

Diversity and Inclusion: Annual Report 2018-19

July 2019



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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Diversity and Inclusion: Annual Report 2018-19

July 2019





Contents

Foreword.....	6
Our year in highlights.....	9
Our Diversity and Inclusion goals.....	10
Our People.....	12
Outreach, engagement and democratic participation.....	27
Diversity and Inclusion in our work.....	40
What next?	45

Foreword

This report provides an update on activities related to diversity and inclusion over the period from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Assembly, making it an apt time to reflect on the progress we have made in terms of both recognising the importance of diversity and promoting inclusion as a parliamentary organisation and the work that we would like to do in the future.

This year saw the creation of the first ever Welsh Youth Parliament, noteworthy in its diversity of Welsh Youth Parliament Members and getting off to a flying start to ensure that the voices of young people in Wales are heard and acted upon through active democratic participation. We've also had extensive consultation on proposals for reforming the Assembly which the public have actively been engaged in. The work of our Assembly Committees is ever-broadening, capturing the views of increasingly diverse audiences.

Also, we have undertaken a thorough review of our organisational approach to recruitment, seeking to identify opportunities to make our recruitment practices even more inclusive and efficient. We were also delighted to receive continued recognition from Stonewall for our approach to LGBT inclusion, the CIPD Wales Gold Award for Diversity and Inclusion Initiative, and Training Journal Silver Award for Best Diversity and Inclusion Programme for our 2018 Apprenticeship Scheme.

We have a lot to celebrate this year, yet we still remain absolutely committed to pursuing and delivering the goals set out in our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and meeting our responsibilities towards the public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010.

As always, we welcome your feedback on this report and on how we might consider doing things differently in the future.



Manon Antoniazzi

Chief Executive and Clerk to the Assembly



Joyce Watson AM

Assembly Commissioner with responsibility for employees and equalities



Our year in highlights



We established the Welsh Youth Parliament which is diverse in its membership and has already started working on topics it has identified, giving a democratic voice to the young people of Wales.



We won both a CIPD Wales Gold Award 2018 for Diversity and Inclusion Initiative (Making our Workforce More Diverse) and a Training Journal Silver Award 2018 for Best Diversity and Inclusion Programme which acknowledged our inclusive approach to the design and delivery of our 2018 Apprenticeship Scheme.



The National Assembly for Wales has been rated among the top five employers of LGBT staff in the UK for the fifth year running. The latest annual Stonewall Workplace Equality Index has also placed our organisation as the top employer in Wales, has recognised it as a top trans-inclusive employer, and a Star Performing Organisation for our continued presence at the top of the Index.



We have a refreshed Dignity and Respect Policy with clear guidelines as to how to report any unwanted behaviour. Specialist external support is available for any complainants regarding sexual harassment or sexually inappropriate behaviour.



We have undertaken an organisational review of recruitment practices and their effectiveness. We identified opportunities to adjust our processes, enhance candidate experience and enhance our employer brand.



We have re-designed our candidate packs to include: up-to-date inclusive imagery of our working environment and our people; information about our benefits and rewards, workplace equality networks and external recognition. Results from recent campaigns have shown an increase in diversity, volume and quality of applications.



Staff helped us develop new organisational values and we have a refreshed our People Strategy.

Our Diversity and Inclusion goals

It is important 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 and contribute to its work. It is also important that we are an inclusive employer, enabling all of our staff to realise their full potential.

Our Vision and Values

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

Our values define the way we work. We:

- ensure diversity and inclusion are embedded throughout everything we do;
- 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.

Our Priorities

Our **Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2016-21** sets out the following priorities and objectives:

- Fostering inclusive leadership and an inclusive workplace culture. We will deliver against this objective by ensuring senior accountability and inclusive leadership, and by supporting and developing our Workplace Equality Networks
- Building on our approach to organisational development. We will deliver against this objective by identifying and removing barriers to inclusion, through external benchmarking and recognition, learning and development, and inclusive workplace policies
- Supporting Assembly Members and their staff to build diversity into their work. We will deliver against this objective by supporting them to consider diversity and inclusion into their roles as employers, as service providers and into their work as caseworkers, scrutineers and legislators, and by engaging with the people of Wales.
- Supporting Assembly Commission staff to build diversity and inclusion into their work. We will deliver against this objective by ensuring inclusive decision-making, service design and delivery, and by taking into account diversity and inclusion when buying-in goods and services.
- Being 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, recognising and addressing underrepresentation in our workforce, and collecting and using diversity data to identify and address any inequalities.

Our People

At the Assembly Commission, we always strive to be an inclusive employer. We want to be an employer of choice where people outside of our organisation want to work here and for the Assembly to be a desirable and attractive place to work. We want to be an exemplar employer, and a place where people can thrive in a safe and supported environment.

Creating an inclusive working environment



- 31 days annual leave per year
- 13 days Public and Privilege holidays per year



- Incremental pay rise
- Principal Civil Service pension scheme



- Access to occupational health
- Access to Employee Assistance Programme
- Supportive work place equality networks



- Family friendly policies, including career break, part-time working, job share, term time working and special leave
- Generous maternity, foster, adoption, and shared parental leave

Our Values

Together with our staff, we have designed and launched our new organisational values that celebrate the way we work together and remind us of who we are and what we stand for.

We are weaving them through our recruitment processes and including them as a core element of our branding, behavioural competency framework and performance structures.



RESPECT

We are inclusive, kind, and value each other's contributions in delivering excellent services



PASSION

We are purposeful in our support of democracy and pull together to make a difference for the people of Wales



PRIDE

We embrace innovation and celebrate our achievements together as a team

WE ARE **ONE TEAM**

Dignity and Respect

- We are committed to providing an inclusive culture that is free from harassment and we expect that everyone - including visitors, Assembly Members, Members staff and Assembly Commission staff, are treated with dignity and respect.
- The Commission has worked with the Standards of Conduct Committee, the Remuneration Board and a range of internal and external stakeholders to develop a Dignity and Respect Policy which was launched in May 2018. In September 2018 the Standards of Conduct Committee published its report: 'Creating the Right Culture', which included a number of recommendations for the Assembly Commission.

We have addressed all of the Committee's recommendations and a number of changes and improvements have been introduced:

- We have delivered awareness training across the Commission and embedded it into our induction and professional development programmes.
- Through conducting a mystery shopper exercise, we have gained assurance, that the Dignity and Respect website pages are user friendly and accessible.
- Our Contact Officers are providing an important, trusted service, providing user-focused advice, guidance and emotional support where required.
- Specialist external support is available for any complainants regarding sexual harassment or sexually inappropriate behaviour.
- An Annual Dignity and Respect Survey is undertaken which includes a series of questions around experiences and awareness of the complaints procedures and processes. This is issued to AMs, their staff and Commission staff.
- Future work will see a campaign to further increase awareness, alongside the continuing review of our policies and practices to ensure that a culture of dignity and respect remains embedded throughout the Assembly.

People Strategy 2019-23

We have refreshed our People Strategy for 2019-23. The strategy sets out how we will develop, engage and reward an agile workforce, equipped to work and flourish.

The Strategy sets out four inter-related strategic aims, which will support the delivery of our overall strategic priorities and will further embed our values and behaviours. We have ensured that it aligns with our **Diversity and Inclusion Strategy** and other relevant strategies.

Apprenticeship Scheme 2018

Our outreach work proved very successful and we received the most amount of applications ever for an apprenticeship scheme. In addition, we received more applications from those who identified as BAME than the previous three schemes combined, and almost three times more than our last scheme.

Not only did we see an increase in the number of applications from BAME candidates, but we saw an improvement in the quality of applications. The application workshops and outreach work had proved to be successful and we had a record number of BAME candidates progress to the next round. As a result, we interviewed more BAME candidates than ever before and after the interview process, we recruited more BAME apprentices than all the previous schemes combined.

We've also improved our relationships with the wider BAME community and developed long term partnerships with local schools and schools across the whole of Wales. Outreach events have already been arranged to continue to build on these relationships and to help prepare future candidates for our next scheme. Visibility of our apprenticeship scheme also helped us promote the organisation as a whole and as an employer, and the scheme coincided with the time that we received the most number of visitors to our website.

By working with the BAME community we've been able to remove barriers and put long term structures in place to attract a more diverse range of candidates for the future. The next intake will be in January 2020.

Workplace Equality Networks

We value the contribution that our workplace equality networks make to our workplace and the expert advice and insight they provide us with in terms of making inclusive policies, promoting an inclusive workplace and helping us to realise our ambitions set out in our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

The networks engaged in various activities throughout the year which include highlights such as:

MINDFUL – members have raised awareness throughout the year about mental health and wellbeing, helping design Mental Wellbeing Week and providing factsheets for staff on how to maintain wellbeing.

REACH – piloted a reciprocal mentoring programme to enable junior BAME staff to engage with senior staff to exchange skills, knowledge and understanding whilst helping our senior leaders gain new perspectives by broaden their understanding of the challenges faced by our staff from diverse backgrounds with protected characteristics. Several BAME staff have undertaken this opportunity and we are reviewing the pilot to ascertain its efficacy.



INSPIRE – members identified the need for a ‘Menopause in the Workplace’ awareness session and arranged a well-attended session for staff. The network also organised sanitary protection collection charity drive to address period poverty.



OUT-NAW – network members attended the annual Pride march in Cardiff and the network has provided factsheets for staff on LGB and Trans inclusion.



A cross-section of network members also were involved in staff panels as part of the recruitment of the post for Director of Assembly Business which enabled a diverse range of staff from all levels and backgrounds to be involved in the process.

Going forward, we will look to refresh the networks: by identifying an indicative work programme for all networks, identifying opportunities for further collaboration and reviewing operating guidelines.



MINDFUL
Our Mental Health Support Network



REACH
Our Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage Network



INSPIRE
Our Women's Workplace Equality Network



OUT-NAW
Our LGBTQ+ Workplace Equality Network



TEULU
Our Working Parent and Carer Network



EMBRACE
Our Disability Workplace Equality Network

Learning and Development

Our learning and development provision is underpinned by the concepts of diversity and inclusion. We have a range of formal and informal training opportunities available to Assembly Commission staff and Assembly Members and their staff. We also provide a suite of factsheets, videos, online training and other resources to those who are unable to attend the training or who wish to develop their knowledge in their own time.

During this period, we have provided a range of training which includes but is not limited to: trans inclusive workplace, mental wellbeing aimed at managers, dignity and respect, pre-retirement, menopause awareness, becoming a trans ally, challenging inappropriate behaviour, child mental health, supporting employees with cancer, autism awareness, dementia awareness and unconscious bias training.

Review of Organisational Recruitment Practice

Following our inclusion audit of recruitment processes last year – we decided to undertake a comprehensive review of organisational recruitment practices. As well as reviewing our processes, we examined and identified ways in which we could reduce any actual and perceived barriers to a more inclusive process that would diversify and widen our candidate pool. The next steps will be to digest the findings of the review, consult with staff and phase in the implementation of recommendations. This work will be done in tandem with procuring and installing an online applicant tracking system (recruitment system).

Widening Inclusion through Recruitment

In addition to the review, we have taken steps to refresh the way in which we reach out to prospective employees in order to attract the widest range of talent for our job opportunities. We have re-designed our candidate packs to include: up-to-date inclusive imagery of our working environment and our people; information about our benefits and rewards, workplace equality networks and external recognition. We use short biographies from our staff in the candidate packs to convey the job role itself and provide insight into our workplace culture.

We have followed through this approach into the way in which we advertise via social media, using quotes from our staff to make the job role come alive and invite interest from a broad range of potential candidates. Results from recent campaigns have shown an increase in diversity, volume and quality of applications. Feedback from both recruiting managers and candidates has been positive about the new candidate packs and we will continue to adjust our approach as necessary.

Workforce, Recruitment and Pay Diversity Data

Our workforce and recruitment data and equal pay and gender pay gap reports are published respectively as accompanying documents to this report to ensure ease of access to the information.

As last year, the **workforce and recruitment data** shows that we continue to attract and recruit a diverse range of people. We have recruited people from a range of ages, with disabilities, and from different races, religions and sexual orientations. We have recruited similar numbers of women and men (31 and 38 respectively) but we have not recruited anyone with a different gender identity or anyone who identifies as transgender.

Internally, we have had a number of internal job opportunities (71 opportunities); we have had successful candidates from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background, with disabilities, across different age groups and sexual orientations.

We recognise the need to continue to work on increasing the diversity of our workforce in order to better represent the communities that we serve. Our recruitment review and the re-design of our candidate pack and use of social media for recruitment has enabled us to identify further opportunities for reducing barriers and encouraging a diverse range of applicants.

In terms of **equal pay data**, it shows us that the pay lead that women have over men has decreased from 31.1% to 28.1% (median for basic salary) and has decreased from 29.4% to 21.3% on median for total salary. The difference is caused by a number of factors: a high concentration of men in the TS grade (largely in the Security Team); a high concentration of women in the M-2 grade (largely Translators) who receive a skills-based recruitment and retention allowance; and the proportion of women at grade M1 who are longer servers than men at that grade.

Our **gender pay gap** is also decreasing: The median gender pay gap **-21.26%** (ordinary pay for 2019 is a pay lead for women). This has decreased from -29.39 last year. This is, at least in part, due to the length of service equalising between women and men, particularly at M-2 level. We still have more women at M-1 grade who are longer servers than the men at that grade but the shortening of pay scales which takes effect from 1 April 2019 will help to resolve this issue.

In its Scrutiny of Accounts Report 2019, the Assembly's Public Accounts Committee recommended that, *"the Assembly Commission builds on the work to engage with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities and leads the way across the Public Sector by including, in its annual report and accounts, disclosure of the ethnicity pay gap"*. We currently publish equal pay data on race/ethnicity (as we have done for previous annual reports). This year we have included a pay differential on equal pay on the grounds of race: difference for median total FTE salary for non-BAME vs BAME and other ethnic origin is 38.9%. This is explained by the prevalence of BAME staff in the lower pay grades.

We are awaiting the outcome of the UK Government's recent consultation on what its approach to Ethnicity pay gap reporting will be. The consultation closed in January 2019 and the timescales for reporting its findings are currently unknown. Nonetheless, we will continue to publish the equal pay differential for BAME and non-BAME pay and prioritise actions to address both BAME underrepresentation in our workforce and pay differentials. In the meantime, we have used the gender pay gap calculation methodology to calculate **our BAME pay gap which is 38.9%** (identical to our BAME equal pay differential), again attributed to BAME underrepresentation in senior, decision-making roles and not because BAME colleagues are paid less than non-BAME colleagues for the same job.

We are working towards further reducing our identified pay gaps.

Promoting Inclusion through Internal Awareness-Raising

The Diversity and Inclusion team and workplace networks have continued to raise awareness of issues for our staff, Assembly Members, their staff and the public. Highlights this year include: networking for your mental wellbeing week; charity cake bake; Holocaust Memorial Day, LGBT History Month, International Women's Day; Disability Access Day; Black History Month; International Day of Disabled People, Dignity and Respect in the Assembly; Trans Day of Visibility; Network Allies and guest blogs for World Autism Awareness Day and Week.

Diversity and Inclusion Week: 9-13 July 2018

Annually we run a Diversity and Inclusion week which focuses on awareness-raising activities and information provision within the workplace and also an externally focused social media campaign. This year, our events and activities included:

- Workshops on: Understanding mental health and wellbeing for managers; Equality in the Workplace; Disability Confidence; Dementia Awareness; and Unconscious Bias.
- Internal and external blog articles and staff news page information on: the importance of collecting and monitoring staff data; an update on what we have done to promote an inclusive organisation for trans and non-binary people; intersectionality; the Assembly as a Disability Confident employer; update on Annual Diversity and Inclusion Report and a factsheet on intersection of sexual orientation, gender identity and religion.

Benchmarking and External Recognition

A useful measure of our approach to diversity and inclusion is to benchmark against external organisations and to undertake accreditation exercises. These enable us to identify where we are exhibiting best practice and where we can make further improvements.

This year we achieved the following:

- The National Assembly for Wales has been rated among the top five employers of LGBT staff in the UK for the fifth year running. The latest annual Stonewall Workplace Equality Index has also placed our organisation as the top employer in Wales, has recognised it as a top trans-inclusive employer, and a Star Performing Organisation for our continued presence at the top of the Index. The Llywydd has stated, "the National Assembly for Wales is proud to maintain a top five place in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index – for the fifth year running. It shows that we have developed and sustained an inclusive culture demonstrating the Senedd's commitment to represent all of Wales' diverse communities. We are determined to continue to make the National Assembly an enjoyable and rewarding place to work for all people as we believe the organisation achieves more with a diverse and inclusive workforce."
- We won both a CIPD Wales Gold Award 2018 for Diversity and Inclusion Initiative (*Making our Workforce More Diverse*) and a Training Journal Silver Award 2018 for Best Diversity and Inclusion Programme which acknowledged our inclusive approach to the design and delivery of our 2018 Apprenticeship Scheme.
- We have been recognised by Chwarae Teg and awarded their FairPlay Employer Bronze Benchmark.
- We were shortlisted for the PinkNews Awards 2018 for the public sector equality award.

We remain: recognised as having Disability Confident Employer status by the Department for Work and Pensions. This status indicates that we are complying with best practice around the recruitment and retention of disabled people.

- committed to providing a family-friendly working environment and have been named as a Top 30 Employer for working families, accredited by the Top Employers for Working Families organisation, an industry-recognised bench marker for good practice when it comes to providing a working environment that allows for a positive work / life balance.
- awarded the National Autism Society Autism Friendly Award. This recognition shows our commitment to making sure that our buildings are accessible to visitors with autism and that our staff have been trained to welcome them.
- signed up to the Citizens Cymru Wales Community Jobs Compact, a scheme that aims to bring local people and employers together to tackle poverty, unemployment and under-representation in the workforce. The Compact encourages employers to commit to best practice in relation to pay, equal opportunities, job security and development.

We have also previously gained the following recognition:

- We have received the Investors in People Gold Standard, recognition from the international mark of global excellence.
- We have achieved the Action on Hearing Loss Louder Than Words charter mark for supporting staff and visitors who are deaf or have a hearing loss. We have also been awarded Excellent Wales awards by Action for Hearing Loss Cymru for service excellence.
- We have been recognised as one of The Times / Opportunity Now Top 50 Employers for Women.
- Going forward, we will be undertaking the Business in the Community benchmark for race, gender and wellbeing to support our objectives set out in our People Strategy.





Joint-Winner of Ethnic Minority Wales Women's Achievement Award

We were delighted that Abi Lasebikan, our Diversity and Inclusion Officer, was recognised as a joint winner for an Ethnic Minority Welsh Women's Achievement Association (EMWWA) Award for the 'Self-Development' category. EMWWA is a charitable organisation which aims to create a network of women and girls of ethnic minority origin across Wales to provide beacons of inspiration for current and upcoming generations.

“Looking at the calibre of the nominees I am very honoured to have been nominated, let alone be walking away with this award. The work of the EMWWA gives a chance for those who work so tirelessly without recognition to get their work and effort acknowledged. I would encourage people to nominate their EMWW leaders, people they would like to get recognised next year, remember leadership is not about titles, positions or flowcharts. It is about one life influencing another.”

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Top: Assembly colleagues who designed and delivered the Apprenticeship Scheme collect the CIPD Wales Award for Best Diversity and Inclusion Initiative

Left: Abi Lasebikan, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, receives joint award in the self-development category from the Ethnic Minority Welsh Women's Achievement Association

Equality and Access Fund: Support for Assembly Members, their staff and constituents

The Equality and Access Fund enables Assembly Members to cover the cost of additional expenses such as communication support and reasonable adjustments. During this reporting period, the fund has been used to provide specific equipment for Members and their staff.

Members' Business Support now also asks new starter AMSS to complete a health declaration form asking them to declare any special requirements or disabilities so that we can inform the occupational health nurse who can advise on any reasonable adjustments necessary to support them in the workplace.

Workplace Adjustments

Through our Wellbeing Strategy, we have supported our staff by assisting them to manage chronic illness and disabilities enabling them to remain in work. During this period, some of the support that we have offered includes provision of ergonomic equipment and communication aids for colleagues.

Outreach, engagement and democratic participation

One of our ongoing objectives is to engage with all of the people of Wales and to champion the work of the Assembly. As a parliamentary body, it is important that the Assembly represents all of the people of Wales and that everyone has access to our work, our building and our information.

Overview of public engagement

In the last year, we have engaged with people from all parts of Wales, in communities across the country, and on our estate. During this period over people across Wales have engaged with us through workshops, presentations, events and engagement activity related to committee consultations. Below, we celebrate some of our engagement work and share some of the highlights of the year.

Inaugural Welsh Youth Parliament

In December 2018, the first cohort of Welsh Youth Parliament Members (WYPM) were elected, 40 of which were elected first past the post for the 40 Welsh electoral constituencies, and 20 elected via official WYP Partner Organisations.

Thirteen organisations were chosen by the Llywydd and the Children's Commissioner to become official WYP Partners, following an application process. Organisations were chosen to ensure that the WYP had representation from diverse groups of young people from different backgrounds. Partners include Barnardos, EYST, Race Council Cymru, Learning Disability Wales, Talking Hands, and Voices from Care.

WYPMs are aged between 11 – 18 years old, with 24 male, and 36 female members making up the 60 representatives. In February 2019, the 60 WYPMs met in the Chamber in a session chaired by the Llywydd Elin Jones AM, to vote on their three priority issues. The topics chosen were:

- Emotional and Mental Health Support
- Littering and Plastic Waste
- Life Skills in the Curriculum

From the outset, diversity and inclusion considerations have been included from the inception of the project, teams in the Assembly have worked closely together to remove barriers to election and participation and have also worked with partner organisations to ensure an inclusive experience for the WYPMs. The WYPMs will also inform any diversity and inclusion decisions on an ongoing basis.

Going forward, the WYPMs will meet in their regions to start working on their three priority issues.



Community Engagement Sessions

Our Community Engagement Team held 35 Community Sessions for 876 delegates over this year, involving a range of groups, including Mind Cymru, the National Autistic Society Cymru, the North Wales Women's Centre, Gingerbread and Mantell Gwynedd. These sessions introduce citizens to the work of the Assembly - what we do in holding the Welsh Government to account, how citizens can engage with their Assembly Members and get involved in consultations and petitioning.

Visitors, tours and events

We promote the Assembly as a visitor attraction through connections with the local Cardiff Bay Waterfront Partners Group, through social media, through our outreach work and through Euan's Guide, a listings and review website that helps disabled people and their families know which venues are accessible.

We have made adjustments to enable visitors to participate in tours by adjusting the speed of tours and the complexity of language used.

We have hosted a vast array of inclusion-related events throughout the year including events to mark: Baha'ullah event; Holocaust Memorial Day Vigil; Action On Elder Abuse Cymru; Bridging the gender pay gap in Wales; #IAmEmbolden - Spirit of D/deaf & disabled women; Learning Disability and the Broadcasting Industry; Celebrating the Achievements of Welsh Black Rugby Players; Change the Gender Imbalance - how to attract more women into engineering; Pride Cymru Conference and Interfaith Week.

“Overall, we would say this was one of the easiest, most enjoyable, most informative and interesting visits to a sight and landmark that we have had. We thoroughly recommend it to everyone, regardless of how interested you are in politics, history, architecture or anything else that might make you wonder if it's worth visiting. It definitely is! The building is 100% disability friendly; it has automatic doors, disabled toilets and lifts for access everywhere.”

Feedback from a visitor following a Senedd tour

Promoting diversity and inclusion

As part of our commitment to being an inclusive organisation we continue to promote diversity and inclusion internally and to the public via events, social media and campaigns. We have encouraged people to think of the Assembly as an inclusive organisation, encouraging them to get involved with the work of the Assembly and to consider the Assembly as a potential employer of choice.

Here are some of the highlights of our promotional work:

International Women's Day 2019 - #BalanceforBetter Rhyl

In partnership with the North Wales Women's Centre, The National Assembly for Wales marked International Women's Day on 8 March 2019 - a global celebration of the achievements of women - with a series of guest speakers and performances at the Rhyl Little Theatre. Local adventurer Steph Jeavons from Old Colwyn, who achieved a world record by becoming the first person to circumnavigate the globe and ride a motorcycle on all seven continents, was invited as guest speaker for the celebration.

The day's celebration saw women from across North Wales discuss this year's International Women's Day theme, #BalanceforBetter. In a panel discussion chaired by the Deputy Presiding Officer, Ann Jones AM was joined by Poppy Johnson, founder of the North Wales Young Business Awards and owner of Poise Academy, Chwarae Teg Chief Executive Cerys Furlong and Mair Stephens, Chair of the WI Federations of Wales Committee to share their achievements, inspirations and the barriers women face within the workplace, economy, democracy and society and how they can be overcome.

Established in 2001, the Centre operates from Rhyl town centre. Rhyl West is the highest ranked ward on the Index of Deprivation in Wales, the Centre works hard to their aim cultivating and advancing the social and economic development of women in the local community. In preparation for IWD, the Community Engagement Team facilitated sessions with 71 citizens from local projects ahead of the event to encourage participation and engagement, and those projects were encouraged so showcase their work as part of the day's networking opportunities.

Four partnerships were formed in total, with the Centre, Wicked Wales, Chwarae Teg and The WI all putting forward speakers. 84 citizens attended the event, with 84% never having engaged with the Assembly before and 78% stating that their interest in our work had increased having attended.

Black History Month 2018

Black History Month (BHM) celebrates, recognises and values the inspirational individuals and events from within the BAME communities. This year, alongside internal awareness-raising activity, we hosted the launch of All Wales BHM and BHM Youth Awards in the Pierhead Building and the Diversity and Inclusion Team attended the showcase closing event in the Millennium Centre, Cardiff. Our Communications Team produced a [podcast](#) for Black History Month, featuring Ali Abdi (Citizens Cymru Wales), Rocio Cifuentes (Director EYST Cymru) and Vaughan Gething AM, (Minister for Health and Social Services) which was subsequently re-tweeted for UN Anti-Racism Day.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDDP) 2018

Deputy Presiding Officer Ann Jones AM, produced a guest [blog and vlog](#) on the Assembly's website to mark IDDP, giving personal insight into her experience as a disabled parliamentarian and what can be done to remove the barriers to encourage a diverse and representative audience into public life. In addition to this, EMBRACE, our disability network once again organised for the Senedd to be illuminated in celebration of the enormous contribution that people with disabilities make to Wales' and the world's economy as part of the Purple Light Up campaign.

LeadHership

The Deputy Presiding Officer took part in Chwarae Teg's LeadHership event in March. This shadowing opportunity provides young women an insight into public life. The day provided participants with one-to-one time with women Assembly Members and their team, to gain an understanding of what the role includes. Around twenty women took part with ages ranging from 16-30 years old.

Enfys 7s Rugby Tournament

The Assembly's rugby team won the Enfys 7s LGBT-Inclusive rugby tournament in August for which we congratulate the team who have been longstanding participants of LGBT-inclusive rugby tournaments and games.

Voice Box event

Voice Box is a bilingual children's joke competition that aims to raise awareness of the fun and importance of communication. Mainstream primary schools and special schools were invited to enter one joke from their school for the 2018 - 2019 competition in April. The Deputy Presiding Officer was pleased to share a joke with the children and present the winning award. This is the first year that the Voice Box competition has taken place in Wales.



Exhibitions

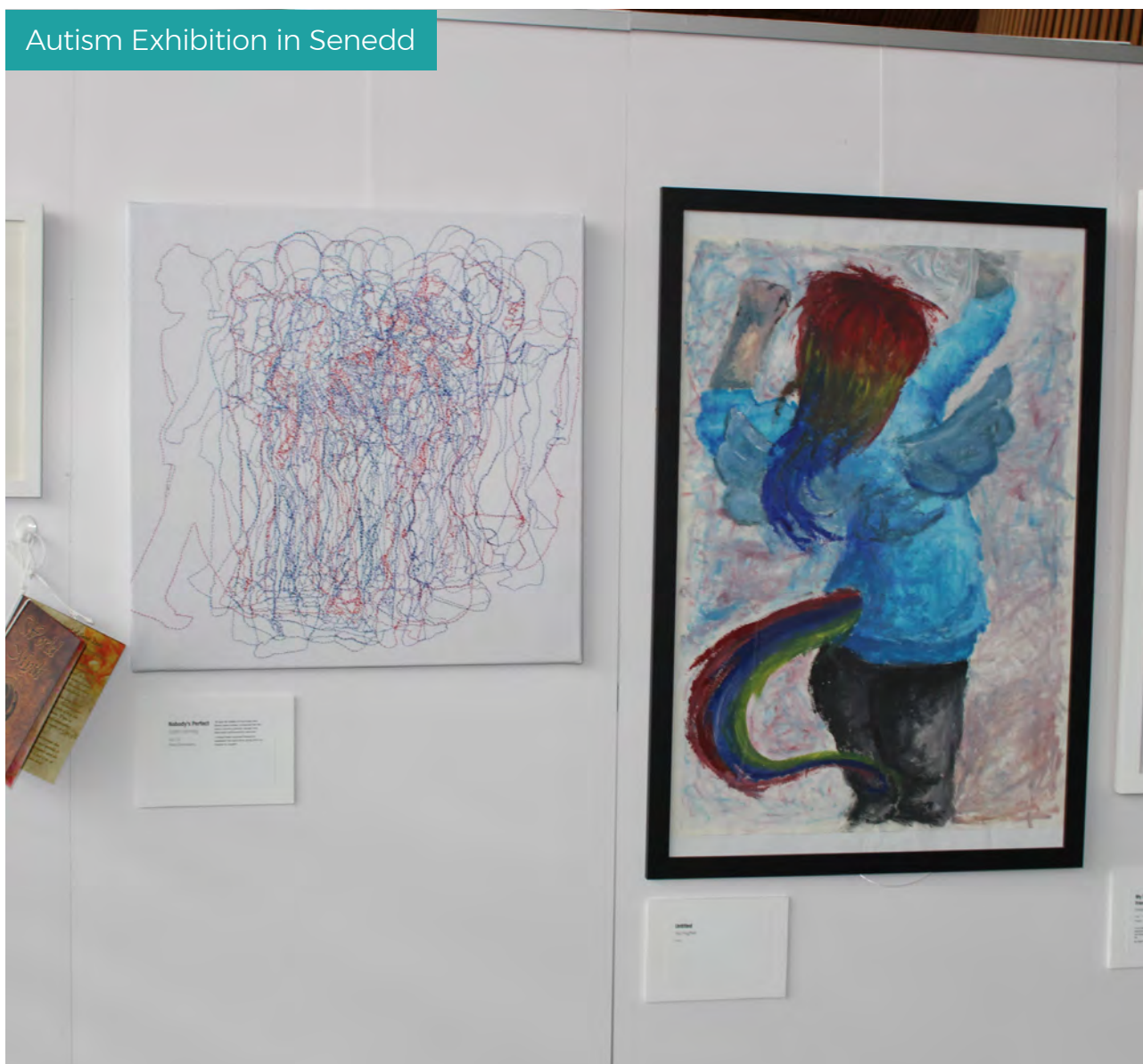
We've hosted a range of exhibitions on the Assembly estate, highlights of which include:

- **Autism Exhibition** - to showcase the wonderful talents of both adults and children in Wales on the Autism spectrum. The exhibition celebrated both Autism in Wales and World Autism Awareness Month 2018. A variety of different art forms were on display from paintings to poetry to pottery.
- **Armenian Art and Wales:** paintings of the Armenian and Welsh Landscapes. An Exhibition linking not only cultural but also visual similarities between these two countries.
- **Show Racism the Red Card Wales' Creative Arts Competition Winners 2018:** an exhibition showcasing emerging talents in primary and secondary schools in Wales, offering visitors a chance to view a range of fine art, multimedia and creative design projects, all addressing the theme of racism and anti-racism in our society and the broader global context.
- **Black History Month:** as part of the celebration to mark BHM the Assembly hosted an exhibition delivered by the Ethnic Minorities & Youth Support Team Wales (EYST Wales) and Cardiff University. 'Young, Migrant & Welsh' curated by the Ethnic Minorities & Youth Support Team Wales (EYST Wales) captured the experiences of young people from migratory backgrounds growing up in Wales. It explored concepts of belonging, identity and whether 'Welshness' is an inclusive concept. It also aimed to break down misconceptions of the term 'migrant' and to reclaim it in a more positive context than current media discourses.
- **#IttoamCardiff**, is a student-led initiative highlighting the faces and voices of BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) students at Cardiff University. The exhibition was launched in 2016 and has been touring since as a way to give BAME communities a voice, raise awareness and prompt discussion.
- **Women's Suffrage in Wales** exhibition: an overview of the various Women's Suffrage Movements in Wales active in the early 1900s, including the Suffragettes, the Suffragists and the Women's Freedom

League and their different approaches. We will draw a parallel between the situation then and the state of gender equality in Wales today.

- **Mothers of Africa:** in 2015, according to the United Nations, approximately 830 women died every day from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, most of which are preventable. On average that is one death every two seconds. 99% of these deaths occur in low-resourced, often rural settings where there is poverty and poor education. Since 2012, the small Welsh charity, Mothers of Africa has been working in collaboration with local healthcare professions in the District of Chongwe in Zambia providing training and education. The exhibition showed women who have survived childbirth, and often many births, and the girls whose future the charity is working to improve.

Autism Exhibition in Senedd



Promoting inclusion beyond Wales

International Congress of Parliamentary Women's Caucuses

Both the Deputy Presiding Officer, Ann Jones AM and the Assembly Commission with responsibility for Diversity and Inclusion, Joyce Watson AM attended an International Congress of Parliamentary Women's Caucuses in Dublin Castle from 9-10 September. The theme was 'Our Vision for Women in 2118'. Break out session topics included:

- Social Media
- Gender Quota
- Herstory
- Deliberative Democracy As A Process
- Impact Of Caucuses Worldwide
- Policy Focused Work On Gender Sensitive Parliament

The Assembly also continues good working relations with international organisations such as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WfD) to promote good governance within evolving and developing democracies.

Mothers of Africa Exhibition in Senedd



Youth Engagement

Our Education and Youth Engagement team have informed, involved and empowered children and young people to engage with Assembly Business both in our in-house education centre and at schools, colleges and out-of-school settings across Wales. The team has managed the election for the first Welsh Youth Parliament during 2018 and is supporting the work of the 60 Welsh Youth Parliament Members for the next two years.

The team has delivered 684 sessions and worked with 162 youth groups in out-of-schools settings, engaging with some groups for the very first time. During this reporting period, 34,659 young people have engaged with us during arranged educational sessions.

Widening the reach of the work of Assembly Committees

Assembly Committees work hard to ensure they hear from the broadest and most diverse range of people to inform their work. On each inquiry, committees will consider what forms of engagement and outreach will be most appropriate. As part of this, issues of inclusion are always at the forefront of thinking. Committees continue to look for new and innovative ways of engaging. We continue to make adjustments to ensure that participants can engage in the ways that work best for them, whether that by using online discussion forums, focus groups or just making it easier for people to give evidence in a formal setting.

For the first time this year, three committees worked together to undertake formal scrutiny of the Welsh Government. The Finance Committee; Equalities, Local Government and Communities Committee; and the Children, Young People and Education Committee met together to scrutinise the Welsh Government's approach to assessing the impact of budgetary decisions. This work focused on the impact of budget decisions on equalities and children and young people, and resulted in a **joint report** published unanimously by all three committees.

Children, Young People and Education Committee

As part of the inquiry into the Status of the Welsh Baccalaureate, the Committee visited schools and colleges across Wales to hear directly from young people about their experiences of studying the qualification. The Committee also undertook online surveys with teachers and learners; parents and carers; and higher education institutions.

On the Committee's inquiry into School Funding we undertook case studies with three schools. This included visits to those schools to meet with specific groups including schools leaders; local authorities; school governors and pupils. The Committee established working groups of expert stakeholders to help inform our formal responses to two Welsh Government consultations. The first of these related to the statutory Additional Learning Needs Code, the second related to the government obesity strategy 'Healthy Weight Healthy Wales'.

The Committee also undertook a short inquiry to look at the provision of textbooks and learning resources for pupils and as part of that we took video evidence from pupils and teachers, which formed part of the Committee's formal report.

Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

In January 2019, the Assembly's Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee launched an inquiry into the Blue Badge Scheme in Wales. The Scheme provides a national arrangement of parking concessions for disabled people, and operates throughout the UK. In Wales, the responsibility for the Scheme lies with the Welsh Government, but it is administered by the individual local authorities, who issues the badges. Inconsistencies in the approach to administering the Blue Badge Scheme across Wales had been identified which effectively meant that the 22 local authorities were delivering the Scheme in different ways, resulting in a 'postcode lottery.'

The Citizen Engagement team arranged a series of twelve focus groups across all five Assembly regions with 102 current and former Blue Badge holders, potential Blue Badge applicants, carers and relevant council staff to gather their views on a number of areas including the support and information available to Blue Badge applicants in Wales and the practical implementation and consistency of the Scheme across Wales, including assessments, fees and enforcement. The Citizen Engagement Team worked closely with key stakeholders including Disability Wales, Age Cymru, Learning Disability Wales and the MS Society to source participants who contributed their views, experiences and ideas to the inquiry.

<http://senedd.assembly.wales/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=23651>

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

As part of its inquiry into the impact of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 in relation to carers, the Committee held fourteen focus groups throughout the summer in locations across Wales. The focus groups included

carers of all ages, and with a wide range of experiences, including caring for people with dementia, mental ill health, cancer and stroke, and provided an opportunity for participants to relate their experiences of caring and the difficulties and challenges it brings. The Committee then held a further round table event to look at how services can better support carers. To coincide with Young Carers Day, working with Carers Trust Wales, the Committee facilitated a workshop for young carers from all over Wales to come and tell the Committee about their experiences as young carers. Participants ranged from age 10 up to 17, and were supported by young adult carers.

As part of its scrutiny of the Autism (Wales) Bill, the Committee was keen to talk to people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families about the challenges they are facing. We held a series of focus groups across Wales to capture the views and experiences of a cross-section of people. Sessions were arranged through organisations that support adults with ASD and their families, as well as through local support groups. Ten sessions were held across Wales, and 95 people took part. Members of the Committee also visited Autism Spectrum Connections Cymru One Stop Shop in Cardiff to talk to service users, and held roundtable discussions with family members of people with ASD.

Petitions Committee

The Committee has considered petitions covering a range of inclusive topics including mental health, gender pay gaps, child safe houses, religious worship in schools, support for male victims of domestic violence, accessible public spaces, education funding for BAME groups and asylum seekers, learning disability training for NHS staff, hostile architecture, free sanitary products, and baby changing facilities.

The Committee published a report on petition **P-04-628 To improve Access to Education and Services in British Sign Language**, which was submitted by Deffo!, a forum for young deaf people. The report made several recommendations to the Welsh Government for how additional support could be provided to deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. We published the report in BSL and produced a summary version. The report was debated by the Assembly in February 2019 and we provided BSL interpretation in the public gallery and online.

The Committee has also published a report on the future of the Welsh Independent Living Grant, and is taking evidence on a petition which calls for accessibility scores to be clearly displayed by premises which are open to the public.

Public Accounts Committee

The Committee undertook an inquiry looking at public services for care experienced children and young people (who are, or have been, 'looked after' by a local authority under the Children Act 1989 and Social Services and Well-being Act 2014) within its remit of considering the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are employed in the discharge of public functions in Wales.

Five young people came and spoke to Assembly Members during one of the Committee's private meetings at the Senedd which was conducted informally to ensure the young people felt comfortable and safe in speaking about their experiences of care. Beforehand the young people met with Committee Members in the Members tea room, over refreshments, to enable them to speak to Members on a one to one basis in relaxed surroundings.

Other sessions were held across Wales in Anglesey, Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Swansea with young people between the ages of 6 and 25 from almost all local authorities in Wales. Participants included children and young people currently in care as well as those who have recently left the care system. In some of the sessions, the young people were supported by their social workers and a foster carer who also provided their views. In all thirty children and young people gave evidence. This approach enabled us to capture the voices of the Children and Young People and provide an insight into real perspectives and experiences of the care system and these were referred to throughout the Committee's report. The report format included an infographic of 'What young people told us' and included a number of quotes directly from the evidence we heard. These findings were also collated into a powerful Sparks video.

Diversity and Inclusion in our work

We support Assembly Commission staff to build diversity and inclusion into their work to ensure inclusive decision-making, service design and delivery, access to our estates and by taking into account diversity and inclusion when buying-in goods and services.

We also support Assembly Members consider diversity and inclusion into their roles as employers, as service providers and into their work as caseworkers, scrutineers and legislators, and by engaging with the people of Wales.

Non-Government Bills

Two non-government Bills were introduced this year: the Autism (Wales) Bill and the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Bill. Each was accompanied by an Explanatory Memorandum, containing a range of detailed impact assessments, including Equality Impact Assessments, Children's Rights Impact Assessments and Languages Impact Assessments. Following best practice, the impact assessments sought to evaluate the Bills' impacts on all groups of people, not just those they positively impacted upon. For example, consideration was given to the impact of the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Bill on children and young people who will not be enfranchised with the right to vote - as well as those who are- and the mitigations in place for such.

The general principles of the Senedd and Elections Bill are currently being scrutinised by Assembly committees, including the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee. If the legislation is passed, it would lower the voting age for Assembly elections to 16. A range of potential benefits arising from this change are identified in the Bill's Explanatory Memorandum, including:

- strengthening democratic accountability, by enabling a wider section of the community to have a direct role in Assembly elections;
- enabling increased engagement in voting over the longer-term (on the basis that an earlier experience of voting could lead to individuals maintaining their engagement);

- it being anomalous for the voting age of Assembly elections not to be lowered to 16, if the Welsh Government decides to legislate to reduce the voting age for local government elections in Wales.

During the previous year, the Assembly Commission issued a consultation on *Creating a Parliament for Wales*, which included an Easy Read version of the consultation. The publication of the *Creating a Parliament for Wales* consultation report was similarly accompanied by an Easy Read version of the consultation report, to facilitate a wider range of people in engaging with the process.

Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) and considering equality in our work

We continue to consider equality, diversity and inclusion as part of our ongoing work, when developing policies, services and making changes to our estate. For example, the business analysis team have worked to embed the principles of equality into business improvement initiatives throughout the Assembly by:

- Advising project teams on the need for an EQIA;
- Ensuring equality and diversity are represented in requirements documents when developing new projects; and
- Considering the needs of all stakeholders of change and ensuring they are represented.

Accessible estate

We continually review the accessibility of our estate, undertaking monthly maintenance audits, as well as acting on feedback and adopting best practice. During this reporting period, we have undertaken further work to improve the physical accessibility of our estate, including:

- installing new external signage around the Senedd to highlight the accessible routes to the building;
- considering access requirements for all refurbishment work that have been carried out and completing Equality Impact Assessments as required;
- replacement of the automatic main entrance doors to the Senedd building and Neuadd;

- continuing with the program of installing LED lighting to improve visibility in the Senedd and other areas across the estate, including replacing the lights in the external Senedd canopy to LED; and
- refurbishment of the main atrium lifts in Ty Hywel including new LED lighting, new signage, including braille, and new voice announcers signaling when the lift arrives at, or passes, each floor; and
- an external audit conducted on Induction Loop provision in meeting rooms and common areas throughout the estate with recommendations implemented.

Procurement

We take every opportunity to champion equality throughout the procurement process and ongoing contract management. Equality is included as part of our sustainability risk assessments at the very start of the procurement process. It also forms part of our pre-qualification exercise for suppliers. Suppliers who fail to demonstrate their commitment to equality are not invited to tender. Post contract-award, we conduct regular contract review meetings with our suppliers. One of the standard agenda items is corporate social responsibility. We also have equality clauses in our terms and conditions.

We are an accredited living wage employer and ensure that the living wage is paid to our in-house contractors. We are committed to ensuring fair and transparent employment practices are in place throughout our supply chain. Consequently we seek to work with our suppliers to monitor and ensure fair employment practices and, acting reasonably, we reserve the right to request changes to any of those practices we consider to be unfair.

Research and Information for Assembly Members

Equality and human rights issues are embedded into the research and analysis provided to support Assembly Members and committees in their work. Activities in the last year included:

- Publishing regular [blog posts on a wide range of equality issues](#) such as: the impact of Brexit on equality and human rights in Wales, disability issues, gender equality, pregnancy and maternity discrimination, refugee and asylum seeker policy, homophobia, transphobia and biphobia, older people, racism and racial inequality, and proxy voting for baby leave in the House of Commons;

- Updating gender equality indicators for Wales for the third year, and providing commentary to help Members scrutinise policies, legislation and budgets from a gender perspective. This was published to tie into the Assembly's debate on International Women's Day;
- Providing suggested questions for each committee on equality during the draft budget scrutiny;
- Ensuring equality is integrated in the drafting of suggested terms of reference for committee inquiries (such as the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee's inquiries into **pregnancy, maternity and work**, and **diversity in local government**, the Children, Young People and Education Committee's inquiry into **the emotional and mental health of children and young people**, and the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's inquiry into **suicide prevention**; and
- Leading on the innovative **concurrent inquiry** of the ELGC, CYPE and Finance Committee to scrutinise the Welsh Government's approach to assessing the impact of its budget on equality and children's rights.

Continuing Professional Development

During the year, a number of Assembly Members and Assembly Member Support Staff have participated in development opportunities to help them inform them in dealing with matters of concern to their constituents, to deal with challenging situations in the course of their duties, or to ensure they are good managers of staff.

These activities include: Managing Casework, Unconscious Bias, Suicide Intervention, Mental Health Awareness and Mental Health First Aid, British Sign Language, Dealing with Challenging Situations, Building Personal Resilience, and Dignity and Respect in the Workplace.

Remuneration Board

Diversity and inclusion is central to the Board's work. Throughout its decision making processes the Board considers the impact of all of its decisions on the protected characteristics.

The Remuneration Board has previously committed to ensuring how it can best facilitate a wide range of able candidates as possible to put themselves forward for election in Wales. As such, the Board commissioned the Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University to undertake research on Board's behalf to identify the barriers and incentives to standing for election in Wales. The report, "[Unpacking Diversity](#)", identified several barriers that potential candidates may face as they consider whether they wish to stand for election to the National Assembly.

The Board is considering the recommendations of the report as it works towards creating a Determination for the Sixth Assembly. In addition, the Board has already begun working with other similar organisations in addressing some of the issues that are highlighted in the report. The Remuneration Board believes that by working together to support individuals from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible to stand for election to the Assembly will strengthen the institution's ability to deliver for the people and communities of Wales.

What next?

Actions for 2019-20

- Implement findings of our recruitment review and continue to improve candidate experience, widen access to our opportunities and increase the diversity of applicants.
- Undertake the Business in the Community Benchmark for race, gender and wellbeing, in addition to other benchmarking and recognition activities.
- Refresh our workplace networks with review of operating guidelines and indicative programme of work, seeking further collaboration between the networks.
- Design and implement another inclusive Apprenticeship Scheme for 2020 which attracts the widest range of talent.
- Continue to work towards further reducing our identified pay gaps.
- monitor and take action to reduce our equal pay and gender pay gap.
- Ensure that the Wales Youth Parliament continues to be inclusive and enjoys access to participation for all.
- Refreshing our Dignity and Respect posters and implementing a campaign to ensure colleagues are not bystanders when witnessing different forms of inappropriate behaviour.