



Manon Antoniazzi  
Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd  
Welsh Parliament,  
Cardiff Bay,  
Cardiff,  
CF99 1SN

1<sup>st</sup> August 2024

Dear Manon,

I am writing in response to your letter of 18 July 2024 in relation to the motion passed in Plenary on Wednesday 17 July 2024.

I can confirm I published a Written Statement on 16 July confirming the evidence that underpinned my decision to ask the former Minister for Social Partnership to leave the Welsh Government and published this evidence.

For ease, I have included a copy of the Written Statement and accompanying images to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

**VAUGHAN GETHING**



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## **DATGANIAD YSGRIFENEDIG GAN LYWODRAETH CYMRU**

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**TEITL**      **Datganiad gan y Prif Weinidog**  
**DYDDIAD**   **16 Gorffennaf 2024**  
**GAN**        **Vaughan Gething AS, Y Prif Weinidog**

Heddiw, rwy'n cyhoeddi'r dystiolaeth sy'n sail i'r penderfyniad dros ofyn i'r cyn-Weinidog Partneriaeth Gymdeithasol adael Llywodraeth Cymru.

Er mwyn cadarnhau eglurder a chywirdeb y ddadl ynglŷn â'r mater hwn yn y Senedd, credaf ei bod bellach yn iawn imi nodi'r dystiolaeth a arweiniodd at fy mhenderfyniad. Yn benodol, rwyf o'r farn ei bod yn bwysig i integriti Llywodraeth Cymru fod eglurder yn cael ei roi bellach ynglŷn â'r dystiolaeth a gefnogodd y penderfyniad hwnnw.

Mae cynnal cyfrifoldeb ar y cyd yn rhan annatod o allu'r Cabinet i weithredu'n effeithiol. Rhaid i Weinidogion Cymru allu ystyried a thrafod materion heriol a gwybodaeth sensitif am faterion sy'n effeithio'n uniongyrchol ar gymunedau, busnesau, gwasanaethau cyhoeddus a dinasyddion. Mae'n bwysig eu bod nhw - a gweision sifil - yn gallu gwneud hynny mewn amgylchedd dibynadwy a chyfrinachol.

Mae'r darn cyntaf o dystiolaeth, fel y disgrifiais yn fanwl i'r Senedd ar 10 Gorffennaf, yn llun o ddarn o sgwrs iMessage o fis Awst 2020 rhwng un ar ddeg o Weinidogion Llafur Cymru. Fe anfonwyd y llun hwnnw at Lywodraeth Cymru ym mis Mai eleni yn yr union ffurf rwy'n ei gyhoeddi heddiw gan newyddiadurwr a oedd yn ceisio sylw ar ei gynnwys.

Rydym wedi cyhoeddi'r llun hwn o'r blaen ar ffurf wedi'i golygu, fodd bynnag, mae bellach ar gael i'r Aelodau heb ei olygu.

Mae'r ail yn ddelwedd gyfatebol o'r un sgwrs, a gafodd ei lleoli wedyn ar ffôn un arall o'r cyfranogwyr ar ôl i'r ddelwedd gael ei rhannu â ni. Mae cynnwys llawn y sgwrs hon bellach wedi'i gyflwyno i'r Ymchwiliad COVID.

Mae'r ddelwedd hon yn dangos bod y cyn-Weinidog Partneriaeth Gymdeithasol yn aelod o'r sgwrs ar y diwrnod hwnnw.

Wrth edrych ar sgwrs iMessage ar ddyfais unigolyn, bydd modd gweld llythrennau cyntaf yr holl gyfranogwyr eraill, ar wahân i rai'r cyfranogwr ei hunan.

Drwy groesgyfeirio'r dystiolaeth ynghylch aelodau'r sgwrs yn erbyn y llun o'r sgwrs a gafodd ei rannu â ni gan y newyddiadurwr, daw'n amlwg mai'r unig lythrennau cyntaf sydd ar goll yn y ddelwedd hon yw rhai'r cyn-Weinidog Partneriaeth Gymdeithasol. Mae hefyd yn amlwg bod y ddelwedd wedi'i thynnu yn 2020 a'i chadw cyn i'r datgeliad ddod yn amlwg yn gynharach eleni.

Y ddau ddarn o dystiolaeth hyn, gyda'i gilydd, yw'r rheswm pam rwyf wedi nodi'n glir wrth y Senedd na all y llun hwn ond fod yn ddelwedd o ffôn y cyn-Weinidog. Gwnes i'r penderfyniad anodd i ofyn i'r cyn-Weinidog adael y Llywodraeth ar sail yr wybodaeth hon a'r diffyg esboniad credadwy.

Gweinidogion sy'n gyfrifol am ddiogelwch eu data, ac ni waeth sut y daeth y llun i feddiant y newyddiadurwr, ni ddylai'r ddelwedd fod wedi cael ei chymryd, gan arwain fel y gwnaeth at Weinidogion yn colli ymddiriedaeth yn y ffordd y diogelir preifatrwydd eu trafodaethau. Roedd yn arbennig o anodd i gydweithwyr eraill nad oeddent yn gallu bod yn glir nad nhw oedd yn gyfrifol am y datgeliad dan sylw.

Mae disgwyl i'r Senedd drafod cynnig Adran 37 yn ddiweddarach yr wythnos hon. Er nad wyf yn ystyried y gall y deunydd a gyhoeddir heddiw fod yn ofynnol gan y cynnig hwnnw, er tryloywder ac o ystyried y diddordeb parhaus, rwyf wedi penderfynu ei rannu â'r Aelodau heddiw.

Byddaf yn ailadrodd yr hyn a ddywedais yn y Senedd ar 10 Gorffennaf, ac i'r Pwyllgor Craffu ar Waith y Prif Weinidog ddydd Gwener. Drwy gydol y broses anodd hon, rwyf wedi ceisio diogelu llesiant y cyn-Weinidog, a chynnig unrhyw gymorth parhaus y mae hi'n dymuno ei gael.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## **WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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**TITLE**            **Statement from the First Minister**  
**DATE**            **16 July 2024**  
**BY**                **Vaughan Gething MS, First Minister**

I am today publishing the evidence underpinning the decision to ask the former Minister for Social Partnership to leave the Welsh Government.

In the interests of clarity and the accuracy of the debate regarding this matter in the Senedd, I believe it is now right to set out the evidence that led to the decision I took. Specifically, I consider that it is important for the integrity of the Welsh Government that there is now clarity on the evidence that supported the decision.

Upholding collective responsibility is integral to the ability of cabinet to function effectively. Welsh Ministers must be able to consider and discuss challenging issues and sensitive information on matters that impact directly on communities, businesses, public services and citizens. It is important that they – and civil servants - are able to do so in a trusted, confidential environment.

The first piece of evidence, as I described in detail to the Senedd on 10 July, is a photograph of a fragment of an iMessage chat from August 2020 involving eleven Welsh Labour Ministers. It was sent to the Welsh Government in May this year in exactly the form I am publishing today by a journalist seeking a comment on its contents.

We have previously published this in redacted form, however it is now available to Members without any redaction.

The second is a corresponding image from the same chat, which was subsequently located on the phone of another of the participants after the photograph was provided to us. The full exchange from this chat has now been submitted to the COVID Inquiry.

This image demonstrates that the former Minister for Social Partnership was a member of the chat on that day.

When an iMessage chat is viewed on an individual's device, the initials of all other participants are visible, apart from the participant themselves.

By cross referencing the subsequently located chat membership with the photograph of the chat fragment that was provided to us by the journalist, it becomes clear that the only missing initials on this image are that of the former Minister for Social Partnership. It is also clear that the image was captured in 2020 and was retained before the leak became evident earlier this year.

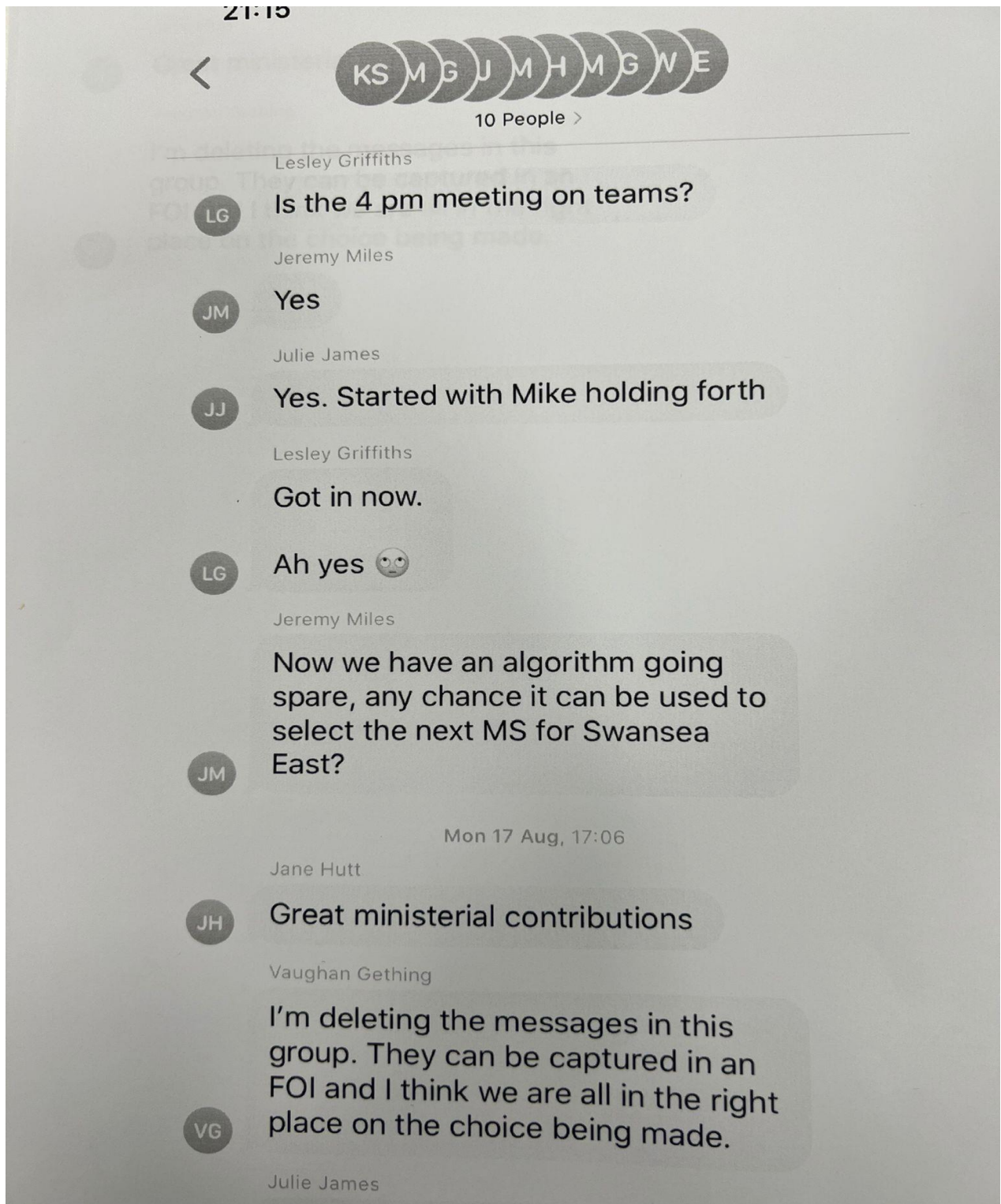
These two pieces of evidence, taken together, are the reason I have been clear with the Senedd that it can only be an image of the former Minister's phone. I took the difficult decision to ask the former Minister to leave the Government based on this information and the lack of a credible explanation.

Ministers are responsible for the security of their data, and regardless of how the photograph came into the journalist's possession, the image should not have been allowed to have been taken, leading as it did to the breakdown of trust for Ministers' expectation of privacy for their discussions. It was particularly difficult for other colleagues who were unable to be clear that they were not responsible for the leak in question.

The Senedd is due to debate a Section 37 motion later this week. Whilst I do not consider the material published today can be required by that motion, in the interests of transparency and given the ongoing interest, I have taken the decision to provide them to Members today.

I will reiterate what I said in the Senedd on 10 July, and to the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister on Friday. Throughout this difficult process I have sought to protect the well-being of the former Minister, and to offer her any ongoing support she wishes to take up.

Image 1



14:19

5G



10 People >



Julie James AM



Yes. Started with Mike holding forth

Lesley Griffiths AM

Got in now.



Ah yes 🙄

Jeremy Miles



Now we have an algorithm going spare, any chance it can be used to select the next MS for Swansea East?

17 Aug 2020 at 17:06

Jane Hutt



Great ministerial contributions

Vaughn Gething



I'm deleting the messages in this group. They can be captured in an FOI and I think we are all in the right place on the choice being made.

Julie James AM



Good point Vaughan



iMessage

