



Ein cyf/Our ref: FM/06362/12

Doreen Lawrence OBE and Dr Richard Stone OBE
Elizabeth@rota.org.uk

19th December 2012

Dear Doreen and Richard,

I am writing in response to your letter regarding your concerns on the planned review of the Public Sector Equality Duty by the UK Government.

I agree that the prime purpose of the Public Sector Equality Duty is to ensure that public authorities consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations and addressing unlawful discrimination and thus achieving better outcomes for all.

The Welsh Government shares your concern and agrees that it is entirely premature to review the Public Sector Equality Duty, after only 19 months since the duty came into force, particularly if the purpose is to genuinely make an objective assessment of the effectiveness of the duties. In the current economic downturn, the Public Sector Equality Duty is vital in protecting those who are most excluded and discriminated against in society.

Within the Welsh Government, equality is enshrined in our founding legislation and reflected in our guiding principles. This together with sustainability and wellbeing, make up the foundation stones underpinning all that we do. Furthermore, equality and inclusion are woven throughout the Programme for Government as well as addressed specifically in Chapter 8 'Standing up for Equality'.

We were the first country in Great Britain to regulate to create specific duties under the 2010 Equality Act, further demonstrating our commitment to equality and the Public Sector Equality Duty. These statutory duties differ from other parts of Britain as they have the requirement to engage when setting outcome focused equality objectives and to equality impact access decisions. In April this year, we published our Strategic Equality Plan.

The Welsh Government was also the first UK Government to publish the assessment of the equality impacts of their budgetary decisions in the 2011-12 Draft Budget. We have just undertaken our third Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Budget. EIAs allow the Welsh Government to ensure that the money we allocate and the policies we develop do not negatively impact on those within our communities who should be protected.

The Welsh Government has distanced itself from the PSED review although we will provide a response with evidence on positive impact of the PSED within Wales. The attached link to the recent press notice issued by Jane Hutt, Minister for Finance and Leader of the House with responsibility for Equalities, publicly states the Welsh Government position on the PSED - <http://wales.gov.uk/newsroom/equalityanddiversity/2012/6782229/?status=gxbqamrvi&lang=en>).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carwyn Jones', written in a cursive style.

CARWYN JONES