair Styles in schools;
7. including a statement on how we expect the Statutory Report in Wales to be used by Welsh Government and public sector organisations to inform their work in the coming year;
   1. referencing the impact of our work with the Disabled Rights Task Force and with Disabled People’s Organisations in Wales;
8. highlighting where our intervention has led to a change in policy or guidance; and
9. providing more detail on the impact of our work around Artificial Intelligence and Digital, including work on facial recognition technology with various police forces.

4.7 Members were advised that the opening pages of the report were under review and that the regulatory model would be included, to show what powers the EHRC has and how they are used. It was noted that this may also shorten the report and make it stronger.

4.8 The Head of Wales noted that there were many pressing current priorities but that the revised report would be circulated for further comment and approval.

**Action: Head of Wales to update the report with members comments and circulate revised report for further comment and approval.**

# **5. Any Other Business**

5.1 The Chair advised that the next meeting of the Committee would be on 4 September 2023 and would be combined with a session for the Committee members and the Wales Team. Additionally, a meeting to discuss Committee Effectiveness is scheduled for 1 November 2023 in Companies House.

5.2 With no other business, the Chair closed the meeting.