



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Summary

## Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for Public Appointments in Wales



## Envisaged Future by 2030



### **We envisage that if we work together to address this issue, for the good of all citizens in Wales, our achievements by 2030 will include:**

- ▶ Diversity, inclusion and fairness will be embedded across the system of public appointments.
- ▶ There will no longer be a need for a strategy to ensure that Boards are diverse and inclusive.
- ▶ The rest of the UK and the wider world will look to us for how we have changed the transparency and culture of our appointments systems, discovering, inviting and nurturing all skills, knowledge and talents.
- ▶ Ministers and all politicians of all parties will uphold the importance of this work, consistently supporting and driving it – they will not falter in inviting and nurturing **all** talent.
- ▶ We had role models that made us feel it was for us.
- ▶ Stakeholders and government won't be put off course – our vision and values will drive it over the years, tackling the difficulties that arise.
- ▶ Asking if we have the right numbers for the right balance won't be needed, Boards will be noticeably different.
- ▶ Disabled people and other groups will have their voices heard on an equal footing – “no unconscious bias please and if challenged we won't be made to feel that we are the problem”.
- ▶ Our strategy is a living document, monitored and adjusted annually, with measurable outcomes.
- ▶ We brought in changes that were sustainable and signed into by leadership.

## Strategy 2020-2023

### Vision

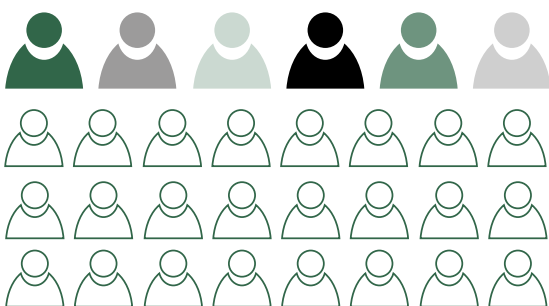
#### Reflecting Wales in running Wales

To ensure that decision making in Wales utilises all the talents, voices and lived experience of the peoples of Wales, and is more inclusive so as to achieve better outcomes for all citizens.



### Purpose

To sustain the increased numbers of women on Boards and to increase the number of disabled, BAME, and other under-represented people in appointments to Boards so that Boards reflect the communities we serve and therefore improve decision making.



## Our values

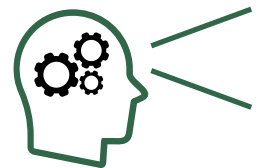


### Transparency

We are open about all we do, so that there is no mystery about who did what and why and how we invited, nurtured and recruited talent from all parts of our society.

### Integrity

We recognise our unconscious biases and monitor them.

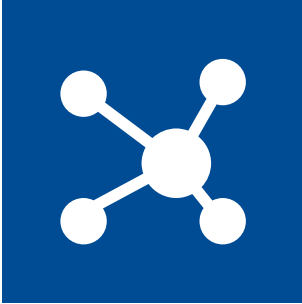


### Inclusion

We involve all, valuing, respecting and positively welcoming the challenges of diverse ideas, views and lived experiences.



# Our 5 Goals



**Goal 1:**  
To gather and share data

Gather & share consistent, reliable, qualitative & quantitative data.



**Goal 2:**  
To build a robust pipeline

Create a robust pipeline of potential Board members by making more aware and supporting talent.



**Goal 3:**  
To secure open and transparent recruitment practices

Develop, test and establish new inclusive & transparent recruitment processes.



**Goal 4:**  
To get Boards on board

Ensure all Board members are skilled & knowledgeable about equality, diversity & inclusion.



**Goal 5:**  
To strengthen leadership

Secure and sustain leadership commitment.

# Introduction

This paper is a summary of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for Public Appointments in Wales.

The Strategy builds on the good practices of current Boards, the work done to increase the number of women on Boards, and the 2018 review<sup>1</sup> which explored how to open up public appointments to disabled people. This Strategy was based on engagement with stakeholders involved in public appointments, equality policy, and those working in academia. The Strategy sets out a programme for the years up to 2023, and outlines a vision for 2030 if the Strategy is fully implemented. The Strategy says that it is crucial that this journey is underpinned by the right progressive values.

The Strategy stresses the need for all talent in Wales to be fully utilised and presents goals and underlying actions aimed at delivering a more inclusive public appointment process and supporting cultural change. The actions have been costed and will be subject to evaluation. Key Performance Indicators are being developed to support effective assessment of progress and timescales for the first years, aiming for substantial progress by 2023. Risks and their mitigation have also been identified.

This summary describes the progress made, the rationale for further work and the challenges faced, leading to the five goals. It is structured as follows:

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The plan is to focus for the next two years on BAME and disabled people with the aim of then using this learning to develop actions for other under-represented groups in the subsequent years.

While the Strategy is focused on the work of regulated Boards only, the hope and the intention is to encourage other non-regulated bodies, task groups, charities and others, to adopt the good practices it describes.

## 1. Diversity Data

There is already encouraging progress towards gender balance in public life. According to the UK's Commissioner for Public Appointments annual report, in 2018/19, women accounted for 63.5% of those appointed or re-appointed to Boards in Wales. However, there is concern regarding the low proportions of BAME people (3.0%) and those identifying as disabled people (5.1%) appointed to Boards in Wales. By contrast, the latest available data reports the BAME population in Wales as 5% and the proportion of working-age adults who are disabled as 22%.

Jane Hutt, Deputy Minister and Chief Whip, and the UK Commissioner welcomed progress in the appointment of BAME candidates, but are jointly concerned that the evidence for candidates identifying as a disabled person was less positive. Both also point to a failure to translate increased diverse representation at Board level into higher numbers of Chairs from these groups.

## Our Own Research

More than forty five individuals involved in the public appointment process and from the wider equality policy arena, were interviewed as part of gathering evidence for this Strategy. Consultations included

<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/760721/Lord-Holmes-Review-full.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/760721/Lord-Holmes-Review-full.pdf)



stakeholder events with representatives from Boards, equality organisations and other partners, and an event with the Public Leaders' Forum. The results are reflected in the rest of this summary.

## 2. The Case for Diversity and Inclusion in Public Appointments

The Strategy is rooted in the strong moral, legislative and business cases for diversity and inclusion. The **moral case** is based on principles of human rights, equality, social justice, and democracy: those who govern Public Bodies should be representative of the communities that they serve.

The **legislative case** includes, amongst others, the Equalities Act (2010), the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) which argue for action to redress inequalities and create a fairer Wales.

Research outlining clear **business benefits** is detailed in the Strategy. It is clear that diverse Boards:

- ensure they tap the full wealth of knowledge, talent and creativity available
- access the full range of people and lived experiences among those who use the organisations' services, resulting in a fuller understanding of how they operate in practice and hence better strategic decisions which reflect the diverse needs of the communities they serve
- are able to be more creative and stronger in their key roles of supporting and challenging those in senior positions within organisations
- bring challenge and naïve questions to raise issues which might otherwise be left untouched.

It is clear then that progressing diversity and inclusion is not just a moral and political issue, but also an economic one. In the 2018 review which explored how to open up public appointments to disabled people, the author states: "This would be using the full talents of all in our society – not just of the elite". Professor Emmanuel Ogbonna of Cardiff University, in his paper on BAME in the workforce, refers to the

"explosion" of the population in the future which will be from diverse backgrounds and which will offer a pool of talent in coming generations. In a recent lecture to leaders in public services he estimated the UK's potential economic benefit from full BAME representation in the workforce to be £24bn per annum.

Other research points to the need to develop mechanisms to identify, develop and promote diversity within all organisations in order to ensure, over time, there is a pipeline of Board-capable candidates, and that their managerial and executive ranks appropriately reflect the importance of diversity to their organisations.

Enormous social, economic, environmental and cultural challenges face public services, other sectors and communities more widely. It is vital that the Boards of Public Bodies should benefit from the views of the full range of people in Wales in all their diversity.

## 3. Challenges

The research highlighted a number of challenges which the Strategy aims to address. One is a general lack of public awareness and knowledge regarding Public Bodies and their functions. This is particularly apparent for those not in the traditional public service loop, often from the third sector but also from the private sector. This often results in the view that individuals from under-represented groups "do not exist in the public services pipeline". The Strategy and its implementation plan advocate significant outreach activity and an improved communications platform for raising awareness of public appointments to address these issues.

A second challenge is that we do not have sufficiently robust baseline data, including location and social mobility data, to establish meaningful targets for Wales. Setting targets for women on Boards helped to highlight urgency and direction, but there are no such targets for BAME and disabled people or other under-represented groups. The Strategy and its implementation plan include work to develop a more robust data platform, including exploring how targets can be set.

## 4. Five Goals

As a result of a number of key stakeholder interviews, five goals were identified and tested with those attending a stakeholder event in September 2019. During this event participants were asked to imagine what Boards may look like in 2030.

Through this work, a statement of purpose for the Strategy emerged, together with a mission which reflected the Strategy and

values which underpinned it. These are presented in the summary at the start of this paper. The discussion also refined the initially identified five goals and identified barriers and opportunities faced in progressing them. These views were further developed at a consultation event of the Public Leaders' Forum in November 2019, leading to the final version of the Strategy. This coproduction resulted in the following five refined goals:



### GOAL 1

To gather and share data.



### GOAL 2

To build a community of individuals who are interested, aware and nearly ready for Board membership (i.e. to build a robust pipeline).



### GOAL 3

To secure open and transparent recruitment practices.



### GOAL 4

To get Boards on board.



### GOAL 5

To strengthen leadership.





These five goals support each other as follows. The core processes for diverse appointments are those that create a robust pipeline of diverse applicants (goal 2) who are then fairly treated, feeling valued during open and transparent recruitment practices (goal 3). The culture and practices of the Boards themselves are critical for the success of these processes and to ensure that those recruited are able to deliver maximum value to the Boards they join and have a positive experience: hence the need to get Boards to engage (goal 4). None of this will happen, especially the changing of culture, without strong leadership by Ministers, Chairs, senior civil servants and other senior leaders (goal 5). All these actions require the guidance and incentives of good quality, widely shared data (goal 1).

Each goal has a series of linked actions, outlined initially for 2020-2021, by which the goal will be achieved. The Strategy outlines each goal in turn, presenting its purpose, requirements, opportunities and challenges and proposing high level actions in order of priority where possible.

### Centralisation of public appointments

In 2018, the process for delivering public appointments was centralised. This will greatly facilitate the implementation of the Strategy. The majority of regulated public appointments are now delivered together, led by the Public Bodies Unit. This provides a number of advantages, including better identification and planning of appointments and facilitating a more consistent approach to delivery. This is being underpinned by a review of the end-to-end public appointment process, which will include refreshed guidance and templates. Delivering appointments in this manner also ensures there is central oversight of diversity and inclusion in the public appointment process.

## 5. Impact

This Strategy not only seeks to increase the numbers of those from under-represented groups on Boards, but also promotes the inclusion of everyone who serves on Boards, to allow them to contribute fully using their unique talents. The presence of diversity on Boards will improve and strengthen decision-making and bring a greater variety of lived experience into discussion. It will also improve the quality, tone and culture of Board discussions, support participation in decision-making and enhance good governance. All this will drive better outputs and outcomes for ALL citizens through enhanced delivery which meets diverse needs and expectations.