

Jane Hutt AC/AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA - P-JH-1337-19

John Griffiths AM

23 July 2019

Dear John,

I am writing in response to your request during Plenary on 7 May for further information about the Welsh Government's work to strengthen community cohesion in Wales.

Prosperity for All's vision is of Wales as a vibrant, tolerant and welcoming place to live and work, where people of all backgrounds are respected and valued. Community cohesion is integral to this vision and we are working in partnership with our public and third sector partners to make sure Wales continues to be a safe and tolerant place for people to live and work now and for generations to come.

Community cohesion is a Welsh Government priority. Like all Public Bodies in Wales, the Welsh Government is subject to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which includes the goal of *A Wales of Cohesive Communities*. Public Bodies must also comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, which states that they have duties to foster good relations between groups, eliminate discrimination and victimisation, and advance equality of opportunity.

Our work on cohesion is led by the Community Cohesion Programme, and supported by a range of related projects and cross-government action plans supporting particular minority communities. We are currently considering how community cohesion could be incorporated into our upcoming Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024. This could include an objective focusing on strengthening community cohesion in Wales and would provide strategic focus for our work over the next four years.

The Regional Community Cohesion Co-Ordinators play a vital role in our work towards community cohesion in Wales, ensuring that we are working with local government, communities, the voluntary sector, and local services to foster cohesion, tolerance and respect. As I mentioned in Plenary, the Welsh Government is expanding its Community Cohesion Programme, investing an additional £1.52 million over the next two years to support small teams in each of the eight Community Cohesion regions of Wales.

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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 expanded programme aims to support ongoing preventative work around hate crime, enabling greater engagement with local communities and greater capacity to respond to whatever tensions may arise.

The work of these teams will be important as the UK goes through the unprecedented process of leaving the EU. As part of our preparations for Brexit we will use £840,000 from the European Transition Fund to strengthen our response to hate crime. £360,000 of this has been awarded to Victim Support Cymru to increase the capacity of the National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre. This funding will provide extra resources to support victims of hate crime in Wales. It will also fund training for the volunteers, who make up the majority of staff.

The remaining £480,000 is being made available through a funding scheme offering one-off grants to organisations who work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and minority faith communities to help tackle hate crime and provide community reassurance following the EU withdrawal.

The Welsh Government will also undertake a substantial communications campaign over the next 18 months to try to prevent hate crime in our communities.

We recognise the UK's withdrawal from the European Union is likely to have a significant impact on EU Citizens living in Wales. These individuals are valued members of our communities and it is vital that we support them through this significant process of change.

We are funding both the 'EU Citizens Rights Project', which is run by Citizens Advice Cymru, and the 'Immigration Advice Service', which is delivered by Newfields Law, to ensure EU citizens have access to appropriate advice services, are protected from exclusion, and are encouraged to continue living and thriving in Wales.

The Welsh Government continues to work with over 30 partners across Wales via our Equality and Inclusion Communications Network to promote positive messages of respect and inclusion, and to celebrate diversity. The Network includes local authorities, the four police forces and third sector organisations.

*Best wishes,*



**Jane Hutt AC/AM**

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