



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Annual Report on Equality 2014–2015

Working for Equality in Wales



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Ministerial Foreword



I am pleased to present the Welsh Government's Annual Report on Equality 2014-2015. This is the third year of reporting on the Equality Objectives set out in our Strategic Equality Plan, and we have seen significant progress with the launch of a series of ground breaking legislation and policies. These actions reflect the Welsh Government's strong commitment to equality and social justice, and will make a real difference to the lives of the people of Wales, including some of those most marginalised and disadvantaged.

Exposure to inequality can happen very early in life and it can become a barrier which prevents children from reaching their potential from the outset, and potentially remain a persistent presence which hangs over them as they progress through life. The Welsh Government is doing all it can to give every child in Wales the best possible start in life, and we are working to remove these barriers from their paths.

In May 2014, the duty contained in the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 was extended and Welsh Ministers are now under a duty to have due regard to the requirements of children's rights in the exercising of any of their functions. This has further strengthened and built on the rights based approach of the Welsh Government's policy making for children and young people.

The Welsh Government also published a revised Child Poverty Strategy for Wales to reaffirm our commitment to the ambition to eradicate child poverty by 2020. Achieving this objective will be a huge challenge, particularly with the ongoing impact of Welfare Reform. However, we as a Government are committed to ensure we use all available levers to tackle this issue. We know we cannot deliver on this agenda alone, and we remain fully committed to taking forward a collaborative approach to tackling child poverty in Wales. Our Child Poverty Strategy highlights the need to work collaboratively across Welsh Government departments, Private Sector, Third Sector and external partners.

We are also focusing on the equality of generations to come. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides a clear focus on what specified public services are seeking to achieve in order to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, for current and future generations. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales, including Welsh Ministers, Local Authorities, national parks authorities, fire and rescue authorities and local health boards, to make decisions which leave a positive legacy for our children, and children's children.

The Welsh Government is committed to tackling damaging and regressive societal problems, such as domestic violence and hate crime. Violence and victimisation are serious violations of an individual's human rights and therefore cannot and will not be tolerated in a progressive and vibrant nation.

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 aims to improve the public sector response in Wales to gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence. It is intended to provide a strategic focus on these issues and ensure consistent consideration of preventative, protective and supportive mechanisms in the delivery of services.

The launch of "Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action" marked another positive stride towards making Wales a safer place to live. The Framework is focused on three objectives: prevention, supporting victims and improving multi-agency working. Wales is taking the lead to drive new and innovative ways to tackle hate crime, such as the development of a National Hate Crime Reporting Centre through Victim Support.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 provides the statutory framework to deliver the Welsh Government's commitment to transform social services in Wales to improve the well-being outcomes of people who need care and support and carers who need support. This new focus on well-being, and promoting people's independence to give them stronger voice and control, will set the foundations for improvement across the sector. The Act embeds an approach to social services which has the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and Strategic Equality Plan at its core.

Equality is built into our founding legislation and remains a cornerstone of the Welsh Government. We have a strong cross Governmental focus on tackling inequality and this is again reflected in this year's annual report, which highlights the wide range of work the Welsh Government is doing to improve opportunities and outcomes for people with protected characteristics. A commitment to equality and social justice continues to drive the Welsh Government and I strongly believe the progress we have made over the last year has been another positive step forward towards making Wales a fairer nation.



Lesley Griffiths AM
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This is the sixteenth Welsh Government Annual Report on Equality, and covers the financial year April 2014 to March 2015.

This combined report is presented under our statutory reporting requirements encompassing section 77 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 and regulation 16 of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

Government of Wales Act 2006

Section 77 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 states:

- (1) Welsh Ministers must make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing their functions are exercised with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people.
- (2) After each financial year the Welsh Ministers must publish a report containing:
 - (a) a statement of the arrangements made in pursuance of subsection (1) which had effect during that financial year, and
 - (b) an assessment of how effective those arrangements were in promoting equality of opportunity, and must lay a copy of the report before the Assembly.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discrimination law, consolidating it into a single Act. The Act covers discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These categories are known in the Act as 'protected characteristics'.

The Act places a duty on the public sector (also known as the public sector equality duty and as the 'general duty'), when carrying out its work, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

In order for public bodies to better perform and demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty, the Welsh Government legislated to bring in specific equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 (also referred to as the Welsh Specific Equality Duties).

The Welsh Specific Equality Duties place responsibilities on the devolved Welsh public sector covering engagement, equality impact assessments, pay differences, procurement, equality and employment information, review and reporting arrangements.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Regulation 16 of the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 states:

- (1) An authority must, in respect of each reporting period, publish a report not later than the relevant date in the year following the year in which that reporting period ends.
- (2) The report must set out —
 - a) the steps the authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information;
 - b) in respect of relevant information it holds, how the authority has used the information for the purpose of complying with the general duty and the duties in these Regulations;
 - c) the authority's reasons for not collecting any relevant information it has identified but does not hold;
 - d) the progress the authority has made in order to fulfil each of its equality objectives;
 - e) a statement by the authority of the effectiveness of —
 - i. its arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information; and
 - ii. the steps it has taken in order to fulfil each of its equality objectives; and
 - iii. the information the authority is required to publish by regulation 9(4) unless the authority has already published that information.
- (3) The authority may, if it considers it appropriate to do so, include in a report any other matter that is relevant to compliance by the authority with the general duty and the duties in these Regulations.
- (4) The authority may comply with the duty to publish a report under paragraph (1) by setting out its report (including any matter referred to in paragraph (3)) as part of another published document or within a number of other published documents.

Programme for Government

The Programme for Government is the Welsh Government's plan of action setting out what we want to achieve over the period 2011-2016 and makes clear our plans to improve the lives of the people of Wales.

Our commitment to social justice and equality of opportunity is reflected in our priority of supporting children, families and deprived communities. This lies at the heart of the Programme for Government, in which equality is a main outcome as well as being mainstreamed throughout. The Welsh Government's annual report on its Programme for Government outlines how and what the Government has done to deliver on its commitments.

The Programme for Government report is available on the Welsh Government's website: www.gov.wales/about/programmeforgov/

The Strategic Equality Plan

In compliance with the specific equality duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, we published our Strategic Equality Plan containing our outcome focused equality objectives on 2 April 2012, following considerable public engagement. Engagement, involvement and consultation with stakeholders are a fundamental requirement of the duties.

The Plan and its eight outcome focused objectives identify areas of deep inequality for those with protected characteristics and how we propose to tackle these to achieve better outcomes for the people of Wales. Each objective has a specific focus in order to prioritise action to have the greatest impact. With the Welsh specific duties we have a unique opportunity to deliver outcomes through Equality Objectives which really matter and which go to the heart of equality, anti-discrimination and good relations between people in Wales. Chapter 3 of this report provides details of the progress we have made against each objective.

The Strategic Equality Plan is available to download on the Welsh Government's website: www.wales.gov.uk/topics/people-and-communities/equality-diversity/?lang=en.

The Tackling Poverty Action Plan

The Welsh Government recognises the close links between poverty and certain groups with protected characteristics. When developing approaches to address poverty it is important to acknowledge and give particular consideration to groups with protected characteristics. The Tackling Poverty Action Plan sets out the targets and milestones the Welsh Government is taking forward to help prevent and reduce poverty in Wales.

The key priorities within the Plan focus on:

- early years – early development of language and cognitive skills is vital, as is access to high quality childcare which allows parents to work;
- breaking the link between poverty and educational attainment;
- reducing the number of workless households as work is the best means out of poverty;
- reducing health inequalities – people in poverty are less likely to have access to high quality healthcare;
- improving the quality of housing in poorer communities and making places more pleasant for people to live.

We made a commitment in the Action Plan to dovetail it with the Strategic Equality Plan. There are similar objectives in each Plan, so officials in the Fairer Futures and Tackling Poverty Divisions are working together closely to consolidate action, share knowledge, avoid duplication, and collaboratively work with other departments where appropriate.

The revised Child Poverty Strategy was published in March 2015. This reaffirmed our commitments to reduce worklessness, increase skills and reduce inequalities in health and education. It also identifies new objectives to develop a strong economy to help tackle poverty, and support families 'here and now' by developing actions around in-work poverty, food poverty, childcare and mitigating welfare reforms.

The Strategy also reiterates the close links between poverty and inequality, and commits the Welsh Government to develop an integrated approach to assessing impact, where poverty and equality are considered together.

Sustainable Development

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires each public body listed to work to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. To do this they must develop and make public 'well-being objectives'. These objectives should show how they will work to achieve a vision for Wales set out in seven well-being goals. Public bodies must then take action to make sure they meet the objectives they set.

The seven well-being goals show the kind of Wales we want to see. Together they provide a shared vision for the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards. As a set of goals, the Act makes it clear public bodies must work to achieve all of the goals, not just one or two.

One of the goals, "a more equal Wales", sets a vision of Wales as a society which enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances, including their socio-economic background.

The Act establishes a sustainable development principle made up of five elements public bodies need to demonstrate they are delivering on. One of these requires public bodies to take account of the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of Wales. The others are around taking into account a long-term and preventative approach; and working in a collaborative and integrated way.

A further key provision relates to the establishment of Public Services Boards in each Local Authority in Wales, made up of key public bodies, who will work collectively to take action in pursuit of the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of their areas. Each Public Services Board must carry out assessments of local economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in their areas. This may include analysis for persons who are "vulnerable" or disadvantaged, possessing protected characteristics, children, young people entitled to support, carers or recipients of care.

Each of these provisions will help ensure specified public bodies act in ways which are consistent with existing statutory duties to advance equality in Wales and make it a more equal nation.

Welsh Language

The Welsh Government has made a commitment in its Welsh language strategy, 'A living language: a language for living Welsh Language Strategy 2012–17' for the whole of the Welsh Government to lead on the future of the Welsh language. Its vision is to make Wales a truly bilingual nation: a country where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either Welsh or English.

In August 2014, the First Minister published a policy statement, Bwrw Mlaen – Moving Forward, which builds on the foundations of the strategy and sets the policy objectives for the Welsh language for the next three years. The policy statement aims to make the language a normal part of everyday life in Wales, and challenges ourselves as a government, the wider Public Sector, businesses, the Third Sector, and individuals to promote the language. Equality of opportunity is a cross-cutting theme integral to the Welsh language strategy.

No one, in any part of Wales, should be denied opportunities to use the Welsh language, nor denied the opportunity to learn Welsh because of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or because they are a disabled person. Welsh language services should be available to, and accessed by, all communities. The Strategic Equality Plan does not specifically include the Welsh language as Welsh language rights are led by the Welsh Language Division within the Welsh Government and reported on separately. The Strategy is available to download on the Welsh Government's website:

www.wales.gov.uk/topics/welshlanguage/publications/wlstrategy2012/?lang=en

We are preparing for the implementation of new Welsh language standards which place statutory requirements on the Welsh Government in relation to the Welsh language, in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The Welsh language standards replace the Welsh language scheme and we are working with all departments across the Welsh Government to ensure we are compliant.

Chapter 2 – Meeting Our Equality Duties

This chapter details some of our actions which have resulted from the Welsh Government having due regard to:

- the principle there should be equality of opportunity for all people, as set out in section 77 of the Government of Wales Act (GOWA) 2006, and
- the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

This chapter also reports against our responsibilities in the Welsh Specific Equality Duties.

Section 77(1) of the Government of Wales Act 2006 specifically focuses on the principle of 'equality of opportunity'. It is therefore closely linked to the second aim of the public sector equality duty.

The public sector equality duty came into force in April 2011. It aims to ensure public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society in their day to day activities through the three aims of the duty:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination;
- advancing equality of opportunity;
- fostering good relations.

Section 77(2) of the Government of Wales Act 2006 requires the Welsh Ministers to report on how they have met the duty in section 77(1), including how successful they have been in promoting equality of opportunity for all people.

Our commitments in complying with both the public sector equality duty and the duty in section 77 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 are reflected in our Programme for Government and our objectives in the Strategic Equality Plan. The respective commitments mutually reinforce our dedication to social justice and equality of opportunity as well as reflecting what our top priorities are for tackling inequality.

Our strategic actions in both the Programme for Government and Strategic Equality Plan reflect what stakeholders from protected groups consider to be priority areas for action. Progress against these objectives is reported in chapter 3 in more detail.

As well as our strategic actions, there is a range of work from across the Welsh Government which actively promotes equality of opportunity, eliminates unlawful discrimination and fosters good relations. A number of examples are outlined in the first part of this chapter and are listed under the following headings:

- Policy Commitments
- Legislation
- Funding

The second part of this chapter lists our actions to meet our responsibilities in regards to the Welsh Specific Equality Duties. The information is listed under the following headings:

- Engagement
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Procurement
- Evidence Base
- Our International Obligations

Policy Commitments

The Children's Rights Scheme

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out rights for all children and young people up to the age of 18. It recognises not only their basic human rights but gives them additional rights to protect them from harm. The Convention covers many areas from a child's right to be free from exploitation, to the right to their own opinion and the right to education, healthcare, and economic opportunity.

The Welsh Government set out its absolute commitment to the Convention by the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure. On 1 May 2014, section 1 of the Measure came into force and places a duty on Ministers to have due regard to the Convention on the Rights of a Child when exercising any of their functions. It means Ministers must think about how what they are doing relates to the rights and obligations of the Convention.

A revised Children's Rights Scheme was published on 1 May 2014, when the Measure came into full effect, to ensure it was fit for purpose. A clear Children's Rights Impact Assessment process was set out in our Scheme. The Children's Rights Impact Assessment acts as a tool in considering the potential relevance and impact any decisions may have on children and young people and encourages thinking about how to maximise positive impact whilst mitigating negative ones.

Screening Information for Transgender People

Anecdotal evidence suggests the transgender community in Wales do not access available screening services, which can have a detrimental impact on their health and well-being.

This issue was brought to the attention of the screening engagement team at Public Health Wales by members of the transgender community. They responded by inviting transgender people to discuss their concerns and healthcare needs, which led to a number of initiatives to encourage transgender people to take up screening services. One of the issues raised was the lack of appropriate information to address the specific needs of transgender people. For example, some people expressed being afraid or embarrassed about having a smear test whilst others had been discouraged by the attitude and behaviour of some healthcare staff.

Working with transgender people, a range of patient information leaflets have been designed. These include a transgender specific information leaflet covering the different screening services and a series of web based frequently asked questions developed to assist both service users and screening staff. In addition, the team produced a series of short videos to raise awareness of screening, including a trans man discussing smear tests and an older trans woman talking about Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm screening.

The information relates to four NHS Wales screening services run by Public Health Wales, which include Breast Test Wales, Cervical Screening Wales, Bowel Screening Wales and the Wales Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme. It explains how transgender people can access each service and how their gender status might affect whether they are automatically invited for screening

It was officially launched by the Deputy Minister for Health in October 2014, and has been widely welcomed by transgender groups.

Schools Challenge Cymru and the Pupil Offer

The Schools Challenge Cymru programme was formally rolled out in September 2014 and focuses on 40 Pathways to Success schools in Wales which face the largest challenge in terms of circumstance and stage of development. The Welsh Government is investing up to £20million per year, for 2 years, alongside proven expertise, to support these schools to achieve rapid and sustainable improvement.

Schools Challenge Cymru places the interests of the pupil at the heart of its programme of school improvement and is based on a belief that all children can achieve. Breaking the link between deprivation and attainment is a key focus for the Challenge, and the programme aims to ensure every learner is supported to reach their full potential, irrespective of their background or socio-economic status.

As part of the programme, the Pupil Offer was announced in December 2014 and rolled out in January 2015. A central premise of the Pupil Offer is ensuring equality in the availability of opportunities for all learners to experience meaningful activities which they might not have otherwise been able to access, including engagement with the arts, culture and heritage, music, science, businesses and entrepreneurship, sports, and personal development. These opportunities focus on the raising of personal expectations, aspirations and ambitions to succeed in future learning, the workplace and later in life.

The Pupil Offer does not specifically target children with protected characteristics. However a number of protected characteristics are represented amongst the target group of learners in the 40 Pathways to Success Schools. A set of criteria was used to identify the 40 schools which included pupils with special educational needs and pupils not speaking English or Welsh as a first language.

Together for Health – A Neurological Conditions Delivery Plan

In May 2014, the Health Minister launched Together for Health – A Neurological Conditions Delivery Plan. The plan is one of a suite of national service delivery plans and is designed to develop and improve services for people with neurological conditions. It requires NHS Wales and its partners to:

- carry out local population needs assessments;
- analyse the gap between current provision and the requirements in this Plan;
- plan and take action to close this gap;
- demonstrate, through regular reporting, improved outcomes for patients, with an emphasis on reducing health inequalities.

The Delivery Plan is designed to put services, care, and support in place to promote self care, supporting people to manage their symptoms and live as independently as possible. It sets out to tackle variations in access to services and reduce inequalities across seven themes, which includes children and young people.

The Plan is being taken forward by an Implementation Group, including the health service, the Welsh Government and Third Sector partners. The plan and the new implementation group will spur health boards, trusts, Local Government and the Third and Independent Sectors to focus collectively on further action to meet the needs of people with a neurological condition.

The Supporting People Programme

The Supporting People Programme provides housing-related support to help vulnerable people to avoid homelessness and live as independently as possible. The aim of the programme is to help a person address issues such as debt, substance misuse or mental health issues which may be precursors to a person losing their home. Support workers provide help, as early as possible, in order to stop a household becoming homeless and to reduce demand on other services such as health, social services and community justice. The Programme covers a wide range of people including people with protected characteristics.

The outcomes received from Local Authorities cover 11 different areas including feeling safe, managing money and accommodation, entering education or work and feeling physically or mentally healthy. Support workers work with service users to decide which of these outcomes are relevant for each individual.

From the first six month period in 2014-2015 we received 49,000 outcome records from the Local Authorities (please note many of the service users have not yet have reached the end of their support package):

- 2783 women were supported with services related to domestic violence. 54% felt safer as a result of support received, 52% were better able to manage their accommodation and 39% were better able to manage their relationships.
- 7456 outcomes were received for people over 55 years of age. Of these 42% felt safer as a result of support, 30% felt physically healthier and 23% felt better able to lead a healthy and active lifestyle.
- 2864 people under 25, including care leavers, were supported during this period. 32% felt safer as result of support, 50% were better able to manage their accommodation and 29% were able to engage in education and learning.
- 7838 disabled people were supported. 36% felt safer during this period, 45% were better able to manage their own accommodation and 30% were felt better able to lead a healthy and active lifestyle. These client categories often have a longer period of support than others and successful outcomes will be achieved over a longer period of time.
- 128 men were supported with services related to domestic violence. 74% of those felt safer due to the support received during this time, 61% were better able to manage their accommodation and 68% felt better able to contribute to their own and others safety.

Thematic Review of Equality Issues on the Apprenticeship programme

In 2013, the Welsh Government commissioned Estyn to conduct a two year Thematic Review of equality issues on the Apprenticeship programme. The remit was to look generally at engagement and participation barriers facing Black, minority ethnic and disabled people, as well as good practice models. In addition, the review would specifically identify and report on sectorial gender issues.

The Estyn Interim report was published, together with the Welsh Government's response, in October 2014. The Welsh Government is developing activities based on the recommendations from the Interim report. Two 'Real Conversation events' have been held, one in north Wales and one in the south. Key questions were raised at the events to challenge individual assumptions and perceptions.

The Welsh Government held a training provider event which was attended by a range of key organisations. The event examined how training providers could become more engaged within minority communities and protected groups and therefore acting as enablers between individuals from protected groups and employers.

The positive outcome for protected groups has been in raising the profile of apprenticeships within a wide range of organisations including schools and employers, highlighting apprenticeships provide an equal opportunity for all. This work has also raised, with employers, the benefits of having a more diverse and inclusive workforce. This review will be completed in 2015.

Legislation

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which received Royal Assent in April 2015, gives effect to the Welsh Government's commitment in 2011 'to legislate to make sustainable development the central organising principle of the Welsh Government and public bodies in Wales and create an independent sustainable development body for Wales'.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 will help tackle the inter-generational challenges Wales faces in a more joined up and integrated way, ensuring Welsh public services look to the long term. It reinforces the fundamental role public services in Wales play in helping to deliver our long term goals for the future well-being of Wales. Seven well-being goals provide a shared vision for the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards. One of the goals is a more equal Wales – a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background and circumstances, including socio economic background and circumstances. The other well-being goals are:

- a prosperous Wales;
- a resilient Wales;
- a healthier Wales;
- a Wales of cohesive communities;
- a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language;
- a globally responsible Wales.

The Act establishes a statutory Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, whose role is to act as a guardian for the interests of future generations in Wales, and to support the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards achieving the well-being goals. The Act also establishes Public Services Boards for each Local Authority area in Wales. Each Public Services Board must improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals.

Housing (Wales) Act 2014

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 received Royal Assent in September 2014. Part 3 of Act places a duty on Local Authorities to assess the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites and to meet the need identified. The duty to assess needs was commenced in February 2015. New statutory guidance was also produced which Local Authorities must have regard to when assessing needs. This will ensure Gypsies' and Travellers' accommodation needs are assessed and that adequate sites for mobile homes are provided.

The Act seeks to address the undersupply of available accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers across Wales, and its positive outcomes should include:

- reduced unauthorised encampments;
- adequate mobile home sites;
- better community cohesion;
- better access to services.

Renting Homes (Wales) Bill

In February 2015, the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty introduced the Renting Homes (Wales) Bill into the National Assembly.

The Bill sets out new arrangements for renting a home. It means, wherever possible, consistent terms will be used irrespective of whether the landlord is a Local Authority, Housing Association or private individual. This will allow important matters to be clearly understood by both landlord and contract-holder, reduce problems caused by a lack of understanding and make it easier for people to get advice on addressing any problems should they arise. Our approach to the Bill reflects the core values of fairness, social justice, equality, and sustainable development, and recognises the importance of safe, secure and affordable homes as the fabric of people's lives and of strong communities.

The Bill will provide the same rights and responsibilities to persons aged 16 or 17 to those currently applying to anyone aged 18+ when renting a home. There are many instances when a person aged 16 or 17 may be seeking to rent a property but is unable to do so. The law as it stands creates unnecessary difficulties for a young person who has had to leave the family home or succeeds to a property following death of a parent. The Bill addresses this and at the same time does not remove any obligation of care a Local Authority may have to a young person.

The Bill also contains provision relating to repossessing properties on estate management grounds, e.g. properties adapted for a disabled person where there is no longer an occupier requiring the adaptation. This is subject to suitable alternative accommodation being provided to the current contract-holder. The ability to be able to reallocate specially adapted properties can help make better use of social housing stock to meet the housing needs of disabled people.

Funding

Equality and Inclusion Grant Programme

Our commitment to the principles of equality and fairness is reflected in our Equality and Inclusion Grant Programme. Set as a three year grant, commencing in April 2014, the programme provides funding to sixteen Third Sector organisations to assist them in reaching seldom heard groups, and benefit individuals and communities in Wales, while making tangible improvements to their lives.

The successful organisations and projects included the Welsh Refugee Council and the Refugee Inclusion in Wales project, Youth Cymru and the Trans* Form Cymru project, the Royal National Institute for Deaf People and the Sensory Inclusion project, and the National Federation of Women's Institutes and the Balancing Power project.

The funding has a positive impact on equality because of its direct benefit to people who often face exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination, and because of the important work of the Third Sector in contributing to the Welsh Government's delivery of its Strategic Equality Plan and objectives. The funding covers a strong balance across the protected characteristics, equality objectives, and a wide geographical spread.

Following recognition of a gap in activity and therefore the need to fund a Wales wide strategic organisation delivering for Welsh Government on migration issues, we made further funding available for a contract of services to deal with these issues. The contract has been awarded and will end in March 2017.

Case Study

Travelling Ahead Project

The Equality and Inclusion Grant Programme provided funding for Save the Children's Travelling Ahead project to ensure young Gypsies and Travellers are better able to participate in decision-making and understand their rights. The project also enables Travelling Ahead to promote the reporting of hate crime experienced by these communities.

The Travelling Ahead project continues to address a range of issues affecting young Gypsies and Travellers across Wales. Through the funding, the young people have developed a number of informative films covering a range of key issues which have been delivered to key organisations and service providers to enable them to better understand the barriers and issues facing the community. The funding has also allowed the young people to engage and participate in a number of activities with likeminded young people from Scotland and other parts of the United Kingdom.

Intermediate Care Fund

In January 2015, the Minister for Health and Social Services announced £20 million a year to continue a pioneering Welsh Government fund to help keep people out of hospital and in their own homes. The new funding builds on the £50m which was invested in the Intermediate Care Fund in 2014-2015.

The Intermediate Care Fund encourages collaborative working to support older people, through innovation or improving on existing best practice, across social care, health, housing, and Third and Independent Sector partners. It is helping to make a real difference to the lives of older people across Wales by:

- promoting preventative care and independent living opportunities;
- supporting recovery and recuperation through re-ablement and "step-up step-down" facilities and;
- helping to avoid unnecessary hospital admission or delayed discharge.

The investment made over the last 12 months through the Fund has enabled health, housing and social services, along with the third and independent sectors, to work together on innovative projects across Wales.

In 2015-2016, the Welsh Government is investing £17.5m in the Intermediate Care Fund to continue those projects which have already proven to be successful in helping people remain in their own homes. The fund will also support schemes which improve out of hospital care and help people return home from hospital. The remaining £2.5m will be used to identify those areas of good practice in one or more regions of Wales and ensure it is spread across the rest of the country.

The Gypsy and Traveller Sites Capital Grant

The Gypsy and Traveller Sites Capital Grant provides funding to Local Authorities to allow them to make much needed improvements to existing sites or build new sites across Wales.

During 2014-2015, the Grant provided £2.1m for the refurbishment of existing Gypsy and Traveller sites to increase living conditions on sites. A total of £3.5m has been secured for 2015-2016 for refurbishment projects and the development of two new sites.

The funding has provided a better standard of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers living on Local Authority sites in Wales. It has also enabled community support organisations to engage and support this often marginalised group. The funding for new site development addresses the shortfall in available pitches across Wales. A key outcome of site development over time will be the reduction of unauthorised encampments across Wales.

Minorities Are Wales Resources 2

Minorities Are Wales Resources 2 (MAWR II) was supported by Welsh European Funding Office with £1.68m from the European Social Fund towards total costs of £1.89m and ran from September 2011 to April 2015. It was led by Swansea YMCA in collaboration with the Valleys Regional Equality Council and the North Wales Regional Equality Network. The project has helped people of Black and minority ethnic and European economic migrant backgrounds to improve their employment status and progress in employment.

The project's focus was on Black and minority ethnic and European economic migrant individuals who often find themselves in low skilled, low paid or insecure employment. These individuals often have the skills or potential to go beyond their current roles. The project helped overcome the barriers faced by these target groups in progressing in employment by providing outreach, confidence building, mentoring, language support, and access to training and support to gain the UK equivalence of overseas qualifications.

The project, up to November 2014, had engaged with 1,453 people across Wales, 821 of whom were female, 1,326 of the project participants were Black and minority ethnic and 497 were European economic migrant. 478 Black and minority ethnic participants had gained a qualification through the project. All of these achievements are above target. The project had also worked with 48 employers to adopt or improve their equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems.

Sport Wales Calls4Action

As part of the community legacy of the Commonwealth Games, Sport Wales launched a Calls4Action grant scheme at tackling inequalities in sport participation in Wales.

Individuals, groups and organisations were invited to bid for a share of the £3m of National Lottery funding. The remit was to take positive action to encourage more young women and girls, disabled people, children from deprived communities and people from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds to play sport.

After hundreds of enquiries and formal applications, ten organisations were successful in securing funding for their projects. Examples of successful projects include:

- Girl Guiding Cymru – £240,439 will be used to help improve its member's ability, confidence and enjoyment of sport.
- Street Football Wales – £198,875 will be used to extend the reach of its women's football league, reaching a further 600 participants and delivering 100 qualifications.

Welsh Specific Equality Duties

In order for public bodies to better perform their public sector equality duty, the Welsh Government was the first government to bring in specific equality duties as set out in Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

The Welsh Specific Equality Duties cover engagement, review and reporting arrangements, equality impact assessments, equality and employment information, pay differences and procurement.

Here are some of our actions to meet the Welsh Specific Equality Duties.

Engagement

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Regulation 5 of the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 states:

- (1) The provisions in paragraph (2) are referred to in these Regulations as “the engagement provisions”.
- (2) Where any provision of these Regulations requires an authority to comply with the engagement provisions in carrying out any activity, compliance with those provisions means that in carrying out the activity the authority.
 - a) must involve such persons as the authority considers
 - i. represent the interests of persons who share one or more of the protected characteristics; and
 - ii. have an interest in the way the authority carries out its functions;
 - b) may involve such other persons as the authority considers appropriate;
 - c) may consult such persons as the authority considers appropriate.

This engagement must take place in relation to:

- Setting equality objectives.
- Preparing and reviewing a Strategic Equality Plan.
- Identifying how an authority’s work and activities may contribute to meeting the general duty.
- Assessing the likely impact on protected groups of any policies or practices being proposed or reviewed.

The Welsh Specific Duties state public sector bodies must 'involve people who it considers representative of one or more of the protected groups and who have an interest in how an authority carries out its functions'. This duty to engage provides Welsh Government with expert support and advice in terms of understanding the key issues and barriers facing people with protected characteristics. This information can then be used to achieve shared aims and to deliver better decision-making, for example, in policy and service development and in setting priorities for action.

Throughout the year, Ministers have engaged regularly at many events and meetings with groups representing people with protected characteristics, to understand their priorities and what challenges they face on a daily basis. The Welsh Government also has established forums through which we engage with groups representing people with protected characteristics.

The Faith Communities Forum

The Faith Communities Forum is made up of faith community leaders who consult with the Welsh Government on issues of policy and strategy. The First Minister is Chair of the Forum and the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, with responsibility for equalities issues, is the Deputy Chair. The Faith Communities Forum facilitates dialogue between the Welsh Government and the major faith communities on any matters affecting the economic, social and cultural life in Wales.

Two of the issues discussed at meetings during 2014-2015 were the Public Health White Paper and Hate Crime Awareness Week 2014. The Forum members considered what they could do to raise awareness of these issues within their faith communities and a video was produced which was posted on line to encourage reporting of faith hate crime.

Wales Race Forum

The Wales Race Forum was established to help the Welsh Government understand the key issues and barriers facing Black and minority ethnic communities and to enable the Welsh Government to engage on an ongoing basis. The membership of the Forum consists of Welsh Government officials and representatives from the main race organisations and equality councils from across Wales. The Forum meets bi-annually.

In 2014-2015, the Forum was chaired by the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty. During the reporting period, the Wales Race Forum continued to theme its meetings around its agreed priorities: tackling racism and race hate crime, poverty and ethnicity, and access to healthcare for Black and minority ethnic disabled people.

Disability Equality Forum

The Disability Equality Forum is chaired by the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty and is made up of disabled and non-disabled people who are active in making progress in disability equality, and belong to different fields of expertise. The Forum provides an opportunity for stakeholders to advise the Welsh Government on the key issues which affect disabled people in Wales and to disseminate best practice in addressing those issues.

The Forum meets twice a year and topics discussed in 2014-2015 included education and employment, and legislation in relation to planning and housing. The Forum also has a role in highlighting barriers to progress on the Framework for Action on Independent Living for disabled people. The Framework takes a strategic approach to disability in Wales and sets out what the Welsh Government is doing to promote an inclusive and enabling society.

Budget Advisory Group on Equality

The Budget Advisory Group on Equality is made up of a number of internal Welsh Government representatives and external representatives from the third and voluntary sector equality organisations as well as an academic economist as an adviser appointed by Welsh Ministers. The group is co-chaired by the Minister for Finance and Government Business and the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty.

The role of this group is to provide advice to the Ministers and to share expertise and best practice on equality issues which in turn will support the continual improvement of the Impact Assessment undertaken of the Draft Budget. Their advice led to the Equality Impact Assessment of the Draft Budget being expanded to integrate Children's Rights, Sustainable Development, Socio-economic disadvantage and Tackling Poverty, and the Welsh Language.

A key focus of the group's discussions has been on understanding the Welsh Government's Budget process against the backdrop of the current financial environment and the constraints this places on our equality considerations. Discussions have had a strong focus on building a solid and robust evidence base and on engaging with people with protected characteristics, so the nature of the underlying equality issues can be identified and understood. This led to the development of the Review of Evidence on Inequalities in Wales, which complemented the Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment of the 2015-2016 Draft Budget.

Ministerial Meetings with Equality Third Sector Organisations

Throughout 2014-2015, Welsh Ministers have continued to engage with groups representing people with protected characteristics. Through frequent engagement, Ministers are given valuable insight to the key issues affecting people in Wales. This engagement includes meetings, visits to organisations and communities, attendance at events and conferences, and correspondence.

In September 2014, the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty attended the All Wales People First Annual Conference, where she spoke about the importance of education and employment for people with learning disabilities. The Minister attended Stonewall Cymru's Annual Workplace Conference in October 2014. At the meeting the Minister spoke about the value of diverse and inclusive workplaces as well as wider society, and outlined the Welsh Government's commitment to increase diversity in public life. Later in October 2014, the Minister attended the launch of a survey report on the experiences of Deaf and hard of hearing service users in Newport and Monmouth.

During 2014-2015 the Minister for Finance and Government Business undertook a series of regional budget events and met with Third Sector organisations to discuss how the financial challenges facing the Welsh Government are translating into the services we deliver to the people of Wales.

Case Study

Young Wales

The Welsh Government is providing a total of £1.8 million over 3 years to Children in Wales, the national umbrella body for organisations and individuals who work with children, young people and their families. Children in Wales will use the funding to create structures to enable children and young people to have their voices and opinions heard and influence the work of the government and others. Their participation model, Young Wales, was launched in March 2015. It aims to reach hundreds of children and young people, including those who may be marginalised, shy, living in poverty, excluded or in challenging circumstances.

Young Wales works with existing youth groups, forums and councils to gather their collective voice to influence legislation, policies and programmes. It also has a focus on social media as a way to contact those children and young people who do not always feel comfortable to speak up.

At the launch event 18 of the 22 Local Authorities Youth Forums were represented. Young people discussed and decided on the priorities for the coming year. As a result, Children in Wales will be working with children and young people, the Welsh Government and other stakeholders on the following areas:

- bullying,
- healthy relationships including domestic abuse,
- sexual health,
- mental health,
- online safety,
- substance misuse,
- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child.

In addition, Young Wales will be leading on children and young people's involvement in the United Kingdom Youth Parliament. In November 2014, Children in Wales took 22 young people from across Wales to the United Kingdom Youth Parliament Annual House of Commons Sitting.

Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is a term to describe how everyone in a geographical area lives alongside each other with mutual understanding and respect. Promoting cohesive communities is a commitment highlighted in the Programme for Government.

To ensure community cohesion is mainstreamed across Local Authorities in Wales, 8 regional Community Cohesion Co-ordinator Posts were put in place. Work programmes were agreed with Local Authorities within the local context and were linked with the development of priorities through Single Integrated Plans and Strategic Equality Plans. Here are some examples of the work on community cohesion in Wales:

Gwent East

The Co-ordinator in Gwent East has established a Monmouthshire Hate Crime Forum which has now merged with the Newport Hate Crime Forum to reflect the changes within the region in relation to Policing and the Equalities Council. The Forum meets quarterly to discuss Hate Crime initiatives, trends and concerns. Membership of the group includes Local Authority representatives, Gwent Police, Coleg Gwent, University of South Wales, and social landlords.

North Wales

The North Wales Anti-Slavery Project Board has been convened, with Regional Reporting structures to the North Wales Strategic Leadership Board. Two sub-regional Anti-Slavery Conferences were organised by the Co-ordinators for north-east and north-west Wales to gauge the needs and expectations of several hundred front-line practitioners. As a result of both conferences, a new Regional Anti-Slavery Action Plan was formed with support from both the Public and the Third Sectors.

Merthyr Tydfil

In order to raise awareness of human trafficking and modern slavery, a weekend residential course in Aberdare was arranged by the Co-ordinator. The weekend was designed to strengthen understanding of human trafficking and to discuss the production of child friendly resources. The resulting film, 'Caught in Traffick', is to be used as a national tool for schools and its accompanying Learning Resource Pack is being distributed to schools and other relevant agencies. It will also be used as part of the Anti-Slavery/Human Trafficking Awareness sessions across Wales.

Mid-West/Carmarthenshire County Council

The Mid-West region has started work on the co-production of Gypsy and Traveller Community Briefing Sheets with the organisation Unity in 2 the Community. The Briefing Sheets will improve information and engagement, including budget consultations and Equality Impact Assessments. Equality Carmarthenshire, with support from Welsh rugby international and member of the Gypsy and Traveller community Samson Lee, has launched a respect poster campaign to help break down perceptions and stereotypes.

Swansea/Western Bay

Show Racism the Red Card has delivered workshops to primary schools across the region on the positive influence of immigration to society, challenging negative representations in the media. The workshops aimed to increase greater understanding, provide information on immigration, and help challenge misconceptions.

Equality Impact Assessments

The Welsh Government, as with other devolved public bodies covered by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, is required to carry out Equality Impact Assessments in respect of protected groups, across its proposed policies and practices, those it has decided to review, and the changes it proposes to make.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Regulations 8(1)(a) and 8(1)(b)

A listed authority must make such arrangements as it considers appropriate for:

- assessing the likely impact of proposed policies and practices on its ability to comply with the general duty;
- assessing the impact of any:
 - policy or practice that the authority has decided to review
 - revision that the authority proposes to make a policy or practice,

on its ability to comply with the general duty

Regulation 8(3) provides that when carrying out an assessment referred to in paragraph (1)(a) or (b) the authority must:

- comply with the engagement provisions; and
- have due regard to relevant information that it holds.

This duty to carry out an equality impact assessment does not include existing policies and practices which the listed authority has not decided to review, however those existing policies must still be monitored.

Regulation 8(1)(c)

The listed authority must also monitor the impact of policies and practices on its ability to comply with the general duty.

Assessing the impact on protected groups of policies and practices is one of the key ways in which public authorities can demonstrate they have had 'due regard'. Our impact assessment arrangements are also a key part of meeting our duty under section 77 of the Government of Wales Act 2006. The Welsh Government's approach to Equality Impact Assessments ensures our policies and practices better meet the needs of the people of Wales. It ensures the work we do takes every opportunity to advance equality and inclusive outcomes for all the citizens of Wales.

What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment is the formal, systematic and thorough analysis of proposed or existing policies, practices, action plans and budget processes. It is a structured approach which establishes and records whether the policy affects different groups of people in different ways, and takes action to eliminate or minimise any negative impacts where possible. Impact assessment also looks for opportunities to advance equality of opportunity.

Equality Impact Assessments within the Welsh Government

Our commitment to Equality Impact Assessments, alongside our statutory duty, can be seen in our Programme for Government where we have promised to:

“Undertake Equality Impact Assessment of budgets and proposed and reviewed policies and practices”.

The Welsh Government has due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different equality groups, when it takes its decisions. The Equality Impact Assessments undertaken by the Welsh Government are its mechanism for having due regard. The Welsh Government's systematic approach to an Equality Impact Assessment ensures our policies and practices better meet the needs of the people of Wales.

Upon completion, where the impact on equality is considered to be substantial, the Equality Impact Assessments are published on the Welsh Government website.

The Welsh Government actively works to embed the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duties and the principle of equality of opportunity for all people in its spending plans and budget processes.

Improvement through Assessment

A clear theme emerging from completing Equality Impact Assessments across the organisation, both for the Budget and policy decisions, is the lack of evidence available for particular protected characteristics including: religion and faith, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups. A requirement of completing an Equality Impact Assessment is not only to outline the evidence sources used, but also to recognise and identify where there might be a lack of evidence. Through this emerging trend of evidence gaps for these characteristics, more departments are seeking to build in evidence collection within their policy evaluation and monitoring which focuses on the protected groups.

Monitoring the Impact of our Policies and Practices

Within our Welsh specific equality duties, listed bodies must also ensure they continue to monitor the impact of its policies following an Equality Impact Assessment.

Equality Impact Assessments are live, interactive and continuous assessments which last the lifecycle of the decision or policy and, in some cases beyond. In Welsh Government, on completion of Equality Impact Assessments, an action plan is developed and a review date is set. At this review date, the original assessment of impact on protected characteristics must be reconsidered and evaluated. Where new impacts are identified, or evidence has been gathered which supports our original assessment of impact, these are incorporated into the assessment.

Equality Impact Assessment of the Budget

At the Draft Budget 2011-2012, the Welsh Government was the first UK Administration to assess the impact of its spending plans. Since then, the Welsh Government has looked to continuously improve the approach year on year.

On 30 September 2014, the Welsh Government built on these foundations with the Draft Budget 2015-2016, and delivered its commitment to move towards a more integrated approach to the impact assessment of the budget with the introduction of its first Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment.

Our approach to the Impact Assessment was informed by recommendations from a range of stakeholders including the Assembly Committees, the Budget Advisory Group for Equality and the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment is a more focused document with a strategic overview of the impacts of key budget changes. There is greater emphasis on assessing the differential impacts of proposals on the various groups in our society, where these are likely to be significant. This integrated approach has the key benefit of considering the impacts of spending decisions on all of the protected groups and, in doing so in an inclusive way, we have been able to develop a deeper understanding of the relationships between these key areas.

The Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment considers the impact of our spending decisions on the nine protected characteristics together with the impacts on the Welsh Language, Rights of the Child, Tackling Poverty and socio-economic disadvantage aligned under the umbrella of sustainable development and well-being.

We have also taken account of the impacts of the UK Government's welfare reform and continued approach to austerity.

Procurement

Public service bodies in Wales spend around £5.4 billion each year on buying goods and services from suppliers. It is important every pound is spent is done so wisely, achieving best value for the people of Wales.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Regulation 18

- (1) Where an authority that is a contracting authority proposes to enter into a relevant agreement on the basis of an offer which is the most economically advantageous it must have due regard to whether the award criteria should include considerations relevant to its performance of the general duty.
- (2) Where an authority that is a contracting authority proposes to stipulate conditions relating to the performance of a relevant agreement it must have due regard to whether the conditions should include considerations relevant to its performance of the general duty.

What is Procurement?

According to the Welsh Government's 2012 Wales Procurement Policy Statement, procurement is the process whereby "organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way which achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment".

Our Procurement Policy

Through compliance with the public sector equality duty, the Welsh Government can ensure the goods and services we procure are fit for purpose and thus ensure they meet the needs of our diverse citizens and communities.

As part of our statutory Welsh Specific Equality Duties, public bodies in Wales must:

- have due regard to whether it would be appropriate for the award criteria of the contract to include considerations to help meet the public sector equality duty; and
- have due regard to whether it would be appropriate to stipulate conditions relating to the performance of the contract to help meet the 3 aims of the public sector equality duty.

Fulfilling the Procurement Duty in Our Welsh Specific Equality Duties

The Wales Procurement Policy statement consists of nine key principles which all Welsh public sector organisations should adhere to when delivering their procurement activity. This has been widely adopted by major public bodies in Wales, with all 22 Local Authorities having confirmed adoption and uptake being monitored.

For the first time in Wales, a formal definition of Value for Money is provided as “the optimum combination of whole-of-life costs in terms of not only generating efficiency savings and good quality outcomes for the organisation, but also benefit to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.”

Embedded within the policy statement are a number of key drivers which influence the delivery of equality considerations including:

- ensuring Community Benefits are built into contracts;
- simplifying the procurement process and lowering barriers for suppliers;
- advertising contract opportunities through the Sell2wales website;
- completing the Sustainability Risk Assessment tool.

Mainstreaming and Embedding Equality within Procurement – Results

The Welsh Government has been at the forefront of the delivery of the procurement policies which drive equality for a number of years. Outcomes include:

Community Benefits

As of March 2015, results from the first 60 public sector projects worth £623m show 83% has been re-invested in Wales, £147m directly on salaries to Welsh citizens, and £375m with Wales-based businesses, 75% of which were Welsh small and medium sized enterprises. Some 682 disadvantaged people were helped into employment, receiving over 19,745 weeks of training provided.

Community benefits are included in the Welsh Government’s grants process as a standard condition of grant funding, thus widening its application. The Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan is also committed to incorporating community benefits into the contracts in its scope.

Supplier Qualification Information Database

Simplifying pre-qualification through the Supplier Qualification Information Database approach is encouraging a proportionate approach and cutting the cost of bidding for suppliers. This approach is utilised for all tenders let across the Welsh Government and has enabled the track record of bidders to be explored in delivering equal opportunities by requesting disclosure of any infractions incurred and the remedial actions undertaken. As of March 2015, over 37 public sector organisations have used the standard Supplier Qualification Information Database question set on over 833 contracts via the eProcurement Service sourcing tools, allowing suppliers to bank over 243,000 answers for future re-use.

Sustainability Risk Assessment

Completion of the Sustainability Risk Assessments for goods and services is a specific requirement of the Wales Procurement Policy Statement and this approach for all Welsh Government contracts above £25,000 has resulted in the evaluation of key equality requirements.

National Procurement Service

The National Procurement Service was established in November 2013 to bring together the procurement of common and repetitive spend across the Welsh public sector on a 'once for Wales' basis.

The National Procurement Service has embedded the principles of the Wales Procurement Policy Statement into all of the frameworks it lets and manages, including increasing opportunities for Small and Medium Enterprises to bid, applying community benefits through procurement activity where possible, undertaking sustainable risk assessments to ensure sustainable and ethical issues are taken into account and ensuring all contract opportunities are advertised through Sell2Wales.

The Evidence Base

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Regulation 18

Regulation 7(1) of the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 states that:

An authority must make such arrangements as it considers appropriate to ensure that, from time to time, it:

- identifies relevant information that it holds;
- identifies and collects relevant information that it does not hold; and
- publishes relevant information that it holds and which it considers appropriate to publish.

We are aware the evidence around particular protected characteristics is very limited, which makes it difficult to assess accurately the potential impact of our policies, strategies and spending decisions on those protected groups. Despite these gaps, we are seeking to make progress strengthening the evidence base. Our collation of equality information as part of the actions within our Strategic Equality Plan, and our continual Equality Impact Assessment of our policies and strategies, together with engagement with protected groups, aim to make best use of the existing evidence base. Knowledge and Analytical Services within the Welsh Government compiled a summary of evidence by protected characteristic: www.wales.gov.uk/topics/people-and-communities/equality-diversity/impactassessments/budget2014iip/?lang=en

During 2014-2015 updates were published for the following relevant statistical outputs:

- Academic achievement by pupil characteristics, 2014
- Absenteeism by pupil characteristics, 2014
- School census results
- Budgeted expenditure for special educational needs provision 2015-16
- StatsWales tables on Further Education including Age, Gender and Disability
- StatsWales tables with data on equality strands (e.g. Annual Population Survey data).
- StatsWales tables on Fire Service operations statistics
- National Survey for Wales
- Welsh Health Survey
- Health Statistics Wales

We continue to collect data by protected characteristic where practicable, for example gathering details of age, gender, ethnicity and disability on household surveys and administrative data collections.

However there are obstacles to collecting equalities information which limit the availability of evidence for particular groups, for example:

- Large-scale, high-quality sample surveys are costly, and the population subgroup is often so small the sample would have to be very large to collect robust information.
- it can be difficult to identify well-tested questions, or formulate new questions to produce accurate results: for example, respondents may not understand what is being asked or may not wish to provide the information asked for.
- Asking about some sensitive topics can offend respondents. This could lead to complaints, negative media coverage, and even to reduced response rates.

Our International Obligations

The Welsh Government works alongside the UK Government to ensure Wales is fully represented in the presentation of reports to meet our United Nations and European obligations.

During the 2014-2015 reporting period, the Welsh Government was commissioned to contribute towards the UK Government's progress report on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is an international declaration of women's rights set up in 1995. The Declaration embodies the commitment of the international community to the advancement of women and to the implementation of the Platform for Action, ensuring a gender perspective is reflected in all policies and programmes at national, regional and international levels. The Platform for Action sets out measures for action for the advancement of women. It enhances the social, economic and political empowerment of women, improving their health and their access to education.

In March 2015, twenty years after its adoption, the UN Commission on the Status of Women carried out a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Welsh Government's contribution was used as part of this global review.

The Welsh Government also contributed to the UK Government's progress reports on two International Labour Organisation Conventions: Convention No.100, which protects the right of women and men to equal remuneration for work of equal value and Convention No.111, which protects all workers against discrimination. The International Labour Organisation promotes social justice and internationally recognised human and labour rights, pursuing its founding mission that labour peace is essential to prosperity.

The Welsh Government continued to engage with the Third Sector on human rights issues. The Human Rights Stakeholder Group was brought together in August 2014 to provide expert support and advice to the Welsh Government. The group also provides assistance and support to the Welsh Government with its international reporting commitments.

The group includes representatives from the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Age Cymru, Stonewall Cymru, Disability Wales, Race Equality First, Diverse Cymru, Oxfam Cymru, Women's Equality Network, North Wales Regional Equality Network, the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, the Children's Commissioner for Wales and the NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights. The group met for the second time in February 2015 and were joined by Sanchita Hosali, Deputy Director of the British Institute of Human Rights. At the meeting the group discussed ways of raising the profile of human rights in Wales.

Chapter 3 – Progress Against the Strategic Equality Plan Objectives

This chapter fulfils regulation 16(1)(d) of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, which requires us to report on the progress we have made to fulfil our equality objectives. It is retrospective and covers the financial year 2014-2015.

The Welsh Government published its Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) on 2nd April 2012 following extensive public engagement which strongly supported the Welsh Government's equality objectives, reinforcing they reflected the priorities of those with protected characteristics in Wales. Detailed actions within the overarching objectives were formulated, based on work across Government portfolios.

The Welsh Government equality objectives are:

Equality objective 1: Strengthen advice, information and advocacy services to help people with protected characteristics understand and exercise their rights and make informed choices.

Equality objective 2: Work with partners to identify and address the causes of the gender, ethnicity and disability pay and employment differences.

Equality objective 3: Reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Equality objective 4: Reduce the incidence of all forms of violence against women, domestic abuse, 'honour' based violence, hate crime, bullying and elder abuse.

Equality objective 5: Tackle barriers and support disabled people so they can live independently and exercise choice and control in their daily lives.

Equality objective 6: Put the needs of service users at the heart of delivery in key public services, in particular health, housing and social services, so they are responsive to the needs of people with protected characteristics.

Equality objective 7: Improve the engagement and participation of under-represented groups in public appointments.

Equality objective 8: Create a more inclusive workplace that promotes equality of opportunity for staff with protected characteristics through improved employee engagement and increase awareness of learning and development opportunities that are accessible to all staff.

Indicators

The majority of the indicators referred to in this report are drawn from the Programme for Government which is our overarching plan on what Ministers want to achieve across the whole remit of Welsh Government in order to improve the outcomes for the citizens of Wales. The Programme for Government sets the context for the Welsh Government's decision making during this Assembly term, and provides transparency as to whether actions are being implemented and are having the intended effects. Reports on progress within the Programme are published annually.

The objectives within our Strategic Equality Plan are also key priorities within our Programme for Government and actions are being taken forward jointly, hence the use of the Programme indicators. The remaining indicators are drawn from individual work streams.

In general, the progress against a large number of the indicators is often broadly unchanged and where there have been changes these are often slight. This is reflective of the nature of indicators where movements occur gradually and over a prolonged period. The indicators should therefore be taken in their entirety, providing an overall sense of direction.

We acknowledge there are limitations to data due to small sample sizes in Wales and therefore disaggregating data by ethnicity and disability, for example, is not always possible. However, we are committed to reviewing our set of equality indicators as our Strategic Equality Plan evolves and changes.

Objective 1

Strengthen advice, information and advocacy services to help people with protected characteristics understand and exercise their rights and make informed choices

Introduction

Advice, information and advocacy services continue to have a positive effect on the lives of people with protected characteristics in Wales. These services ensure people access appropriate and correct information on a range of issues, including debt, welfare rights, money management, housing, and discrimination. The advice obtained can make a big difference and can significantly improve the well-being of the service user.

This objective forms part of the Welsh Government's wider efforts to tackle poverty and inequality and financial and social exclusion in Wales. Our efforts will help support, empower and build people's resilience to make their own financial decisions which may reduce the demand for such services in the longer term.

Why is access to advice and information important?		
 Acts as an enabling and preventative resource (helps citizens make informed decisions relating to their lives).	 Improves health and well-being.	 Reduces reliance on public services.

Our Actions

Front Line Advice Services

Through the Independent Advice Providers Forum, Welsh Government officials have engaged with advice providers involved in giving advice on issues relating to equality and discrimination. This has enabled the Welsh Government to develop a fuller understanding of the current issues being faced by clients and providers. These discussions helped inform the criteria for awarding an additional £2 million grant in 2014-2015 for front-line advice services.

The £2 million grant was awarded to the following five organisations:

- Citizens Advice Cymru and Shelter Cymru – £1.3 million to deliver specialist advice services on housing, welfare benefits, and debt issues.
- Citizens Advice Cymru and SNAP Cymru – £390,000 for specialist discrimination advice (including education discrimination advice) and awareness training to ensure generalist advice providers are better equipped and informed to identify discrimination cases early on.

- Tenovus – £105,253 to provide welfare benefits advice services to patients suffering from cancer and their families.
- Age Cymru – £223,413 to provide anti-poverty advice services for older people and carers.

Almost £400,000 of funding was allocated to support a pan-Wales specialist discrimination advice service to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics. An element of funding from the Equality and Inclusion Grant was committed in 2014-2015 for this purpose.

Organisations in receipt of the Front Line Advice Services grant are required to report to the Welsh Government on how their services are delivering against the purposes of the grant and what impact the services are having on the target client group. This enables the Welsh Government to demonstrate more clearly the positive impact which these services are having on service users.

Better Advice: Better Lives

The Welsh Government is providing £2.2 million per annum to support the Better Advice: Better Lives scheme. The project is delivered by Citizens Advice Bureaux and helps support and maximise income for families with disabled children, and reaches out to those living in deprived areas whose health is likely to be affected by poverty. The total number of benefits gained as a result of advice on children's disability benefits was £3.062 million in 2014-2015. During this time there were 1,899 clients advised on issues relating to children's disability benefits.

National Advice Network

The Welsh Government has established a National Advice Network to bring key partners and stakeholders together to ensure services are geared towards making a positive difference to people's lives and to ensure services are planned and delivered in the places where they are needed and in a way which meets the needs of clients. The Network has an independent Chair and a secondee has been appointed to ensure there is dedicated support for the Network. The Network meets quarterly and had its first meeting in March 2015.

Part of the work of the National Advice Network will be to build upon the findings of an independent research study and to work with the Welsh Government and wider stakeholders to bring greater consistency to the quality standards which are applied across the information and advice sector in Wales.

Indicators

Grant funding from the Welsh Government in 2014-2015 has enabled Citizens Advice, Shelter Cymru, SNAP Cymru, Age Cymru and Tenovus to:

- respond to over 30,000 requests for information and advice,
- provide specialist discrimination advice (including specialist education discrimination advice) to almost 1,000 people.

This data is sourced from departmental management information.

Objective 2

Work with partners to identify and address the causes of the gender, ethnicity and disability pay and employment differences

Introduction

The Welsh Government has continued to utilise a cross-cutting approach to address the many different factors which cause gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps and employment differences.

This includes giving all children the best possible start in life, providing them with a quality education, challenging gender stereotyping and encouraging people with protected characteristics into roles where they are under-represented.

Through these actions the Welsh Government is removing barriers, allowing individuals to reach their full potential and inspire others to follow in their paths.

What are the causes of these pay and employment gaps?		
Gender	Ethnicity	Disability
 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role as carers and/or motherhood.• Education choice.• Stereotyping or discrimination.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education choice.• Lower education achievement for some groups.• Cultural differences.• English Language competence for some groups with speakers of languages other than English.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower educational achievement.• Being disabled itself.• Impairment likely to increase with age.

Our Actions

1. Early Years

Childcare

The key findings of the 2014 Childcare Sufficiency Assessments show affordability remains the main issue for childcare users. Gaps in out of school childcare, holiday scheme provision and in the availability of flexible and Welsh language provision were also reported.

Out of School Childcare Grant funding totalling £2.3m per year has been made available to the 22 Local Authorities in Wales since 2012. In the financial year 2014-2015, an additional £400,000 in total was allocated to the Local Authorities to assist them to address existing gaps in childcare provision.

In line with Welsh Government priorities, Local Authorities have used this grant to offer out of school childcare, including holiday play schemes, to children from low income families, and to children who have a specific need. For example, some Local Authorities have used their Out of School Childcare Grant to fund their own Assisted Places Scheme to help those families on low incomes, as well as their Helping Hands Scheme which provides one-to-one support for children with additional needs and enables them to access mainstream childcare and play opportunities.

Start-up and sustainability grants have also been provided through this grant to promote, encourage and sustain childcare provision, particularly in rural areas, and through the medium of Welsh.

Under the Children and Families Delivery Grant, the Welsh Government has awarded £4,324,396 over a three year period to the childcare consortium, CWLWM, led by Mudiad Meithrin. The grant is to be used to support the Welsh Government in taking forward its childcare agenda. This will include working collaboratively to enhance childcare and play opportunities for children with additional needs and through the medium of Welsh. CWLWM is supporting the childcare sector to develop opportunities in rural and deprived areas, and to extend childcare services to include wrap-around provision.

Flying Start

Flying Start is the Welsh Government's targeted early years programme for families with children under the age of four who live in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales. The programme aims to make a difference to the life chances of these children and remains a top priority of the Welsh Government. It includes four core elements:

- free quality childcare
- parenting support
- intensive health visitor support
- support for early language development.

In 2014-2015, 37,260 children benefited from Flying Start services in Wales. This meant the Welsh Government met its target to deliver the programme to 36,000 children by 2016 a year early.

To date a total of £32.2 million of capital funding has been awarded over a four year period (2012-2016) to 263 projects across Wales. The funding is being used to develop new childcare settings, create office accommodation for the multi-agency Flying Start Teams, and venues for parenting courses and early language development sessions. The funding has primarily been used to develop the childcare settings as more than 4,000 full time equivalent places are needed to meet the commitment to provide all two to three year olds living in a Flying Start area with a part time childcare place in a high quality setting. The capital programme is also funding work to ensure childcare settings are easily accessible. Funding has been used to

develop and equip sensory rooms and a sensory garden for children with additional learning needs.

Local Authorities are required to report on their performance on a broad range of performance indicators through submission of the Flying Start monitoring workbook on a termly basis. Through the workbook, Local Authorities submit data on a range of indicators including engagement with groups with protected characteristics including children from ethnic minority families, disabled children, and children with a disabled parent or carer. We continue to work with Local Authorities to share best practice and to support continuous improvement through liaison with Welsh Government Account Managers and scrutiny of the performance information.

The Flying Start Statistical Release is available at: www.gov.wales/statistics-and-research/flying-start/?lang=en

2. Education

Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant

The Welsh Government's Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant makes funding available to support the educational attainment of certain minority ethnic groups in Wales. These include asylum seekers, refugees, and the children of migrant workers.

A new reporting framework for the Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant was introduced in 2014-2015. The framework aimed to ensure the grant arrangements are more outcomes focused so the Welsh Government can transparently demonstrate what the funding achieves in terms of attainment.

The Welsh Government commissioned academic research to bring together evidence of the factors involved in shaping different experiences of the schooling system for pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. This research was published in June 2014 and was circulated and discussed with key stakeholders in Wales. Stakeholders were encouraged to consider the practices identified in the research and to consider how similar approaches can be adopted.

The Welsh Government also commissioned research to explore the barriers to Gypsy and Traveller children accessing education, with a particular focus on engaging families to determine what works in ensuring pupils continue to attend school. The research was undertaken informed by a comprehensive literature review and discussions with stakeholders. The research, published in November 2014, identified the importance of both pastoral and academic support for these learners and their families at a number of stages in their school careers. The research also identified concerns regarding the growth of Elective Home Education and the lack of consistency in the way Local Authorities collect, manage and retrieve attainment and attendance data for the Gypsy and Traveller pupils they support.

In the draft Budget statement in September 2014, a new single grant funding stream, the Education Improvement Grant, was announced for introduction in 2015-2016. This new funding stream will draw together separate grant arrangements, including those for minority ethnic and Gypsy and Traveller attainment.

English for Speakers of Other Languages

English for Speakers of Other Languages provision in Wales equips people with the English language skills they need to fulfil their potential and to actively participate in the Welsh economy.

The English for Speakers of Other Languages Policy for Wales was published in June 2014. It provides the sector with a clear steer on government priorities and states English for Speakers of Other Languages should have parity with Adult Basic Skills provision. The policy specifically differentiates from England as the provision is provided for all learners in Wales, not just those who are learning for work. This is especially relevant to many female learners who are more likely to need this provision to support engagement in the community.

Although there has been a reduction in funding, English for Speakers of Other Languages, along with Basic Skills, has been protected where possible to ensure provision is maintained. Further data on the provision of English for Speakers of other Languages is published annually as part of the general statistics on Further Education and Adult Community Learning provision in Wales. The majority of English for Speakers of Other Languages learners in Wales are at Level 1 or Entry Level; and overall have a completion level of 94%.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

Across most STEM subjects, most notably physics, engineering and computing, girls' take-up as they progress through their education and into the world of work, remains behind boys. Girls are therefore not fully benefitting from the opportunities which STEM study and employers can offer, including on average, higher salaries.

The Welsh Government has highlighted gender balance in education progression as a key priority of work supported through Welsh Government grant funding. A key strategic priority has been placed on delivery of enrichment activity focused on engaging and enthusing larger numbers of girls to study science and mathematics.

From September 2014, this work incorporated a pilot project with the Institute of Physics, delivering outreach activity to Key Stage 4 learners in 12 schools. These were predominantly Schools Challenge Cymru schools. In addition, mentoring and professional development support was provided for non-specialist secondary Physics teachers.

The Focus on Science campaign reinforces the message of the importance of science study and links directly with the Qualified for Life Education Plan. Focus on Science supports primary and secondary schools, pupils and their parents, providing bilingual resources and promoting awareness of and interest in science through competitions, awards, events, role models and case studies.

Girls Make a Difference

In September 2014, the Welsh Government's Local Government and Communities Department hosted the Girls Make a Difference conference in Cardiff. The conference was designed to help raise aspirations and demonstrate careers for girls in less traditional roles – such as science, engineering and as decision-makers in public service – are accessible to all.

The event also encouraged young women to aspire to senior roles by providing advice, guidance and role models at all levels to illustrate how successful women have made it to the top. Over a hundred girls from across South Wales attended the event and heard from inspirational speakers such as Laura McAllister, Chair of Sport Wales, and Jessica Leigh Jones, UK Young Engineer of the Year 2012.

3. Workplace

Sector Panels

The Welsh Government is working with nine key business sectors to encourage more people from protected groups into roles where they are under-represented.

Each business sector has a panel whose role is to provide advice to Ministers on the opportunities and needs of the different sectors. They offer their private sector success and experience to help the Welsh Government identify opportunities for business growth.

Communities First

Communities First is the Welsh Government's community focused tackling poverty programme. It supports the most disadvantaged people in our most deprived areas with the aim of contributing to alleviating persistent poverty and narrowing gaps in education, economy, skills and health. The programme provides funding for Lead Delivery Bodies within Local Authority areas known as Communities First Clusters to narrow the gaps between our most deprived and more affluent areas.

There is an expectation resources will be targeted to support disadvantaged groups based on clear evidence of need. The involvement of Black and minority ethnic groups, young people and disadvantaged groups such as workless households should be a priority in all areas. During 2014-2015, the programme demonstrated some significant results which included supporting people to acquire employment skills and find work, and reducing youth unemployment and disengagement. During this period, as a result of Communities First, some 2646 people over 25 and 888 people aged 16 to 24 entered employment. At an operational level, the Communities First Clusters have been keen to demonstrate how they have taken action to ensure inclusivity.

The action taken will vary between clusters according to the requirements of the individuals involved and might include ensuring appropriate access to venues and activities for disabled people or providing activities which meet the specific requirements of a particular Black and minority ethnic group. For example, in the Butetown, Riverside and Grangetown Cluster in Cardiff, the Promoting Physical Well-being project was designed to meet the cultural and social sensitivities of the local area by delivering a range of sessions targeted at different sections of the population such as Somali men, Bangladeshi women and young people.

The Lift Programme

The Lift Programme reflects the commitment in the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty Action Plan to provide 5,000 training and employment opportunities to people from workless households by the end of 2017. The Programme was formally launched in March 2014 and is being delivered in nine areas, based on 12 Communities First Clusters, across Wales.

The Programme focuses on people who have been out of work for more than six months and face employment barriers, such as young single parents, adults with few or no formal qualifications, people with poor employment records, and disabled people. Research shows people in households with these characteristics are much less likely to gain employment than others.

The Welsh Government aims to provide as many opportunities for Lift participants as possible. Registered Social Landlords have undertaken to provide at least 1,000 opportunities over the lifetime of the Programme, with another 1,000 opportunities to be provided in the Welsh NHS, 1,600 opportunities ring-fenced for Lift within existing Department for Education and Skills Programmes and around 30 opportunities through the Arbed scheme. Lift Brokers have already begun supporting participants into some of these opportunities.

The Programme is progressing well and, as at the end of April 2015, had provided over 1,600 training and employment opportunities with over 280 people supported into employment.

European Social Fund Programmes

The European Social Fund has had a significant impact in supporting some key groups with protected characteristics in Wales. European Social Fund programmes have resulted in over 581,000 people receiving support. 46% were women, with an equal percentage gaining a qualification. 5% of participants were from a Black and minority ethnic background and 12% of participants identified themselves as disabled. Of those participants gaining qualifications, 3.5% were from a Black and minority ethnic background and 8% were disabled.

Chwarae Teg's Agile Nation project helped over 2,900 women with skills development, with 2,300 gaining qualifications. The project also worked with over 550 employers and helped over 250 of these to adopt or improve their equality strategies and monitoring systems.

The WAVE (Women Adding Value to the Economy) project aimed to tackle gender pay inequalities. In March 2014, WAVE published their Working Patterns in Wales Report, which provided a detailed analysis of the jobs, sectors, and working patterns of men and women in Wales in employment and self-employment. In September 2014 the Equal Pay barometer was launched, enabling people to see where gender pay gaps exist and to encourage women to consider less traditional career paths.

The Minorities Are Wales Resources II project led by Swansea YMCA with other partner organisations helped over 1,400 employed people to access vocational training, English for Speakers of Other Languages training, and other support. 91% of participants described themselves as being from Black or minority ethnic backgrounds and participants reported a wide range of nationalities.

Indicators

Percentage of children on health visitor caseloads:

Local Authorities report on their performance on a number of key indicators through submission of the Flying Start monitoring bulletin on a termly basis. This includes their performance on the Programme for Government indicator % of Flying Start children reaching

or exceeding their development milestones at 3 years. Collection of this data through the workbook does not disaggregate on this measure by protected characteristics.

Overall 23% of children aged under 4 in Wales were on health visitor caseloads and received Flying Start services during 2014-2015, nearly 1 in 4 Welsh children. This is an increase from 19% in 2013-2014.

Across Flying Start areas in Wales, the percentages on the Health Visitor caseloads in 2014-2015 were disaggregated as follows:

- children from ethnic minority families: 13%;
- children from families where Welsh is the first language: 3%;
- children from families where English or Welsh is not the first language: 7%;
- children of teenage parents: 9%;
- children of first time parents: 29%;
- children with a disabled parent/carer: 2%;
- disabled children: 2%;

Children can, of course, be in more than one of these groups.

Number of children benefiting from Flying Start nursery provision:

In 2014-2015, 7,658 children received nursery care under Flying Start (an increase from 6,450 in 2013-2014).

Percentage of children reaching or exceeding development milestones at age 3 as measured against standard assessment development tool:

52% of children in Flying Start areas reached or exceeded the targeted developmental milestones by age 3.

Education

School attendance rates:

The data for school absenteeism is complex, and further complicated by the distorting effect of persistent absenteeism. For secondary schools in 2013-2014, 5% of pupils were persistent absentees (i.e. they missed at least 62 half day sessions). However, this group accounted for 25% of overall absences, and 48.8% of unauthorised absences.

There were no gender differences for unauthorised absences in secondary schools in 2013-2014. However, for overall absences boys missed 6.2% of half-day sessions, while girls missed 6.6%.

Secondary schools with a higher proportion of students eligible for free school meals recorded higher levels of absences. For example, schools with more than 30% of eligible students indicated 8.8% of half day sessions were missed, compared to 5.1% for schools where 10% or less of students were eligible. The all-schools figure is 6.4%.

In 2013-2014, the average percentage of half-day sessions missed in secondary schools was 6.4%, continuing a steady decrease since 2009-2010 (8.9%). Students with a statement of Special Educational Needs missed a greater percentage of sessions (7.8%), as did school action plus (9.8%) and school action (7.9%) students.

Asian/Asian British (5%), Black/Black British (3.3%), and Chinese/Chinese British (2.6%) missed a smaller percentage of half-day sessions than average.

For primary schools, 1.7% of pupils were persistent absentees (missing at least 76 half day sessions) in 2013-2014.

There were no notable gender differences for unauthorised or overall absences for girls and boys in primary schools in 2013-2014.

Primary schools with a higher proportion of students eligible for free school meals recorded higher levels of absences. For example, schools with more than 32% of eligible students indicated 7.7% of half day sessions were missed, compared to 5.0% for schools where 8% or less students were eligible. The all-schools figure is 6.3%.

In 2013-2014, the average percentage of half-day sessions missed in primary schools was 5.2%. Students with a statement of Special Educational Needs missed a greater percentage of sessions (7.4%), as did school action plus (6.6%) and school action (6.2%) students.

In primary schools Asian/Asian British students missed a larger percentage of sessions than average (5.7%). However, Black/Black British (3.8%) and Chinese/Chinese British (4.2%) missed a smaller percentage of half-day sessions than average.

Percentage of pupils aged 15 achieving level 2 threshold including GCSE (A*-C) in maths and either English or Welsh as a first language:

55.4% of students achieved a level 2 threshold (including GCSE grade A* – C in English/Welsh and Mathematics) in 2014.

A smaller percentage of boys achieved this standard (51.4%) than girls (59.7%). Both of these percentages have increased by approximately 6% in the previous five years.

A breakdown of ethnicity reveals significant inequalities in achievement of this standard. Chinese/Chinese British students are the highest achievers on this measure (78%). The average for other Asian backgrounds was 57%, while the average of mixed ethnicities was 56.1%. Black students are less likely to achieve the standard (41.9%), as are Gypsy/Gypsy Roma students (12.5%).

Students learning English as an additional language have demonstrated an encouraging increase in achievement from last year. From 2012-2013 to 2013-2014, the percentage of those achieving the standard in 'early acquisition' has increased from 6.7% to 12.8%. Those with a 'developing competence' have increased from 23.3% to 31.6%. The same can be said for those who are competent (63.9% to 67.3%) and those who are fluent (64% to 74.7%).

Students with Special Educational Needs are less likely to achieve this standard (average of 19.7%). 9.3% of those who are statemented achieve the standard, while those under School Action Plus (17.3%) and School Action (24.1%) are slightly more likely to achieve the standard.

Students eligible for free school meals have significantly lower levels of achievement on this measure. 27.8% of those eligible for free school meals achieved the level 2 standard, against 61.6% of those not eligible. Both of these percentages have increased between 2008 and 2014.

Finally, absenteeism data reveals a predictable effect on achievement. 70% of those who miss 0-4% of sessions achieve the standard, whilst only 5% of those who miss more than 50% of sessions do so.

Percentage of working adults qualified to level 2/3/4 threshold:

For 2014, the general pattern for working adults is as follows:

- 9% have no qualifications,
- 78% have a level 2 qualification or above,
- 58% have a level 3 qualification or above,
- 36% have a level 4 qualification or above.

There are some notable exceptions to these averages.

- No qualification:
 - 18% of disabled individuals (Equality Act or work-limiting) have no qualifications.
- Level 2:
 - 65% of disabled people have a level 2 qualification or above.
- Level 3:
 - 44% of disabled people have a level 3 qualification or above.
 - 66% of non-white people also have a level 3 qualification or above.
- Level 4:
 - 25% of disabled people have a level 4 qualification or above.
 - 55% of non-white people have a level 4 qualification or above.

Reduced inequality in education and skills outcomes:

The percentage of children with who attain the Level 2 threshold at Key Stage 4 has improved in the last four years from 49.4% in 2010 to 55.4% in 2014. The percentage of Special Educational Needs pupils achieving the Level 2 threshold at Key Stage 4 has also increased from 12.9% in 2010 to 19.7% in 2014.

At KS2, 6.3 percentage points more females achieve a level 4 qualification than males (89.4% & 83.1%, respectively). At KS4, the gap is wider at 8.3 percentage points (59.7% for females, 51.4% for males) while overall attainment is lower.

In 2014, the percentage of disabled people who left school with no formal qualifications (18%) was higher than any other group (only 6% of non-disabled people do so). A lower percentage of non-white people (8%) have no formal qualifications than white people (10%). There is also no difference between males (9%) and females (9%).

Workplace

Pay differences for gender/disability/ethnicity:

The gap between the average hourly earnings for men and women in Wales has been narrowing over the past decade, with women's pay standing at 93.3% of men's in 2014.

When it comes to pay differences for disabled people, we are constrained by the availability of Wales-specific data. The same is also the case for the earnings of different ethnic minority groups. However, recent research conducted by the Equality and Human Rights Commission has looked into the issues surrounding the earnings of disabled people and those of ethnic minority background. In their conclusions they assert the impact of disability on hourly earnings is much less than for other disadvantaged groups, yet a persistent gap does exist when compared to the Welsh average.

Similarly, there is considerable variation in terms of average hourly earnings for people from different minority ethnic backgrounds. Indian, Black African and Black Caribbean ethnic groups appear to have the highest earning, a reflection of their relatively high concentration in well paid occupations. However those from Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins have average hourly earnings significantly below the Welsh average.

Employment rates by gender/disability/ethnicity:

Large differences in employment rates continue to exist in Wales by year ending December 2014. 72.9% of men are employed, compared to 66.1% of women. Finally, 70.1% of white adults and 55.3% of non-white adults are employed.

43% of disabled people were employed whilst 76.5% non disabled people were employed.

Further education learning activity success rates:

In 2013-2014, the success rate for further education learning activities was 86%. There was no notable difference in the rate for gender, but the success rate for disabled learners and learners from ethnic minorities were slightly higher than average (87%).

Objective 3

Reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Introduction

Reducing the number of young people in Wales classed as not in education, employment or training (NEET) is a key social justice priority for the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government is addressing this objective through the provision of support and guidance, and the creation of opportunities for young people. Poverty and low educational attainment can increase the chance of a young person becoming NEET. It is therefore vital a cross Governmental approach to this objective is taken, dovetailing our efforts wherever possible.

Influences on Young People Becoming NEET			
 Low levels of qualifications.	 Lack of vocational skills.	 Family disadvantage and poverty leading to disengagement.	 No formal experience or training.

Our actions

Jobs Growth Wales

Jobs Growth Wales, with the support of the European Social Fund, offers unemployed job ready young people aged 16-24 a job opportunity for a 6-month period. This is paid at or above the National Minimum Wage for a minimum of 25 hours per week, with the intention the young person is sustained by the employer.

As of 10 March 2015, 17,195 job opportunities have been created across Wales and of these, 14,656 have been filled. The remainder of the job opportunities are in various stages of recruitment. The destination data for young people completing the 6 month job opportunities remains positive, with over 80% of participants in the Private sector strand of the programme progressing into sustained employment including an apprenticeship or further learning.

The programme also committed to supporting 750 job opportunities for young people living in Communities First areas across Wales. As of 31 December 2014, 746 jobs have been created with over 466 jobs being filled.

Traineeships

The Traineeship programme for 16-18 year olds aims to support young people to secure sustained employment by helping them gain confidence and motivation, improve their skills

levels through the delivery of NVQs in any chosen occupational area, as well as gaining employability skills and valuable work experience, aiding the transition into employment.

The programme, supported through the European Social Fund, seeks to improve skills levels through the delivery of entry level qualifications up to NVQ Level 1 in their chosen occupational area, and elements of NVQ Level 2 delivery. This includes the delivery of essential skills qualifications to enhance their learning experience. They also receive valuable work experience and the support and help they need to learn at a pace suitable to them. This can sometimes be with a dedicated employer or through a simulated work environment, depending on the level of support the young person requires.

The Welsh Government are undertaking an in depth review of the programme, with the aim of making recommendations for the future structure of the programme. The review will assess the structure, profile and positioning of the Traineeship programme and ascertain whether it is fully meeting the needs of all of target groups.

The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework

The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework requires an integrated approach from all organisations involved in delivering activity for young people, focusing on the needs of the individual. Local Authorities are charged with providing the support individuals need to aid their progression through education and training into employment.

At the heart of the Framework there are two new actions. The first is the offer of a lead worker within a relevant organisation who can provide continuity of support and contact for the most at risk young people. The second is the development of a proactive Youth Guarantee, which is the offer, acceptance and commencement of a suitable place in education or training for a young person making the first time transition from compulsory education at age 16. It is believed this will provide a clear progression route for all young people, linked to effective information, advice and guidance to help them make a more informed choice, and support their progression post 16.

Since the launch of the Framework each Local Authority has put in place an Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator. They play a critical role in implementing the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, closely working with Careers Wales to provide the operational leadership needed to identify the level of risk of young people and the specific support needed to help them make a positive progression.

The Welsh Government is committed to the continued implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework and has agreed a further £1.1 million in grant funding to support Local Authorities in its delivery. Key to the success of the Framework is the early identification and tracking of progress of young people at risk of becoming NEET, many of whom will come from deprived backgrounds. It is vital personal information about individuals at risk is shared legally, safely and with confidence between partners. All Local Authorities in Wales have a quality assured Information Sharing Protocol in place or under development.

Careers Wales

Priority client groups, as identified in the annual remit letter, receive a more tailored service from Careers Wales. The priority groups identified are:

- young people with statements of Special Educational Needs or equivalent;
- young people 11-18 who are in greatest need of careers information, advice and guidance;
- young people educated otherwise than at school;
- young people aged 16-17 who are unemployed;
- young people in the youth justice system.

Young people at risk of disengagement are entitled to enhanced careers information, advice and guidance service which includes face-to-face guidance interviews, as well as the standard service of telephone and web-based support. Careers Wales provide 'lead worker' support to help unemployed 16-18 year olds re-engage in education, employment or training as part of the implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework.

Careers Wales has a responsibility for supporting young people with Special Education Needs as one of its priority client groups. This means preparing a specific and individualised Learning and Skills Plan identifying learning and training needs support for the young person progressing into further education or training.

European Social Fund

The European Social Fund supports young people, unemployed people and those at a disadvantage in finding work and in gaining skills. The development of the 2014-2020 European Social Fund programmes align closely with the Welsh Government Youth Engagement and Progression Framework supporting the identification, tracking and mapping of services and outcomes for young people from education through to employment. This alignment will create a consistent approach in supporting young people and ensuring European Social Fund investment truly adds value to an integrated approach to achieving the programme's aim.

In line with this approach, the proposal is to extend the definition of 'young people' to 0-24 years of age (previously 11-19), ensuring European Social Fund investments support individuals as they move through mainstream education into sustainable employment, reducing the risk of becoming NEET and ensuring interventions can begin early and tackle the key transition points.

As of March 2015, 122,303 young people have been supported by the European Social Fund programme (2007-2014) of which 46% were female, 5% from a Black minority ethnic background and 7% disabled. 22,222 young people gained a qualification, of which 44% were female, 4% from a Black minority ethnic background and 11% were disabled. The figure for those gaining a qualification seems low but it should be noted the main aim of the funding is not to fund qualifications through this activity but to enable young people to stay in formal learning and engage with mainstream qualifications which are not counted here. £160.5 million has been spent on projects supporting young people in Wales of which £94.2 million comes from European Social Funding.

Indicators

Percentage of 16-18 year olds who are NEET:

This indicator measures (on an annual basis) the percentage of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). In 2014, 10.9% of 16-18 year olds were NEET (12,200) compared with 10.9% (12,300) at the end of 2013. The distribution by gender is also broadly similar, with males (11.9%) being more likely to be NEET than females (10.0%). Note the figures from 2013 are revised.

Percentage of 19-24 year olds who are NEET:

In 2014, 20.7% of 19-24 year olds were NEET (53,700) compared with 21.1% (54,500) at the end of 2013. Unlike the 16-18 year old group, females in the 19 to 24 group were more likely to be NEET (23.2%) than males (18.4%).

Attainment of 19 year olds:

Data from 2010-2011 (published February 2014) indicated gender may have a slight effect on the educational attainment of 19 year olds. 95% of 19 year olds achieved a Level 1 threshold (96% female, 93% male); 78% achieved a Level 2 (81% female, 74% male); and 53% achieved a Level 3 (58% female, 48% male).

Number of people benefitting from Job Growth Wales:

During 2014-2015, 5,298 people had benefited from Jobs Growth Wales.

Number of apprenticeship opportunities available through Young Recruits Programme:

In 2014-2015, 1,692 opportunities were available. A programme evaluation concluded that Young Recruits is straightforward and easy to present to employers. The majority of employers reported that they had become generally more favourable to the recruitment of young people as a result of support. By the end of the period 2013-2014, the programme had already far exceeded its target of 4,000 places for the 2 year period 2013-2014 to 2014-2015. As a result, we reviewed the eligibility criteria for 2014-2015, leading to a reduction in the number of new places supported for this period to 1,692.

Apprenticeship framework success rates:

The rates of leavers attaining the full framework are recorded by the Lifelong Learning for Wales Record. The rate of successful leavers was 84% for 2013-2014, slight decrease from 86% in 2012-2013. Only slight differences were observed for gender (female 85%, male 82%) and there was no difference for ethnicity (BME 84%, white 84%). However, disabled apprentices appeared to be less likely to attain the full framework (80%) compared to those who are non-disabled (84%).

Percentage of traineeship leavers progressing to either further learning or employment:

Data from Lifelong Learning for Wales (2013-2014) indicates 71% of those leaving traineeships progressed to further learning or employment. Disaggregation by protected characteristics did not indicate the presence of any strong effects for gender (71% of women, 71% of men), ethnicity (69% of BME trainees, 71% of white trainees) or disability (70% of disabled young people, 72% of non-disabled young people).

Objective 4

Reduce the incidence of all forms of violence against women, domestic abuse, 'honour' based violence, hate crime, bullying and elder abuse

Introduction

No one should have to live their lives in fear of violence, abuse or victimisation. Violence against women, domestic abuse, 'honour' based violence, hate crime, bullying and elder abuse cannot and will not be tolerated in a progressive Wales. People from all walks of life suffer these abuses, irrespective of cultural, social or ethnic backgrounds. Many suffer alone and in silence, and it can take great courage to ask for help.

During the reporting period, the Welsh Government has made significant strides towards making Wales a safe and vibrant place to live, a nation where individuality is valued and celebrated.

Our Actions

Tackling Hate Crime and Incidents: A Framework for Action

The Association of Chief Police Officers and the Crown Prosecution Service define hate crime as:

"a criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived disability, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and transgender".

Offences may include physical assault, damage to property, bullying, harassment, verbal abuse or insults, or offensive graffiti or letters.

The agreed common definition for a hate incident is:

"any non-crime incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on actual or perceived disability, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and transgender".

The Welsh Government launched the 'Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action' in May 2014 at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff. The Framework is focused on three objectives: prevention, supporting victims and improving multi-agency working. An annual delivery plan has been produced which will be updated cyclically to evidence delivery and progress against outcomes. Delivery through the plan has included funding for Victim Support Cymru to establish a Hate Crime Report and Support Centre to increase advocacy and support for victims.

An Independent Advisory Group was developed with stakeholders to monitor the delivery of the Framework. This is chaired by the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty and includes representation from across all protected characteristics. The Group will provide advice on qualitative and quantitative information to assess delivery and will publish an annual evidence report. The Welsh Government has also established the Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board Cymru which aims to work with non-devolved agencies to share information and enhance consistent delivery on a pan Wales basis.

Following Hate Crime Awareness week in October 2014, the Welsh Government published a 'Summary Report for Hate Crime Awareness Week 2014'. The summary report outlines the breadth and the range of work which took place across Wales.

The range of actions resulted in an increase in reporting across October 2014 through the National Hate Crime and Report Centre.

Key themes in tackling hate crime				
				
Leadership:	Partnership Working:	Education:	Tackling Hate Incidents:	Promotion of Human Rights:
Organisations to take the lead to challenge and tackle hostility and prejudice both in the workplace and in our communities.	Welsh Government, Public Sector, Statutory and Third Sector organisations have a responsibility to work together to improve outcomes for people and to increase reporting.	Tackling stereotypes and negative attitudes should take place with children and young people to increase awareness of the impact of hostility and prejudice.	Low level harassment can have a detrimental impact on people. This can lead to persistence and escalation, where victims can be repeatedly targeted. Early intervention is effective.	The framework supports the FREDa (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Dignity and Autonomy) principles.

Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 received Royal Assent in April 2015. The Act's overarching purpose is to improve the public sector response in Wales to gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence. It is intended to provide a strategic focus on these issues and ensure consistent consideration of preventative, protective and supportive mechanisms in the delivery of services.

The Act aims to ensure there is a stronger and more consistent focus on tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. It places a duty on the Welsh Ministers, Local Authorities and Local Health Boards to prepare and publish strategies aimed at ending gender based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

In particular, to reflect the disproportionate way in which women are affected by violence and abuse in a domestic setting, the Act includes a specific focus on women and girls. This does not detract, however, from the application of the Act as a whole, which recognises that victims can be from across the breadth of society, irrespective of gender, age or ethnicity. An implementation plan is currently being developed to take forward the provisions of the Act and supporting policy.

Right to be Safe

The Right to be Safe Strategy, launched in 2010, was the Welsh Government's integrated strategy for tackling all forms of violence against women and domestic abuse. The Strategy identified four key priority areas:

- prevention and raising awareness of violence against women and domestic abuse;
- providing support for victims and children;
- improving the response of Criminal Justice Agencies;
- improving the response of health services and other agencies.

The 'Right to be Safe Strategy – Fourth Annual Report' was published in June 2014 with only 8 objectives left to deliver. The then Minister for Local Government and Government Business announced this would be the last Annual Report and the outstanding actions would be incorporated into a Ministerial approved work programme.

The work programme is being progressed and sets the strategic direction for the work of the Welsh Government in respect of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. It also encompasses 10,000 Safer Lives, provisions in the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 and the White Paper which preceded the legislation, along with recommendations from a number of independent research projects.

A National Strategy will be published under the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act in 2016 and this will replace the work programme in setting the strategic direction on these topics.

10,000 Safer Lives

The aim of the 10,000 Safer Lives Project seeks to improve the response provided by multi-agency services to victims of domestic abuse in Wales, with a focus on service users identified as being at medium or standard risk. The Project specifically addresses a key Programme for Government commitment to ensure all relevant service providers and organisations in Wales are able to identify the signs of domestic abuse and are able to effectively support individuals who experience domestic abuse to ensure the safety of the individual and their family.

Latest data confirms between April 2011 and March 2015 over 14,000 individuals considered themselves to be safer, or to feel safer, as a result of the direct support from specialist organisations funded by Welsh Government such as the All-Wales Helpline, Project Dyn and New Pathways.

In light of the significant achievements delivered through the Project, it was decided the relevant remaining standards will be taken forward as part of the implementation of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 rather than separately through the Project.

Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking

Slavery is a complex issue and tackling it requires strong, strategic leadership and co-ordinated joined up partnership action. The purpose of the Welsh Government's Anti-Slavery Co-ordinator is to strengthen and coordinate the response in Wales to tackling slavery, providing support to survivors and demonstrating Wales is hostile to slavery. The work is underpinned by a multi-agency delivery plan.

The Wales Anti-Slavery Leadership Group, established and chaired by Welsh Government, includes a wide range of stakeholders, ranging from the National Crime Agency, the Police, the Third Sector, the Probation Service, Gangmaster's Licensing Authority and Safeguarding. The members provide oversight and direction and are integral to tackling slavery in Wales. The Leadership Group is supported by an Operational Delivery Group and Regional Anti-Slavery Groups which encourage the sharing of 'best practice' between partners.

The Leadership Group has introduced a number of initiatives which include:

- Delivering a consistent programme of training ranging from awareness raising to specialist joint training for our Police Senior Investigating Officers and Crown Prosecution Service Prosecutors.
- A 'Survivor Care Pathway' which is a joined up multi-agency response and provides a personal plan of support aimed at restoring the lives of survivors of slavery back to normal.

Recent high profile prosecution cases in Wales and the UK, awareness raising campaigns by the Welsh Government and the introduction of the UK Government's Modern Slavery Act 2015, are all contributing to raising the profile of slavery. In the UK and Wales recorded incidents of slavery referred to the National Referral Mechanism continue to increase each year. For Wales in 2012, National Referral Mechanism referrals numbered 34 and increased in 2014 to 71.

Female Genital Mutilation

The Welsh Government is working to end these practices by working collaboratively to promote awareness and prevention of Female Genital Mutilation in Wales through training of key organisations and individuals in public services.

In September 2014, NHS Wales and Welsh Government hosted the 'Tackling Female Genital Mutilation in NHS Wales Summit' which identified ways for NHS Wales to provide robust mechanisms by which Female Genital Mutilation can be identified, recorded, reported and managed. This included needs in relation to training, safeguarding and review of existing data

collection mechanisms available to NHS Wales. As a result of the summit a package of work was agreed by officials to be taken forward which includes data collection mechanisms and the development of healthcare pathways.

In a bid to highlight the incidence and practice of Female Genital Mutilation, the Minister for Education and Skills sent a joint letter along with the Minister for Local Government to all head teachers in Wales in June 2014, drawing attention to their role in eradicating it. In January 2015, the Welsh Government issued new statutory safeguarding guidance 'Keeping Learners Safe'. The guidance clearly sets out the safeguarding and child protection responsibilities of schools and education services to keep children safe, and to ensure any concerns are responded to.

The Welsh Government also held a community based conference entitled 'Making Our Voices Heard' to mark International Day of Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Mutilation on 6 February 2015. Community engagement is imperative to eradicating Female Genital Mutilation and in order for there to be sustainable change, the conference aimed to build confidence within communities to use existing mechanisms to tackle Female Genital Mutilation in Wales.

Indicators

Hate Crime

Incidence of hate crime

1,955 hate crimes were recorded in 2013-2014. 1,810 were recorded in 2012-2013. It is likely that these statistics underestimate the prevalence of hate crime due to under-reporting.

Number of hate crime referrals to the Hate Crime Report and Support Centre through Victim Support Cymru

From 1 May 2014 to 31 March 2015, the number of hate crime referrals to the Hate Crime Report and Support Centre through Victim Support Cymru was 1,265. 927 of these hate crimes were race related, 149 were related to sexuality, 126 to disability, 22 to religion and 2 to gender. This data is sourced from departmental management information.

Number of people undertaking Hate Crime training sessions

The number of people undertaking hate crime training sessions in 2014-2015 was 2,335 (1,983 Local Authority Staff and 352 Third Sector/Public Sector/Communities). This data is sourced from departmental management information.

Violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence

Percentage of successful prosecutions and convictions in cases of violence against women:

76.7% of prosecutions in cases of violence against women were successful in 2013-2014. This was slightly lower than last year (78.1% in 2012-2013).

Incidence of domestic abuse/sexual crime:

47,304 incidents of domestic abuse were recorded in 2013-2014. The number has decreased from last year (53,547 in 2012-2013) and slightly below the previous two years (48,576 in 2011-2012, and 48,738 in 2010-2011).

In 2013-2014, 3,366 sexual offences were recorded in Wales. This was an increase from last year (2,873 in 2012-2013).

Number of people referred to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs):

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) are designed to support and protect adults and children who are at high risk of being seriously harmed. In 2014, 5,834 cases were referred, an increase on the 5,585 referred in 2013. There were 6,718 children in households referred in 2014, and 21% cases (1,225) were repeat referrals. This data is sourced from departmental management information.

Number of callers supported by All Wales Domestic Abuse Helpline:

The number of calls to the All Wales Domestic Abuse Helpline by callers experiencing domestic abuse has increased significantly from 2,335 in 2013-14 to 5,393 in 2014-2015.

The total number of calls to the All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Helpline in 2014-2015 was 27,972.

Objective 5

Tackle barriers and support disabled people so they can live independently and exercise control in their daily lives

Introduction

The Welsh Government is committed to supporting disabled people by promoting greater access to services and providing opportunities which will enable them to participate in, and contribute fully to, society.

The Framework for Action on Independent Living provides a detailed programme of action in relation to Objective 5. The Framework promotes the rights of disabled people in Wales to live independently and exercise the same choices as other people. It focuses on delivery and sets out the actions we are undertaking across Welsh Government departments and with our external partners.

Our Actions

Framework for Action on Independent Living

The Framework for Action on Independent Living was published following extensive engagement and consultation with disabled people and their representative organisations.

Independent living in this context expresses the right of disabled people to participate fully in all aspects of life. The Welsh Government supports the following definition of independent living, which was adopted by Disability Wales and partner organisations during consultation on the Manifesto for Independent Living prior to the last National Assembly elections:

“Independent Living enables us as disabled people to achieve our own goals and live our own lives in the way we choose for ourselves”

The Framework focuses on delivery and sets out the actions we are undertaking across Welsh Government departments and with our external partners to promote independent living. It takes a positive approach, based on the social model of disability, and is focused on removing the barriers to equality and inclusion in seven key priority areas.

The Framework also highlights the crucial role of our public sector partners in creating inclusive and enabling places and communities, which are sustainable for future generations. Disabled people’s groups and organisations make up a network which can enable effective engagement with public services and the private sector to ensure their views are represented and taken into account. The Framework encourages constructive partnership working between Public Authorities and disabled people’s organisations, as this will achieve better outcomes for service deliverers and disabled people alike.

We also promote the importance of Centres for Independent Living, and are funding the development of two through the Equality and Inclusion Grant. These Centres are social enterprises, which are run by and employ disabled people. They can provide a wide range of

services including information, advice and independent advocacy services, training, third party Direct Payments support, and support with engagement. We are committed to supporting the development of more Centres for Independent Living in Wales, although the lead on this must come from disabled people themselves.

The assumptions underlying the commitment to develop the Framework for Action	
	
Action is needed to strengthen the rights of disabled people to live independent lives as set out in Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People, i.e. the right to independent living.	People in Wales are disabled by environmental, institutional and societal barriers which lead to social exclusion and dependence and prevents them from full participation in Welsh society.

Monitoring Progress

The Disability Equality Forum is made up of stakeholders from disability organisations and provides an opportunity for them to identify issues and barriers to progress. Progress on the Welsh Government actions in the Framework is also monitored by an Internal Programme Board of officials from relevant departments.

The key priorities identified in the Framework were identified by disabled people as the most important to them. The following actions demonstrate the progress on these priorities during the reporting period.

Information, Advice, Advocacy and Peer Support

Communities 2.0 provided support for digital inclusion initiatives aimed at getting disabled people to benefit from the latest digital technologies. Disability Wales’s ‘Digital Lives’ project was supported by Communities 2.0 to provide training to groups of disabled people across Wales.

The Royal National Institute of Blind People was successful in securing funding from Big Lottery for their UK wide ‘Online Today’ project. This successful bid was based on the Communities 2.0 funded ‘Get Connected’ project delivered in Wales. The project, which employs seven dedicated digital inclusion officers across Wales, will help digitally excluded people with sensory loss to gain the basic skills and confidence to use technology.

Accessible and supported housing

The Welsh Government implemented a review of aids and adaptations programmes to explore the options for a consistent, good quality and accessible system for adaptations to support disabled people to continue to live in their own homes. The report on the review of independent living adaptations was published in January 2015 and work is underway on implementing the report’s recommendations.

The Renting Homes (Wales) Bill was introduced into the Assembly in February 2015, following engagement with the supported housing sector to ensure the right balance is achieved between the rights of occupiers and supported housing providers. The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 received Royal Assent in September 2014 and aims to improve the accommodation provision for the most vulnerable in society, and addressing equality and fairness in housing in Wales.

Personalised care and support

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 provides the legal framework to give people a stronger voice and control over the social care services they use, and to help meet their changing needs. During 2014-2015 the National Social Services Partnership Forum, Leadership Group and Citizen Panel continued to support the implementation of the Act. The Citizen Panel has produced several key reports to inform the process, and additional work is being developed with children and young people as a next step.

New eligibility, assessment and care planning arrangements are being introduced through regulations and codes of practice under the Act. The model of eligibility presented through the regulations and code of practice is a rights-based model which asserts the person has needs which meet the eligibility criteria if an assessment establishes they can, and can only, overcome barriers to achieving their well-being outcomes by the Local Authority preparing a care and support plan (or a support plan for a carer), and ensuring it is delivered. Regulations will also set out clear requirements on Local Authorities to work in partnership with those in receipt of care and support in the development and review of their care and support plans

This model for meeting people's needs for care and support emphasises the importance of a new approach to assessment and care planning through working in partnership with people and their carers to both build on their strengths and understand their needs. It is a model which supports people's right to have respectful conversations about their well-being, and to exercise a strong voice and control in decisions about their care.

The process of assessment is based on an analysis of 5 inter-related factors to ensure Local Authorities consider the person's circumstances in the round. These factors are:

- personal outcomes;
- barriers to achieving personal well-being outcomes;
- a person's circumstances;
- a person's strengths and capabilities;
- risks.

The Act also makes it easier for people who receive care and support in one Local Authority area to move to a new Local Authority area. It also places a duty on any persons exercising functions under the Act to seek to promote the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support.

Person-centred technology

The e-accessibility Forum facilitated by Disability Wales continues to develop and monitor the E-Accessibility Wales website. The website acts as a directory for organisations to advise disabled people on the appropriate assistive technology for their needs. This includes software, hardware and other tips or resources they may find useful. The e-accessibility Website now includes easy read pages and was formally re-launched at the Disability Wales Annual Conference in October 2014.

A refreshed Digital Health and Care strategy is being developed in conjunction with the NHS and Local Authorities in Wales. The emerging strategy of care closer to home and in the local community will mean the use of broadband connectivity will increase, and a more networked approach will mean connectivity will be exploited more effectively. Its vision is to equip the NHS and social care workforce with the digital tools they need to work effectively and deliver the best quality of care to patients and service users.

Funding was provided from the Health Technology and Telehealth Fund to support a number of projects across Wales for investment in Telehealth and Telemedicine to enable the early identification of at-risk groups and allow the remote management of long term conditions from both within the patient's home and community settings.

A barrier-free transport system

The Welsh Government developed a Charter for Disabled Public Transport Passengers so disabled passengers can see which bus and train operators are committed to the Charter by means of a CharterMark or similar accreditation.

The Bus Services Support Grant allocated £25m to Local Authorities for 2014-2015 to help them boost the number and range of subsidised, socially-necessary bus and community transport services.

The Welsh Government continues to promote improved accessibility for all at stations. For example, improvements were made to Llandudno station in order to improve accessibility to station facilities including the new ticket office, passenger toilets, access points to platform areas, and lighting.

We allocated £100,000 to each of two integrated transport pilot projects, in the Vale of Glamorgan and in Ceredigion, to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of how public transport services are managed within those authorities; as well as exploring innovative ways of integrating on-road services. The lessons learned will be evaluated and disseminated to Local Authorities throughout Wales.

In December 2014, Regulations came into force to allow people with cognitive impairments to be issued a Blue Badge under discretionary eligibility criteria.

Accessible and inclusive places

Following publication of the draft Planning (Wales) Bill, we issued a consultation on Design in the Planning process at the end of 2014. The responses received helped inform the debate around the Bill, and in particular our consideration of the requirement for Design and Access Statements.

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 seeks to enable more people to travel by more active methods. The Active Travel design guidance was published in December 2014. The guidance was developed in consultation with groups representing disabled people.

Employment, including self-employment

Provisions relating to special educational needs which were removed from the Education (Wales) Bill during its passage through the Assembly have been included in legislative proposals for additional learning needs. Legislative proposals for additional learning needs were set out in a White Paper and consulted on in the summer of 2014. A summary of responses was published in October 2014. A draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill, amended as necessary in the light of the consultation responses, was published for consultation in July 2015.

A Welsh Government funded adult skills programme for unemployed people is at the design stage. As part of the development of the programme, we established stakeholder fora to gather best practice and understand the needs of specific client groups; including disabled people. This has helped inform the design of the programme.

The Remploy Employer Support Grant scheme closed to applications at the end of September 2014. The Employer Support Grant has supported over 250 disabled former Remploy workers into employment, across approximately 90 employers. The scheme will continue to offer a wage subsidy to the employers of these workers over the four year period of the scheme on a reducing tapering basis until 2018-2019.

Supporting Disabled People's Organisations

From April 2014, the Welsh Government's Equality and Inclusion Grant has supported two projects to support independent living:

Enabling Wales Project: Disability Wales, working with the Wales Co-operative Centre and DEWIS Centre for Independent Living, is aiming to increase the number of organisations led by and for disabled people so they are more actively involved in the design and delivery of public services. The training courses are underway, with adults and young people involved in the sessions in south and south west Wales.

Sensory Inclusion Project: Action on Hearing Loss Cymru is working with the Royal National Institute of Blind People Cymru to train and support people with sensory loss to share their personal experiences with service providers. The focus for year one was housing and following the output from three regional focus groups, and meetings with local housing providers, service users' stories were captured and these will be fed into a toolkit at the end of the project. In addition, a best practice document was created for publication in 2015, which will be rolled out to all housing providers in Wales.

Indicators

The Framework document includes several headline indicators which will help us monitor progress on independent living. We have developed an outcomes framework which includes those indicators along with further measures.

Indicators are currently in development as part of the Framework for Action on Independent Living. The following represents a sample of these indicators.

Percentage of disabled people in households with internet access:

70% of adults (aged 16+), who have a limiting long-term illness, live in households with internet access. However, 89% of those without a limiting long-term illness live in households with internet access. Age (which is highly correlated with limiting long-term illness) is likely to be responsible for some of the difference between those with and without limiting long-term illness.

Disabled people's level of satisfaction with the public transport system:

The National Survey for Wales in 2013-2014 asked respondents what their level of satisfaction was with the public transport system (on a 0 to 10 scale, with 10 being the most satisfied). This question included public and private transport, as well as infrastructure such as footpaths, roads, cycle paths, etc. 39% of adults (aged 16+), who have a limiting long-term illness, gave a high rating (7 to 10) for the transport system (46% for adults without a limiting long-term illness). The average rating was 5.7 (5.9 for respondents without a limiting long-term illness).

Age (which is highly correlated with limiting long-term illness) is likely to be responsible for some of the difference between those with and without limiting long-term illness.

Take-up of Direct Payments:

This indicator measures the number of adult service users receiving direct payments. The data is sourced from departmental management information, specifically: 'Referrals, Assessments and Social Services for Adults, Wales'. In 2013-2014, 4,148 service users received direct payments. This number has increased over the previous few years. 3,536 service users received direct payments in 2012-2013, 3,211 in 2011-2012 and 2,734 in 2010-2011.

Employment rates of disabled people:

This indicator compares the headline employment rates for disabled individuals in Wales and the rest of the adult population. The employment rate for disabled people for the year ending December 2014 was 43.1%, lower than the 76.5% for the rest of the adult population.

Economic activity rates of disabled people:

Data from the Annual Population Survey indicates the economic activity rate (ages 16-64) for disabled people (49.4%) is lower than the rest of the adult population (81.4%) for the year ending December 2014.

Percentage of disabled people with no formal qualifications:

Disabled persons (Equality Act currently disabled and/or work-limiting disabled) are more likely to hold no qualifications than non-disabled persons, and less likely to hold qualifications at or above levels 2, 3 and 4.

For 2014, 18.3% of disabled people had no qualifications (6.2% for non-disabled), while in 2013 the percentages were 19.6% and 6.9%, respectively.

Percentage of Welsh students enrolled in universities in the UK who are disabled:

In 2013-2014, there were 11,385 Welsh disabled students who were enrolled in universities in the UK. This represents 11.4% of the total number of Welsh students. In the previous year (2012-2013), 10.8% of Welsh students enrolled in UK universities were disabled (10,915 students).

Percentage of new public appointees who are disabled:

For the purpose of this indicator, senior appointments are defined as the chairs and members of executive Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies, Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts appointed by Welsh Ministers.

All data is based upon self-reported information from the new public appointees. As such, the data on disabled people should be treated with a degree of caution, given some people do not identify themselves as disabled and others may be reluctant to declare they are a disabled person.

In 2014-2015, 4% of new appointees self identified as disabled, while in 2013-2014 the proportion was slightly higher at 4.7%.

Objective 6

Put the needs of service users at the heart of delivery in key public services in particular health, housing, and social services, so they are responsive to the needs of people with protected characteristics

Introduction

Public Services play an essential role in the lives of people in Wales. Whether they are keeping people safe, healthy or in accommodation, they are providing services which support many of our fundamental and basic rights.

The delivery of public services should always reflect the needs of the public. A more people focused approach will result in the provision of better public services which meet the requirements of all. It can assist providers in identifying and overcoming barriers which prevent people with protected characteristics from accessing services. This is a key challenge for all public service organisations.

What are the benefits of engaging with citizens?					
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
It can help inform the development of policies and strategies.	It can help in planning the development of new services.	It can inform decision making about setting priorities and the allocation of resources.	It can be used to monitor attitudes and perceptions about how organisations are performing.	It can inform decision making about individual projects or programmes which impact upon local communities.	It can help build closer links between organisations and citizens by involving them in decisions which effect them.

Our Actions

Health

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales Advisory Board

During 2014-2015, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales established an Advisory Board to provide a voice for people. The Board includes around 50% representation from service users, carers, relatives and volunteers and around 50% from various health organisations in Wales. The Board will help support Healthcare Inspectorate Wales by providing expertise and authoritative advice to the Chief Executive in order to improve healthcare for people through better regulation, inspection and review.

The Board met for the first time in October 2014 and the February 2015 meeting was used to get views and feedback on our proposed work programme for 2015-2016.

Travelling to Better Health

Research and evidence shows Gypsies and Travellers suffer disproportionately when compared with the general population in relation to health status and access to healthcare. To address this, in August 2014 the Welsh Government consulted on draft guidance for healthcare practitioners on working effectively with Gypsies and Travellers, entitled 'Travelling to Better Health'. The guidance is presented in three main parts: advice on cultural awareness for the benefit of practitioners; advice on professional practice which could encourage greater participation in health and health services; and a summary analysis of the available research and evidence base which provides the rationale for the guidance.

'Travelling to Better Health' was subject to wide engagement with Gypsies and Travellers and individuals and organisations which work with them both in its preparation and via formal public consultation. The formal consultation included use of a Cross Party Group on Gypsies and Travellers, a Group which is chaired by Julie Morgan AM and which many Gypsies and Travellers from across Wales attend, as a platform for engagement.

Some of the outcomes which are expected from using this guidance include:

- increased practitioner knowledge of Gypsy and Traveller culture and traditions;
- increased practitioner knowledge of the health status and health needs of Gypsies and Travellers; and
- increased practitioner confidence in working effectively with Gypsies and Travellers.

The final guidance is expected to be published in 2015.

A Review of Evidence of Inequalities in Access to Health Services in Wales and the UK

An additional two reports were commissioned following the publication of the Review of Evidence of Inequalities in Access to Health Services in Wales and the UK: Gender, Gender Re-assignment and Sexual Identity in 2014. One report will focus on Black and minority ethnic groups, Refugee Asylum Seekers and Gypsy and Traveller Communities and another will focus on the experiences of disabled people. Both reports are due for publication during 2015.

These reports are being used to inform the NHS Wales planning framework. The framework sets out the Welsh Government's expectations of Health Board and Trust plans and is aligned to a clear scrutiny and approvals process. As further reports conclude, they will also be reflected in the framework.

Housing

Hate Crime and Housing – Policy and Practice Update for Social Landlords in Wales

In October 2014, 'Hate Crime and Housing Policy and Practice Update for Social Landlords' was published on the Welsh Government website, publicised through the Homes for Wales Bulletin, and circulated to interested key stakeholders in Wales.

The aim of the publication is to provide social landlords and partners with updated information, guidance and good practice examples on hate crime and housing which can be used by housing officers responsible for dealing with hate crime, managers, contractors, as well as other staff. The update focuses on the following themes: prevention, increasing reporting, support and enforcement, multi-agency working, monitoring and evaluation, and practice examples.

Since its publication, Tai Pawb has reviewed hate crime policies and procedures of three housing providers based on the recommendations. As a result of the publication of the toolkit and raising the profile of hate crime within social housing, the Welsh Housing Equality Network held a meeting focused on hate crime and domestic violence where practitioners presented what they do to tackle hate crime and exchanged good practice.

The update was based on, but not a substitute for, "Tackling Hate Incidents: A Toolkit for Social Landlords in Wales" (Wales Social Landlords Anti-Social Behaviour Forum, HouseMark and Social Landlord's Crime and Nuisance Group 2008).

Social Services

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 received Royal Assent and became law on 1 May 2014. The Act embeds an approach to social services which has the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan at its core.

The Act provides the statutory framework to deliver the Welsh Government's commitment to transform social services in Wales to improve the well-being outcomes of people who need care and support and carers who need support. This new focus on well-being, and promoting people's independence to give them stronger voice and control, will set the foundations for improvement across the sector.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places new duties on Local Authorities to provide information and advice to all people in need of care and support services and assistance is provided to people in accessing care and support. The Act promotes independent living, and seeks to give those with needs voice and control by, for example, requiring Local Authorities to identify and take into account the outcomes which people wish to achieve in their everyday lives when assessing their needs for care and support.

The Act places strengthens the rights of carers and gives them the same right to have their needs assessed and a right to support on the same basis as those with care needs. Integration and simplification of the law for people will also provide greater consistency and clarity to people who use social services, their carers, Local Authority staff and their partner organisations.

A duty on any person exercising functions under the Act to have regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child and the UN Principles for Older Persons has been placed on the face of the Act. This will help promote a rights based approach in securing well-being for people who need care and support and carers who need support.

Indicators

Health

Public health services satisfaction rates:

Public health services satisfaction rates: Survey Wales People were asked to rate health services on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 was 'extremely bad' and 10 were 'extremely good'. For this report, respondents who gave a score of 7 or more are classed as being 'highly satisfied'. In 2014-2015, 51% of respondents were highly satisfied with health services in Wales. 16 to 24 year olds and the over 75s were most likely to report high satisfaction (57% and 68%, respectively, compared to 56% and 69% in the previous year). Less than 50% of both 25 to 44 year olds and 45 to 64 year olds reported being highly satisfied with health services

There was no significant difference in satisfaction with the health service in Wales between genders (with 52% of males reporting high levels of satisfaction, and 50% of women). There was also no significant difference in satisfaction with the health service in Wales between those who had a limiting long-standing illness, disability or infirmity and those who didn't: with 53% of those with a limiting long-standing illness, being highly satisfied, compared to 50% for the rest of the population. Please note this data comes from the National Survey for Wales 2014-2015, and will be discontinued in 2015-2016 pending changes to the Survey.

GP Access:

These indicators monitor patient access to GP surgeries and services.

In 2014, 80% of practices were open for either the full daily core hours (08:00 to 18:30, Monday to Friday) or within one hour of the full daily core hours. This is an increase from the 2013 percentage (76%).

There was some change in the percentage of practices which offered appointments at any time between 5pm and 6.30pm at least two days a week. 97% of practices offered these appointments in 2014, compared to 95% in 2013.

The percentage of practices closed for half a day on one week day has remained at 6% in 2014 following a decrease, from 11% in 2012 to 6% in 2013.

Gap in life expectancy between most and least deprived areas:

Using aggregated data from ONS (2011-2013), the gap in life expectancy between most and least deprived areas in Wales was 7 years for males and 6.1 years for females. Deprivation is judged based on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).

Housing

Number of additional affordable housing units delivered:

2,416 affordable housing units have been delivered in 2013-2014. The number of planned affordable housing units for 2014-2015 is 2829.

Number of empty homes brought back into use via action by Local authorities:

2,293 houses which had been vacant for more than six months at the beginning of the financial year were returned to occupation during the year (2013-2014) through direct action by the Local Authority. The number of houses brought back into use has risen over the previous 5 years, from 596 in 2009-2010 to 1102 in 2012-2013.

Number of homeless acceptances per 1,000 households:

3.9 households per 1,000 were accepted as homeless in 2013-2014. This figure has decreased from the previous four years (4.3, 4.8, 5.0 and 4.4, chronologically).

Of the total number of eligible households, 7.5% were from non-white ethnic groups. 2.4% of the total was Asian/Asian British, and a further 2.4% were Black/Black British.

Social Services

Indicators in the Social Services National Outcomes Framework:

Percentage of social services users who felt involved in any decisions made about how care or support was provided:

The National Survey for Wales in 2014-2015 asked respondents whether they received help from care and support services in Wales in the previous 12 months. This could be help for themselves or help for someone that they were a carer for. 80% of those who received help agreed that they had been involved in any decisions made about the care or support that was provided.

Percentage of social services users who rated care and support services as excellent or good:

71% of those who received help from care and support services in Wales in the previous 12 months rated the people who directly helped, cared or supported them as excellent or good.

Percentage of people who felt that they were treated with respect:

96% of people who had visited their GP Surgery in the previous 12 months and 96% of those who had a hospital appointment in the previous 12 months agreed that they had been treated with dignity and respect.

Percentage of adult service users helped to live in the community:

This indicator measures the percentage of adult social service users who are helped to live in the community. It has remained constant at roughly 82% over the six years to 2013-2014. In 2013-2014 the percentage was 82.6%. The data for this indicator was sourced from 'Assessments and social services for adults, Wales, 2013-14'.

Objective 7

Improve the engagement and participation of under-represented groups in public appointments

Introduction

It is vital our public bodies consist of board members who reflect Welsh society. When people from all walks of life are represented on public boards, it ensures diverse perspectives and more informed decision making on public services in Wales, both locally and nationally.

The Welsh Government is committed to removing the barriers which prevent under-represented groups from applying for public appointments. We are working with a range of organisations to raise awareness of the opportunities available to all in public bodies, including health boards, sports organisations, and art bodies.

Why is diversity important in public appointments?			
 <p>The key resource of organisations is its people and therefore boards need to find and appoint the best talent.</p>	 <p>Diverse boards benefit from a range of experiences and are therefore more adaptable to new situations, providing better services to customers and stakeholders.</p>	 <p>Diverse boards are more effective, have better governance, and will improve the performance of the organisation.</p>	 <p>Boards of public bodies should reflect the people they serve if they are to be credible and command public confidence.</p>

Our Programme for Government includes commitments to:

- Identify steps to deliver a more representative pool of decision makers in public appointments.

Our Actions

In December 2014, the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty wrote to Cabinet colleagues reminding Ministers of their role in public appointments and the Welsh Government's commitment to ensure at least 40% of appointments are women. The Minister also issued a written statement highlighting progress made in increasing diversity on Public Sector Boards since publication of the good practice Sport Wales case study in December 2012.

Sport Wales Case Study 2

In collaboration with Sport Wales, Public Appointments Unit and the Sports Division, the Fairer Futures Division has prepared a case study outlining Sport Wales' 2014 board member appointment process to share best practice on increasing diversity in Public Bodies.

Sport Wales conducted a skills audit of their whole board which helped them identify the range of skills along with the diversity needs to be met from their recruitment round. They undertook a thorough review of the language used in the job description and person specification, removing any jargon and technical language. This made the application process more accessible and recognised the importance of helping prospective candidates consider the strengths they could bring to the Board. Sport Wales also actively engaged with networks from under-represented groups and ensured their communications and social media could be targeted at these groups.

The make up of Sport Wales' board from April 2015 clearly demonstrates the importance the organisation places on diversity. With 6 women, and 2 Black and minority ethnic members, they have come a long way since 2011 when they had only 2 female board members.

The case study update report was published on the Welsh Government website and shared with Ministers and all sponsor divisions across Welsh Government. The case study has also been shared with the Chairs of Public Sector Boards.

Pilot programme for under-represented groups in public appointments

A pilot development programme for under-represented groups in public appointments was made available to up to 20 people from under-represented groups across Wales. The pilot programme will include training, provision of a local mentor and/or coach, and opportunities for participants to shadow a Health Board or Trust.

The pilot programme was launched by the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty at a seminar for Chairs of Public Sector Boards in November 2014. The induction day took place in March 2015. Over 70 applications were received for the 20 places.

Expert Group on Diversity in Local Government

The Expert Group on Diversity in Local Government was established to address the severe under-representation of female councillors and candidates in Wales.

In 2014, the Expert Group published its report 'On Balance: Diversifying Democracy in Local Government in Wales'. The report sets out an action plan and 24 recommendations with an aim to improve the diversity of candidates by the next Local Government Elections in 2017. A Steering Group has been established in order to work with the Project Co-ordinator to take forward the recommendations in the report.

All Local Authorities in Wales have nominated a Diversity Champion in order to raise awareness of diversity and to support some of the recommendations in the Expert Report Action Plan. All 22 Diversity Champions, along with an additional 30 member volunteers will act as Mentors for people who are interested in standing for election in 2017.

There is an ongoing publicity campaign aimed at increasing awareness of the general public around Local Government and life as a councillor. Video clips are being developed and materials, particularly aimed at under-represented groups have been commissioned to promote the campaign. Research was carried out into the English Access to Elected Office Scheme, whereby disabled people are offered funded support in running an election campaign. The Welsh Government is considering whether a similar scheme may be operated in Wales.

Indicators

The following indicators are sourced from departmental management information:

Percentage of new public appointments who are women, disabled people and ethnic minorities:

In 2014-2015, a smaller proportion of women, disabled people and ethnic minority people were appointed to regulated public positions. 48.5% of those appointed were women (42.6% in 2013-2014). 7% identified as disabled (8.8% in 2013-2014), and 4.2% were from ethnic minorities (3.1% in 2013-2014).

Number of new public appointments disaggregated by gender/disability/ethnicity:

In 2014-2015 there were 142 new public appointments. Of these, 69 (4 did not complete) were female (48.6%), 6 were from an ethnic minority group (4.2%) and 10 were disabled (7%). The percentages for female and disabled appointments are lower than these groups' share of the total population (50.3% for working age females and 22.4% for people with a disability defined under the Equality Act).

Number of public reappointments disaggregated by gender/disability/ethnicity:

Of 77 public reappointments in 2014-2015, 36 (1 did not declare) were female (46.7%), 2 were from an ethnic minority group (2.6%) and 7 were disabled (9.1%). These percentages are lower than these groups' share of the total population, though the percentage of reappointments for all three groups has increased since 2013-2014.

Number of people who apply for public appointments disaggregated by gender/disability/ethnicity:

In 2014-2015, 446 people applied for public appointments. 183 of these were female (41%), 39 were disabled (8.7%) and 15 were from ethnic minority backgrounds (3.4%). Thus females (50.3% of the working age population) and disabled people (22.4% of the working age population under Equality Act definition) are under-represented in applications to public appointments.

Success rates at the recruitment intervals disaggregated by gender/disability/ethnicity:

Of the 446 people who applied for public appointments in 2014-2015, 215 were shortlisted (48.2%) and 58 were appointed (13%). The figures for female applicants were 24% shortlisted and 7.8% appointed. By comparison, 24% of males were shortlisted, and 5% were appointed.

Of the 58 candidates appointed, 35 were female (60.3%), 22 were male (38%), 6 were disabled (10.3%) and 3 were from ethnic minority backgrounds (5.1%).

Objective 8

Create a more inclusive workplace that promotes equality of opportunity for staff with protected characteristics through improved employee engagement and increase awareness of learning and development opportunities that are accessible to all staff

Introduction

As an employer, the Welsh Government is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and values individualism and diversity. All Welsh Government staff are expected to understand their responsibilities with respect to equality and diversity.

The Welsh Specific Equality Duties include a requirement to collect and publish data on the number of people employed, recruitment information (both externally and internally), employment information by gender, training, grievances and disciplinary procedures and employees leaving the organisation. The Welsh Government captures and reports this data in its annual Employer Equality Report.

Our Actions

Diversity Networks

The Welsh Government supports and encourages four Staff Diversity Networks. These networks give under-represented groups a voice. They offer networking opportunities to provide a different sort of support to colleagues than is normally available. It is a chance to meet others in the same position, and to share issues and ideas. They also act as an advisory body to internal policy makers, and offer opportunities for staff to gain or develop new skills.

During 2014, the Staff Diversity Networks improved their visibility and activity by hosting a range of events which were open for all staff to attend, such as a Black History Month Celebration, and attending Pride events around Wales. Each Staff Diversity Network was allocated a budget of £1000 and 10 hours facility time to use on network activity.

Our four staff networks are:

Disability Awareness and Support

Disability Awareness and Support has been in existence since 2002. The group acts as a support network for disabled staff as well as providing support to Welsh Government policy makers.

The Minority Ethnic Staff Network

The Minority Ethnic Staff Network is the network for staff from minority ethnic backgrounds. The network actively seeks to support its members to achieve their full potential; to contribute to making their experience of working for the Welsh Government one which positively benefits our communities as well as helping to develop individual learning. We promote a zero tolerance position towards racism.

Women's Network (Women Together)

Women Together, the Welsh Government women's network is an inclusive network for men and women working at all levels of the organisation. Through a range of events and activities, the network aims to provide opportunities to help individuals to fulfil their potential through connecting, learning and sharing with others.

PRISM

PRISM is the Welsh Government's sexual orientation and gender identity staff network which supports staff who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or who experience atypical gender identity. PRISM works in partnership with the organisation to create a safe, inclusive and diverse working environment which encourages a culture of respect and equality for all so everyone can reach their full potential without fear of discrimination. The network provides confidential advice, support and developmental opportunities, as well as offering social networking opportunities for members.

The PRISM network worked in close partnership with the organisation to improve the Welsh Government's score in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index. In 2014-2015, the Welsh Government rose to 34th place out of 397 entrants from the previous year's score of 195th. PRISM held a series of educational and entertaining talks aimed at increasing awareness of LGBT+ issues in the workplace and wider society. PRISM also arranged events to mark LGBT history month and IDAHOT (International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia).

Equality Training

The "Bullying, Harassment and Dignity at Work" course was updated in 2014 and renamed "Dignity and Respect". The new course offers more case studies featuring real-life situations for delegates to consider and discuss. In addition to this, a "hotshot" training session on Mental Health Awareness was designed for Human Resources Business Partners to deliver within their business portfolios.

An e-learning course on Equality and Diversity was launched in January 2015, and take up is being monitored and reported by each department.

Work is currently underway to develop a programme for high performing women in the Executive Band, to prepare them for Senior Civil Service roles.

People Survey 2014

As well as the developments in learning and development described above, the Human Resources Stakeholder Reference Group continues to meet regularly and provide feedback on corporate developments.

The engagement scores for the People Survey 2014 stand at 63% for the Welsh Government as a whole, but disabled colleagues are still reporting a lower engagement score at 58%. Work is currently underway to further explore the reasons for this and what further work can be done to address the issues.

Work Placements

The Welsh Government offers a range of placements to provide individuals with an opportunity to experience the world of work. These range from paid and unpaid placements for those of school age children to undergraduate and graduate placements. We are currently participating in the following diversity placement schemes:

Windsor Fellowship

This is an 8 week and 50 week placements for Black and minority ethnic undergraduates. They complete 8 weeks in their second year at university and a 50 week placement when they graduate. We have 2 students each year on a rolling programme. One student would be on their 8 week placement and the other on their 50 week placement.

Cabinet Office Summer Diversity Internships

These are 9 week placements for undergraduates and recent graduates who are thinking of applying for the Fast Stream and are from ethnic minority backgrounds or from socio-economically deprived backgrounds.

LIFT Placements

This work placement scheme was launched in July 2014 and is for individuals who come from workless households (a household where no one has worked for the past 6 months or more). The placement scheme runs for 26 weeks. For the first 12 weeks, the individual will continue to receive their current state benefits package and the placement will be unpaid by the Welsh Government. Following this, providing the placement is working well and there is mutual agreement to continue, the individual will cease claiming benefits, and undertake a 14 week placement paid at the Living Wage level.

During the placement, the participants in the scheme will receive training on CV writing, interview techniques, confidence building and office based skills, all of which will provide a good platform going forward for future job seeking and employment.

Employer Equality Annual Report 2013-2014

Regulation 9 of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, requires listed authorities to collect and publish certain employment information each year for their workforce, including that information broken down in respect of each protected characteristic. Regulation 16(2)(f) permits the employment information to be captured in a separate report from the Annual Equality Report, providing that separate report has already been published by the time the Annual Equality Report is published.

The Welsh Government publishes its Employer Equality Annual Report by 31 March each year. The report provides an overview of the work undertaken to progress equality and diversity in the workplace including:

- Workforce data.
- Recruitment and outreach activity.
- Training provision.
- Activities aimed at supporting an inclusive environment.

The Employer Equality Annual Report for 2014-2015 will be published in March 2016.

Indicators

The following indicators are sourced from departmental management information:

Workforce representation rate by protected group:

Women make up 58% of the workforce at Welsh Government, and are thus over represented relative to the population. Of those who responded to questions on other characteristics, 1.4% are non-white; 4.5% are disabled people; and 2.6% are not heterosexual.

62% of those who responded are married or in a civil partnership. However, the figure is only 41% if we take it as a proportion of all staff (roughly 34% of respondents failed to answer this question).

Christianity accounts for the largest number of staff (44%). 'Other religion' accounts for 19% of staff, while those who preferred not to declare account for 30%. The remainder are those without a religion (4%) and non-responses (3%).

Finally, the age of members of the workforce is normally distributed, with a peak in the range of 40-54 years (44% of staff), and reducing numbers at the younger and older ends of the scale.

People Survey engagement index by protected group:

Welsh Government used the Civil Service People Survey 2014 results to feed into the 'Preparing for the Future' programme of improvement, which aims to drive rapid progress in the way we understand value and support diversity and engage the whole organisation in practical action to make improvements. Work to date has specifically focused on developing an action plan to drive improvement on how we can better involve colleagues in developing internal policies and systems, how we create a fairer PMR system and how we improve the physical reasonable adjustments process.

The 2014 results were analysed to explore differences in the attitudinal responses and experiences of the following equality groups – Disability, Ethnicity, Religion and Sexual orientation.

The mean engagement index for the Welsh Government was 63%. The index was lower for staff who reported as disabled (60%) and higher for those from mixed ethnicities (65%) or Asian/Asian British respondents (72%). Buddhists had a higher index (72%) as did Christians (66%) and Muslims (66%) while 'any other religion' were lower (60%). There was little variation by sexual orientation, apart from those who selected 'other' (i.e. not heterosexual, gay/lesbian, or bisexual) at 53%. Please note all comparisons are based on very small group sizes, and so should be interpreted with caution.

Participation in training and talent management programmes by protected group:

In 2014-2015, 64.1% of attendees on training courses were female. Excluding non-replies and 'prefer not to say', staff from ethnic minorities accounted for 1.9% of attendees, 5.7% were disabled, and 3.1% were not heterosexual.

40.1% of attendees were married or in a civil partnership, 36.3% were single or another status, and 23.7% did not reply. 43% of attendees were Christian, 4.1% had another religion, and 24.5% had no religion. 25.2% selected 'prefer not to say' with the remaining 3.2% who did not reply.

Feedback from the implementation of reasonable adjustments:

- The Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing team are responsible for the provision of the majority of reasonable adjustments, ranging from keyboards and mice to assistive software such as Dragon Dictate. With a workforce that is increasing in age, the amount of adjustments that are provided continues to increase, year on year.
- In 2014-2015 there were some significant changes to the ICT infrastructure, which had a knock on effect of creating compatibility issues with the assistive software, leading to a number of the users not being able to use their software. The result of this was that a rapid solutions event was carried out with all relevant stakeholders to identify how these issues could be addressed. In addition the event re-mapped the processes to speed up the case management to make sure the adjustments reach the person in far more timely manner.
- The Head of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team takes an active part in the Disability Awareness And Support group in order that all staff receive fair and equitable treatment.

- The range of adjustments vary considerably, and on occasion the delivery of those adjustments does not happen in a timely manner, due to factors which are usually out of the control of the team (delivery times etc.), however the team engage with and order from a number of suppliers to minimise the chances of this happening.

Take up rate of equality and diversity courses:

More women than men take up equality and diversity courses (58%), while white people account for 94% (of declared respondents) on these courses. Similarly, 90% (of declared respondents) are non-disabled, and 86% are heterosexual. 57% of respondents are married or in a civil partnership (43% excluding non-responders).

Christians account for 42% of attendees. Those with another religion account for 4%, while those who preferred not to say account for 26%. Those with no religion are over-represented on this type of training, account for 25% of attendees.

Age of attendees ranges from 16 to 65+. There is lower attendance at equality and diversity training for those within the age range of 60 to 65+ (with 65+ at 1.1%) while higher attendance falls within the age range of 40 to 54 (peaking at ages 50 to 54 – 15.9%).

Effectiveness of Welsh Government Actions to Fulfil the Equality Objectives

The equality objectives seek to address long standing, deeply entrenched and often inter-generational inequalities for those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It is therefore imperative the actions to address these inequalities have a long term focus. A truly equal and inclusive Wales will take time to achieve but we intend to show measurable progress.

In order to measure progress against the equality objectives, where appropriate, indicators have been established and referenced in this report. Where indicators are still in development as part of specific strategies, this is also made clear within the relevant equality objective in this report. The indicators are intended to set the baseline in this third year of reporting progress against the equality objectives. Our actions to progress each equality objective, considered alongside the indicators, demonstrate our effectiveness in this reporting period. We acknowledge often significant change may not be immediate but, should nevertheless, be steady and measurable. We are committed to ensuring we have the right actions in place to take forward each equality objective.

The Welsh Government is committed to evaluating its key policies and programmes, many of which have goals to reduce inequalities in health, educational, economic and social outcomes, partly reflecting deep-seated disadvantages experienced by groups with particular protected characteristics, such as disability, race or gender. Recent and ongoing evaluations include those of the Pupil Deprivation Grant, the Discretionary Assistance Fund and Flying Start.

Chapter 4 – Looking Ahead

During the final year of the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives 2012-2016, the focus will turn towards the direction of travel for the next four years. From April 2015, the Welsh Government began consulting on the review and refresh of its Equality Objectives within the future Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020 with the launch of a 12 week consultation.

The Welsh Government will hold workshops across Wales and invite Third Sector stakeholders to hold their own focus groups. This approach will enable the Welsh Government to gather views and evidence on what the current priority areas of inequality are for protected groups, which will be addressed in its refreshed Equality Objectives for 2016-2020. It will support Welsh Government to comply with the statutory duties not only to review our Equality Objectives but to engage and involve people with protected characteristics in this process.