

Dear Linda,

Thanks for your note to Jonathan (below) which has been passed to me. I hope you are well by the way .

Given the FOI requirements on timing, I need to write to you today to let you know I will be writing to you again in a few days time with more information. The alternative would be a formal FOI reply with explanations of why we can't yet release that information. And since we intend to release the information in a few days, it seemed sensible to send this short holding reply.

As you indicated in your email, a high level steering group, with an independent chair, has been set up to oversee the review. Members have been appointed because of their experience and expertise in one of the following delivery and policy sectors including, Health, Education, Policing, Local Government and Whitehall. The Government Equalities Office (GEO) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission will also sit on this high-level group.

We intend to publish the names of both the chair and individual members of the steering group by the end of the week and plan to hold the first steering group meeting in mid December. The terms of reference for the review will be published shortly, once they have been considered by steering group members.

I would like to reassure you that, as indicated in the Ministerial Statement issued on 15 May, this is an operational review to ensure the duty is working as intended. There is no predetermined outcome and we will be working with civil society groups and practitioners to gather evidence on whether use of the PSED has led to better equality outcomes for local communities in relation to the public services they use.

I will write to you early next week to provide you with further details, as per your FOI request. Are you content with that approach? As I explain above, I need to write twice in accordance with the FOI timetable requirements.

Regards

*Alison*

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