



National Assembly for Wales
**Diversity and Inclusion
Strategy 2016-21**

March 2017



National Assembly for Wales
Assembly Commission

The National Assembly for Wales is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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Contents

Foreword	1
01. About our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy	2
Purpose	2
02. About our Organisation	3
03. Our Diversity and Inclusion Vision and Values	4
Vision.....	4
Values.....	4
04. How we Developed this Strategy	5
05. Our Diversity and Inclusion Objectives	6
Objective One: Fostering Inclusive Leadership and an Inclusive Workplace Culture	6
Objective Two: Building on our Approach to Organisational Development.....	8
Objective Three: Supporting Assembly Members and their Staff to build Diversity into their work	9
Objective Four: Supporting Assembly Commission Staff to build Diversity and Inclusion into their work	10
Objective Five: Behaving as an Inclusive Employer which attracts and retains the widest pool of talent where all staff have the opportunity to realise their full potential	11
06. Roles and Responsibilities	13
07. Monitoring, Measuring Success and Reporting on Progress	14
Appendix One: Our Legal Duties in Relation to Diversity, Inclusion and Equality	15
Government of Wales Act 2006.....	15
Equality Act 2010	15

Foreword

We are proud of the progress we have made so far in delivering on our previous equality plans but we realise there is always scope to increase our efforts. This strategy therefore sets out what we want to achieve over the Fifth Assembly in progressing our work on embedding diversity and inclusion even further into our organisation.

We want to build on what we have achieved so far in terms of fostering an inclusive organisational culture, behaving as a progressive employer, which attracts and retains the widest range of talent and ensures that all its employees realise their full potential, irrespective of their background. Another priority is to continue to provide support for the Assembly and its work to be accessible and inclusive, enabling the people of Wales to become involved in its work in a way that is easy and meaningful to do so. We will continue to support Assembly Members and their staff to build these considerations into their work and also ensure that their diverse range of needs are also met.

The objectives set out in this strategy provide an overview of the approach we will take to achieve these ambitions and we also detail how we will measure our success in delivering them.

We welcome feedback on our strategy which we will regularly review and report on progress on its implementation. The strategy is a living document and consequently, we will adjust our approach accordingly as our organisation evolves to ensure that we see achieve sustainable, meaningful improvements.

We look forward to working collaboratively with colleagues both inside and outside the organisation to realise the diversity and inclusion vision set out in this strategy.



Claire Clancy
Chief Executive and Clerk to the Assembly



Joyce Watson AM
Commissioner for Employees and Equalities

01. About our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Purpose

The purpose of this Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is to set out the Assembly Commission's diversity and inclusion objectives for 2017-21 and the steps we need to take to deliver against these objectives.

This strategy will help us build on the progress we have made in delivering on our previous two equality plans to ensure that diversity, inclusion and equality considerations are further built into everything that we do. We have made considerable progress in developing an inclusive organisational culture, encouraging the growth of workplace equality networks, embedding equality impact assessment into our working practices and working with an ever broadening audience to encourage greater interaction with the Assembly and its work from the people of Wales. We have also received external recognition for our work in relation to diversity and inclusion. We need to build on this and our strategy identifies the work we believe we need to undertake. This includes continuing to reach out to people who are not currently engaged with the Assembly or aware of its work and continuing efforts to support our existing staff and attract prospective staff from the widest pool of talent. It is also important to us that diversity is reflected at all levels throughout our organisation and we want to see this reflected at senior decision-making level where there is an underrepresentation of black minority ethnic (BME) and disabled staff.

In line with the Assembly Commission's strategic goals, it is important to us that the Assembly continues to be accessible to the people of Wales and beyond: making it relevant, easy and meaningful for people to interact with it and contribute to its work. It is also important to us that we behave as an inclusive employer, enabling everyone we employ to realise their full potential.

The strategy will also help us plan how we comply with the duties placed on the Assembly Commission by the Government of Wales Act 2006 and also by the Equality Act 2010, covering each of the protected characteristics¹ and other issues such as caring responsibilities, social mobility and other inequalities. A summary of the Assembly Commission's legal duties in relation to equality and discrimination law is at Appendix One.

A separate action plan details what activities we need to pursue to meet these objectives and how we will monitor our progress and success in meeting them. We will ensure that our staff understand the part they play in helping our organisation deliver on our diversity and inclusion objectives and realise our diversity and inclusion vision.

This strategy is a living document which we will keep under constant review and adjust our approach as and when required.

¹ Protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation

02. About our Organisation

The National Assembly for Wales is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

The Assembly Commission serves the National Assembly for Wales to help facilitate its long-term success as a strong, accessible, inclusive and forward looking democratic institution and legislature that delivers effectively for the people of Wales. The Commission's responsibility is to provide the property, staff and services required by the Assembly.

03. Our Diversity and Inclusion Vision and Values

Vision

We want to continue to be an exemplar organisation in valuing diversity, promoting inclusion and embedding equality, both as an employer and parliamentary organisation. Our organisation is accessible and engages with and respects the people of Wales.

Values

From our corporate values which define the way we work, we have identified our Diversity and Inclusion values. We:

- ensure diversity, inclusion and equality are embedded throughout our organisation and informs our approach to how we deliver services, recruit and manage staff, support Assembly Members and engage with the people of Wales;
- challenge and strive to eliminate harassment and discrimination;
- recognise and address barriers to inclusion, access and participation;
- behave as an inclusive employer and accessible parliamentary organisation;
- aim for our workforce to be representative of our diverse society, including at a senior level;
- encourage and widen participation in Assembly activities and engagement with the Assembly from people across Wales; and
- promote positive attitudes towards diversity and inclusion and foster good relations between different groups of people.

04. How we Developed this Strategy

In formulating this strategy, we focused on our key functions and also the strategic goals and related activities set out in the [Assembly Commission's Corporate Strategy](#):

- To provide outstanding parliamentary support
- To engage with all the people of Wales and champion the Assembly
- To use resources wisely

This Diversity and Inclusion Strategy also converges with other Assembly Commission strategies, including: People Strategy, Public Engagement Strategy, Recruitment Strategy and Official Languages Scheme.

We also took into consideration:

- our size, resources and nature of our work;
- activities relating to our previous work on diversity, inclusion and equality which can be accessed at www.assembly.wales;
- feedback we have received from staff, Assembly Members and their staff, organisations and members of the public;
- information produced by UK organisations such as Equality and Human Rights Commission and best practice identified in other organisations;
- monitoring our workforce, recruitment and pay diversity data and acting on findings to further inclusion; and
- our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant law.

During the development of our diversity and inclusion objectives, we engaged with people upon whom our strategy might impact, including: staff, workplace equality networks, Assembly Members and their staff, existing contractors, partners in the public and third sectors and the wider public.

05. Our Diversity and Inclusion Objectives

To plan and monitor the delivery of our objectives, we have an action plan which corresponds with service area plans, where appropriate, across the Assembly Commission’s directorates.

Objective One: Fostering Inclusive Leadership and an Inclusive Workplace Culture

We will deliver against this objective by:

Ensuring senior accountability and inclusive leadership

This strategy sees a renewed focus following on from our previous equality scheme on enhanced accountability from managers across our organisation. We identify that there is a need to increase accountability for diversity and inclusion for all the people that we employ, particularly with an expectation that our senior leaders who are champions for our networks will act as role models for inclusive leadership. To us, the term ‘inclusive leadership’ means people who lead through and display our core values; they value our people, encourage them and foster the idea that all staff should realise their full potential.

We want to build behaviours linked to diversity and inclusion into performance management of all managers, including the senior champions of our workplace equality networks. We will use the performance management system to look at how managers act as role models and demonstrate leadership in relation to diversity and inclusion and how this in turn, influences the behaviour of their staff. Ensuring that managers are held to account on diversity and inclusion on an ongoing basis, alongside other objectives, will increase transparency and embed the principles of inclusive leadership at all levels of the organisation. Senior leaders will also take account of the objectives set out in this strategy when developing and reviewing service plans.

Managers will be equipped to lead inclusively, promote positive behaviours and manage unconscious bias, with a focus on our recruitment and performance management processes. We will provide managers with the learning and tools they need to do this.

There will be continued visibility of senior political role models e.g. the Assembly Commissioner with responsibility for diversity and inclusion in their portfolio. This will help ensure that the Assembly Commission has diversity and inclusion at the heart of its decision-making processes.

How we will measure success:

- Assembly Staff Survey outcomes
- data from performance Management Development Review (PMDR) outcomes
- ongoing feedback from staff and workplace equality

Supporting and developing our Workplace Equality Networks (WENs)

Our self-managed workplace equality networks have been evolving over recent years and have provided an invaluable platform for feedback to management. Networks are inclusive of Commission staff, Assembly Members and their staff and onsite contractors. The networks can identify opportunities to enhance inclusion in our organisation, where they work in partnership with management and Trade Unions to bring about positive change and improvements. The Assembly Commission believes it is vital to provide support for the networks to grow and add value to the experience of our staff, Assembly Members and their staff and the people that interact with the Assembly.

Our workplace equality networks have demonstrated that people, irrespective of their background or position in the organisation, can lead positive change. We will support them so that they continue to grow and operate on a more strategic level. Our workplace equality network co-ordinator will help them to maximise their contribution through development of an overarching work programme, collaborative working, and ongoing advice and guidance.

Our networks with senior champions have fostered a more joined-up approach to diversity and inclusion and connected senior managers with issues that staff across the organisation might face. We want each network that does not already have a senior champion to secure one.

Objective One: Links to the Assembly Commission's strategic goals and related activities:

– to use resources wisely

build our people capability and integrate diversity and inclusion into decision-making, service design and delivery.

Objective Two: Building on our Approach to Organisational Development

We will deliver against this objective by:

Identifying and removing barriers to inclusion

We will identify opportunities to identify and raise awareness of potential barriers to inclusion through collaboration with our workplace equality networks, the ongoing use of equality impact assessments and other appropriate awareness-raising activities such as our annual Diversity and Inclusion Week. We will work collaboratively across teams to remove any identified barriers to inclusion.

How we will measure success:

- equality impact assessment outcomes
- ongoing feedback from staff and workplace equality networks
- performance in external benchmarking activities

External benchmarking and recognition

We will continue to benchmark our diversity and inclusion work with other organisations through peer review and other external recognition activities. We will share and learn from best practice, utilising our networks with other organisations in Wales and beyond. We have utilised the feedback mechanisms from accreditation exercises to bring about improvement and we will review our arrangements for benchmarking on an annual basis.

Learning and development

We will ensure that staff receive current, relevant diversity and inclusion training and information throughout their employment to support them to help us realise our diversity and inclusion vision and values. Through training needs analysis, we will continue to identify new learning opportunities in relation to diversity and inclusion and we will critically examine our provision to ascertain if it is fit-for-purpose as our organisation evolves.

Inclusive workplace policies

Our workplace policies will continue to be inclusive in the way that they are drafted and reviewed, including being subject to equality impact assessment, which includes input from our workplace equality networks. We have a number of inclusive policies for staff, including a Dignity at Work Policy which is underpinned by the concepts of diversity, inclusion and equality.

Objective Two: Links to the Assembly Commission's strategic goals and related activities:

- **to use resources wisely**
integrate diversity and inclusion into decision-making, service design and delivery

Objective Three: Supporting Assembly Members and their Staff to build Diversity into their work

We will deliver against this objective by:

Supporting Assembly Members and their staff to build diversity and inclusion into their roles as employers, as service providers and into their work as caseworkers, scrutineers and legislators

We continue to support Assembly Members and their staff to enable them to provide inclusive services: at induction; with the availability of continuing professional development opportunities; written guidance on responsibilities set out in the Equality Act 2010; ongoing advice from Legal Services, the Members' Business Support team; and research briefings provided by the Research Service.

Assembly Members can also utilise the Equality and Access Fund (provided by the Assembly Commission) to assist with engaging with a wide range of constituents and to support the needs of disabled staff in their offices. The Fund covers costs such as communication support services and the production of information in accessible formats.

We will continue to feed diversity and inclusion considerations into the work of the independent **Remuneration Board of the National Assembly for Wales**. The Board is the independent body responsible for setting the pay, pensions and allowances for Assembly Members and their staff. We will explore with the Board what information from Assembly Members and their staff in relation to diversity and inclusion would enable the Board to take account of relevant issues in its decision-making processes and meet its obligations under the Equality Act.

We will also work with the Business Committee and the Committee Chairs' Forum, to explore how to strengthen the ways that diversity and inclusion are taken into account in Assembly business procedures and practices and when legislating to exercise any new devolved powers to the Assembly.

Engaging the people of Wales

In line with the Assembly Commission's Strategy, we want to broaden the reach of the Assembly to individuals and communities who are not currently engaged with its work or with the work of Assembly Members. We want to make information about the Assembly and its work to be increasingly easy to access and meaningful to the people of Wales.

It is therefore important that all Assembly directorates monitor and review who it is they are engaging with on an on-going basis, to identify trends and make suitable adjustments to encourage interaction and participation from a diverse range of audiences. We will also regularly review policies and arrangements for visitors to the Assembly to ensure that they are inclusive and promote access to all.

How we will measure success:

- Assembly Members' Survey outcomes
- key performance indicators related to Assembly Business and other relevant data

Objective Three: Links to the Assembly Commission's strategic goals and related activities:

- **outstanding parliamentary support**
innovate and tailor our services to best support Members.

Objective Four: Supporting Assembly Commission Staff to build Diversity and Inclusion into their work

We will deliver against this objective by:

Inclusive decision-making, service design and delivery

In order to ensure that inclusion is at the heart of decision-making across service areas, we will ensure that equality impact assessments are conducted whenever we change or initiate something new.

We are increasing our capability in terms of equality impact assessments and embedding them in major projects and programmes of work, as well as ongoing policy development and review. It is vital that we share best practice amongst our staff to develop confidence and promote efficiency in terms of corporate knowledge. Therefore, we are developing a bank of information related to completed assessments which the organisation can draw on. Our workplace equality networks are consistently involved in the equality impact assessment process and we engage more widely, as and when appropriate.

Service areas across the Assembly Commission will develop and review their service plans regularly. This process will take account of how service areas will deliver, where appropriate, on the objectives set out in this strategy. This approach will ensure that diversity and inclusion considerations are at the core of our day-to-day work.

Taking into account diversity and inclusion when buying-in goods and services

Our procurement processes incorporate diversity and inclusion elements. We expect our contractors to share and live our diversity and inclusion values with their employees. We will examine our procurement processes and outcomes on an annual basis and will decide if changes are required. On-site contractors are also invited to participate in our diversity initiatives and our workplace equality networks.

How we will measure success:

- equality impact assessment outcomes
- service plan delivery
- contract monitoring

Objective Four: Links to the Assembly Commission's strategic goals and related activities:

- **to use resources wisely**
integrate diversity and inclusion into decision-making, service design and delivery.
- **engage all the people of Wales and champion the Assembly**
engage strategically to make an impact on Assembly business through people visiting our estate, across Wales and online; commit strongly to the young people of Wales; make trusted information easy to find, use and share in a digital world; and share our learning in Wales and beyond.
- **outstanding parliamentary support**
innovate and tailor our services to best support Members.

Objective Five: Behaving as an Inclusive Employer which attracts and retains the widest pool of talent where all staff have the opportunity to realise their full potential

We will deliver against this objective by:

Supporting our talented workforce

In line with our People Strategy, we recognise that every member of staff, irrespective of their background, deserves to realise their full potential and progress in their careers. We recognise that that learning needs and styles vary from individual to individual but there might be instances when people who share a protected characteristic would benefit from shared learning and development activities. Acting on feedback from our workplace equality networks, we will deliver on requirements for specific coaching and mentoring from role models that share the same protected characteristics as network members and therefore have insight into challenges that people might face. We will also encourage all staff to take up the opportunity to develop career aspiration plans.

Recognising and addressing underrepresentation in our workforce

Over the life of our previous equality action plan, we identified and attempted to address trends emerging from our workforce and recruitment equality data. Our workforce and recruitment diversity data has shown that although we do successfully recruit BME staff and disabled staff at entry level, there appear to be barriers to progression into more senior roles. We are working with our REACH (Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage) workplace equality network and Embrace, our disability workplace equality network to identify actions to support existing BME staff and disabled staff and their career progression. The main priority over the life of this strategy will be to continue to address imbalances in representation of BME colleagues and disabled colleagues particularly at senior management level and above.

We have therefore identified the need to have a flexible, strategic approach to identifying where we need to address underrepresentation where and when it occurs in our workforce. We will do this by supporting our existing staff and by adjusting where necessary, our recruitment attraction arrangements, exploring employment outreach activities and whether exploring and using positive action initiatives would be beneficial. We will also maintain an ongoing review of our overall recruitment and selection processes to identify and remove any barriers to inclusion. Throughout the implementation of our previous Equality Plan, it became clear that we required a strategic approach to recruitment outreach and the need to consider ways in which we might work with external partners to offer work placements, job shadowing and our apprenticeship scheme to prospective employees.

How we will measure success:

- training needs analysis
- ongoing feedback from staff and workplace equality networks
- annual workforce, recruitment and pay diversity data.

Collecting and using diversity data to identify and address any inequalities

We will routinely collect, analyse, publish and act on trends from our diversity data on workforce, recruitment and equal pay to further inclusion. We will ensure that improvement actions are based on evidence of need. The data that we collect and evaluate will be used to measure the efficacy of our attempts to address inequalities.

Objective Five: Links to the Assembly Commission's strategic goals and related activities:

– **to use resources wisely**

build our people capability and integrate diversity and inclusion into decision-making, service design and delivery.

06. Roles and Responsibilities

We will ensure that Assembly Commission staff are aware of their responsibilities in implementing this strategy. Responsibilities include:

- senior managers to demonstrate inclusive leadership and champion diversity and inclusion;
- line managers to lead teams inclusively, ensuring that individuals can realise their full potential and capability;
- all staff to deliver a service which is inclusive and accessible, in particular front-line staff and their roles in engaging with people in the first instance;
- staff who design and deliver changes in policy, function and projects etc. demonstrate that they have built in diversity, inclusion and equality considerations into their work (by means of equality impact assessment);
- and
- Diversity and Inclusion Team to support staff in implementing this strategy and co-ordinate the arrangements for monitoring and reporting.

We will ensure that Assembly Members are aware of their responsibilities as employers and elected representatives in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation. This will be done through provision of factsheets, briefing, ongoing advice and where required, the provision of diversity-related continuing professional development activities.

07. Monitoring, Measuring Success and Reporting on Progress

The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will run from 2017 until after the end of the Fifth Assembly term in April 2021. We will draw on key performance indicators (KPIs) and other key data to measure success and report regularly via dashboard reports to Management Board to track progress on implementing our strategy. We will also compile and publish an Annual Diversity and Inclusion Report at the end of each financial year. The Assembly Commission's senior management team and the Commission itself will consider each report before its publication. We will also undertake ongoing internal and external peer review and the Assembly Commissioner with portfolio responsibility for diversity and inclusion will receive regular updates on progress.

Alongside our Annual Diversity and Inclusion Report, we will publish workforce, recruitment and equal pay diversity monitoring data. We will also publish information relating to equality impact assessments that have been undertaken.

The main method for making information available with regards to our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will be via our Diversity and Inclusion web pages. Please do contact us however, if you require any information in another format.

Appendix One: Our Legal Duties in Relation to Diversity, Inclusion and Equality

Government of Wales Act 2006

The Government of Wales Act 2006 states that the functions of the Assembly Commission and the proceedings of the National Assembly for Wales should be conducted with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people.

Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010, the Assembly Commission is considered a non-devolved public body. This means that as an organisation, we have responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty set by the UK Government. Where necessary, we may exceed our responsibilities under the UK duties in responding to the needs of our organisation and the people with whom we interact.

Our Strategy recognises that the Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on the Assembly Commission to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation based on protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation;
- advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't; and
- foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act 2010 requires the Assembly Commission to publish monitoring data and to consider the equality impact of decisions and policies. We will do this in our annual reporting processes, detailed in section seven of this strategy.

For the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh language is not covered as a protected characteristic. The National Assembly for Wales Official Languages Act 2012 however, places a duty on the Assembly to produce and implement an Official Languages Scheme. The Scheme sets out how we will deliver our statutory duty to provide services bilingually to Assembly Members and their staff; the people of Wales and Assembly Commission staff.

Over the period of its life, the strategy can be adjusted where required, to take account any changing legislative requirements.