Annex 1

APS Equalities Survey Analysis – Results by Strand

Age

The largest age group within APS is the 25-34 age group and 32.6 per cent of those who replied to the survey were in this group. 2.5 per cent did not wish to record their age. However, it is important to bear in mind that the analysis of response rates shows that the 16-24 age group, and to a lesser extent the 55+ age group, may be under-represented by the survey.

Figure 1. Age of respondents, 2008
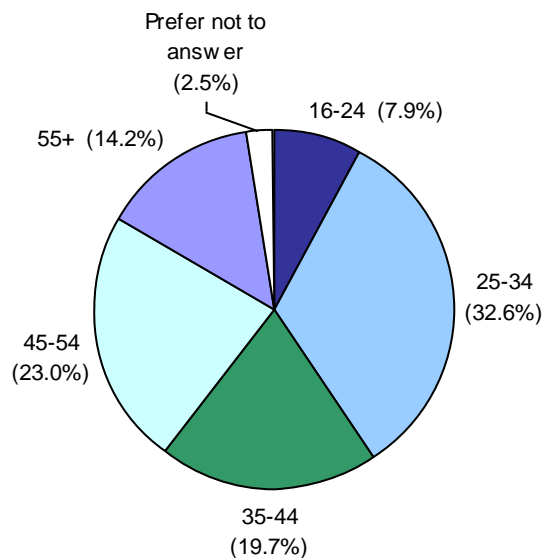
Gender and Grade

51.1 per cent of those that answered the survey were female and 48.9 per cent were male. No respondent stated that they were transgender. 2 respondents did not wish to give their gender.

Table 2 shows the gender make-up of each grade. For example, 31.6 per cent of Team Supports who gave gender information were female and 68.4 per cent were male. The largest difference is in the HEO grade where 77.8 per cent of those who responded were female and 22.2 per cent were male. The information from Table 2 is also shown in Figure 2.

Table 2. Gender make-up of grades, 2008

	Per cent	
Grade	Female	Male
TS	31.6	68.4
EO	52.6	47.4
HEO	77.8	22.2
SEO	44.8	55.2
Grade 7 or above	55.9	44.1
Prefer not to answer	50.0	50.0
Total	**51.1**	**48.9**

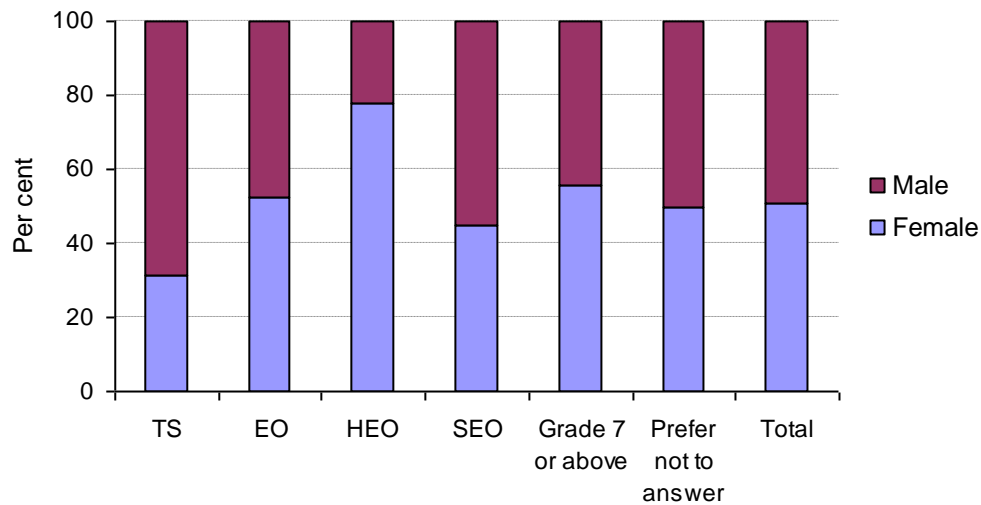**Figure 2. Gender make-up of grades, 2008**

Table 3 below shows the distribution of each gender across grades. For example, 19.8 per cent of all females who responded to the survey work as Team Supports. A chart for each gender is also given below.

Table 3. Distribution of each gender across grades

	Per cent	
Grade	Female	Male
TS	19.8	44.8
EO	16.5	15.5
HEO	34.7	10.3
SEO	10.7	13.8
Grade 7 or above	15.7	12.9
Prefer not to answer	2.5	2.6
Total	100	100

Figure 3. Distribution of females across grades
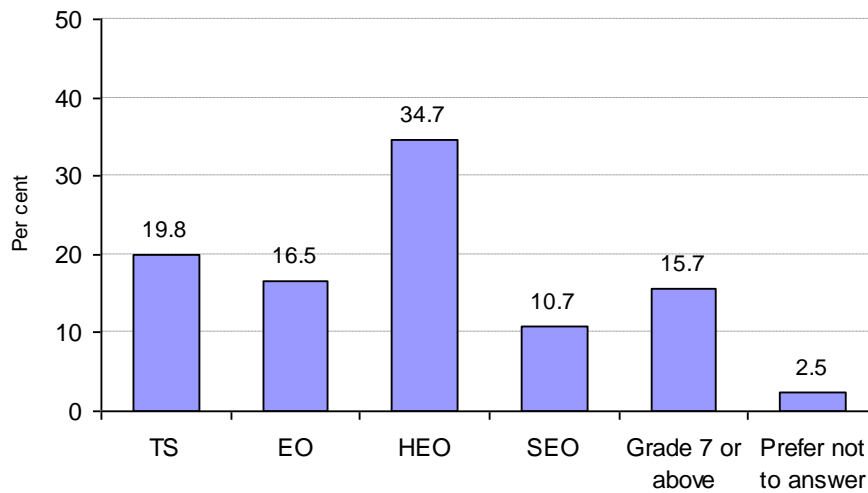
Figure 4. Distribution of males across grades
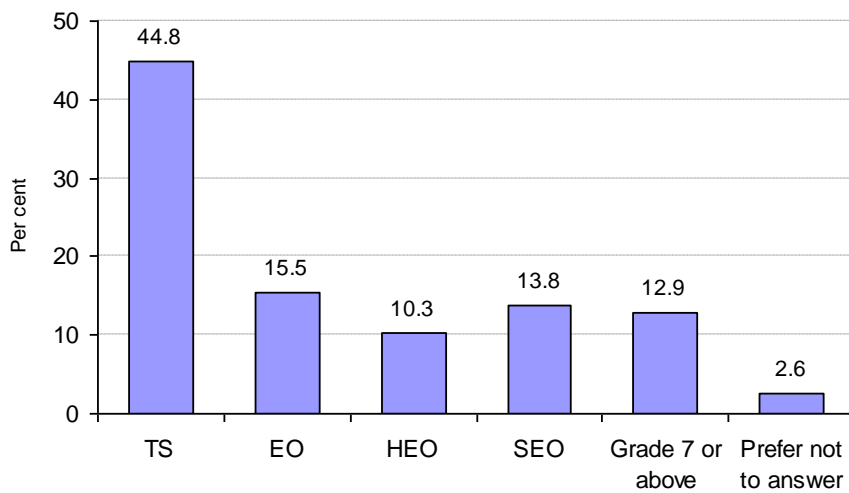
It should be kept in mind that the analysis of response rates suggests that team supports (especially male team supports) and male HEOs may be under-represented by the survey.

Disability

87.9 per cent of respondents stated that they did not have a disability. 5 per cent of respondents had a physical impairment, while 3.3 per cent had a different type of disability. These included the following categories: learning disability/difficulty, sensory impairment, mental health condition and other long standing illness or health condition. 3.8 per cent of respondents did not wish to answer the question on disability.

Figure 2. Disability status of respondents, 2008
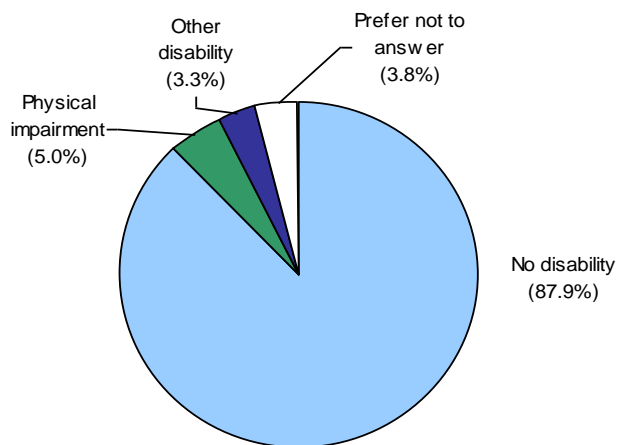
Ethnicity

92.9 per cent of employees who responded to the survey were white and 5.0 per cent were non-white. 2.1 per cent chose not to answer the question on ethnicity. This compares to a non-white population of 4.5 per cent for the officially defined Cardiff travel to work area[1]. 77 per cent of the people who recorded that they were white were in the White Welsh category.

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[1] From previous MRS analysis of 2001 Census figures.

Figure 3. Ethnicity of respondents, 2008

Prefer not to answer (2.1%)

Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British (1.7%)

Black, Black Welsh or Black British (1.7%)

Mixed or Other Ethnic Group (1.7%)

White (92.9%)
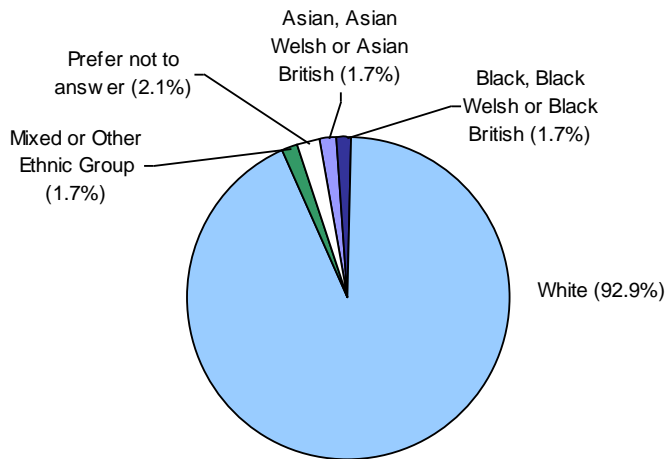
Sexual Orientation

91.2 per cent of the respondents to the survey were heterosexual. In total, lesbian, gay and bisexual employees made up 4.2 per cent of the respondents. 4.6 per cent of people did not wish to record their sexual orientation. Official figures on sexual orientation, either from HR or official statistics agencies, are not available so it is not possible to compare the figure from the survey with the wider population.

Figure 4. Sexual orientation of respondents

Bisexual (1.7%)

Lesbian or Gay (2.5%)

Prefer not to answer (4.6%)

Heterosexual (91.2%)
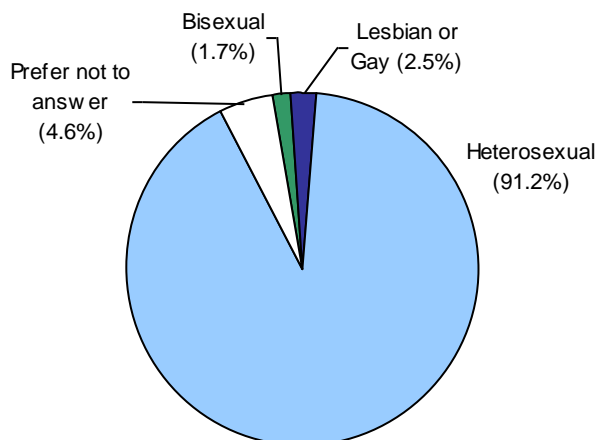
Religious Belief

Of the people that responded to the survey, the largest religious group was Christian (49 per cent). The second largest group (38.9 per cent) stated that they had no religious belief. 7.5 per cent chose not to answer the question on religion.

Figure 5. Religious beliefs of respondents, 2008
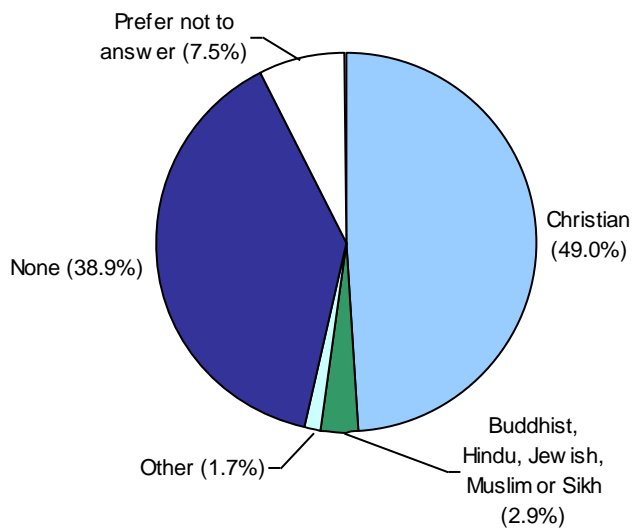
NB Where a question has been left blank, it has been included in the "prefer not to answer" category. Blanks may have occurred when respondents filled in a paper copy of the survey and did not select an answer option. Where necessary, small numbers have been included with other categories to protect confidentiality.

Adele Baumgardt Consulting

External Review of Recruitment Practices and the Impact of these on Increasing Representation from the Black and Minority Ethnic community in National Assembly for Wales Commission Workforce

Report

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Executive Summary

The National Assembly for Wales Commission (Assembly Commission) commissioned an external review of recruitment practices and the impact of these on increasing representation from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community in its workforce. The review is driven by the Assembly Commission desire to be an exemplar employer, and an organisation that representatives from the BME community aspire to work in and with.

The review consisted of analysing existing policies and practices within the Assembly Commission, examining other good practice in relation to recruitment of BME staff, and making recommendations on additional activities which it might be engaged in, which would lead to measurable and meaningful outcomes and increase BME representation.

Key findings
The Assembly Commission is a relatively small employer with approximately 300 employees. It currently employs approximately 4.3% of staff from a BME background. However, this statistic is not wholly robust, since collection of data from equality monitoring forms is not 100%. Because of the size and nature of the organisation, vacancies are relatively few. Strategies to address the under –representation of staff from BME backgrounds are hampered by the low turnover rate within the Commission, and are quickly distorted by only one or two appointments or resignations.

Currently a variety of methods are used to advertise vacancies. In some instances opportunities are advertised internally in the first instance. Whilst the reasons behind this approach are operationally sound, they will have a negative impact on the Commission's ability to increase the representation of BME staff in its workforce. Wherever possible, posts at all levels, should be advertised externally to maximise opportunities to increase BME representation.

It should be noted that data from the first staff equalities survey are due shortly. This will complement the data already held and greatly increase the organisational understanding of BME issues.

It appears to the reporter that good, if not excellent practices are in place to positively impact on both the perception of BME groups of the Assembly Commission as a place of work, and the real ability of under-represented groups to access the application and appointment processes.

However, there are, as with all organisations, limits to the resources which may be deployed on this issue. An organisational decision needs to be made

regarding the priority this work is given and on the resources necessary to deliver it. The recommendations below present an ideal, achievable only with significant resources allocated, and may not, therefore, be organisationally feasible.

It should also be noted that differing equality aspirations often compete. So success in creating a bi-lingual organisation, can present an additional barrier to individuals from different ethnic backgrounds. This risk should be acknowledged, and the actions taken to mitigate this risk clearly audited in order to comply with the Race Relations Amendment Act requirements.

Recommendations

The following are the key recommendations for continuing and improving practice in relation to increasing recruitment and opportunities for BME representatives. A fuller list and analysis of the findings and good practice are available in the full report.

1. Data collection and acting on findings

In order to monitor and evaluate performance it is critical that robust and thorough data collection and monitoring systems are put in place. Some of these are already collected, but are not complete. In addition, clear identification of action and response to the data will make it more meaningful and help contributors to understand why it is being collected and what will be done with it. Data sources on all staff, identifying BME status could include:

- Recruitment and selection data, including number of applicants, numbers successful at sift stage through to interview to appointment.
- Staff survey data
- Performance appraisal data
- Training and development data on take up rates
- Data from exit interviews

In addition a full equality audit could be useful, including an analysis of pay. All these data should be publicised widely internally and explain why data is collected and what is done with it. This could be linked to positive case studies.

> **Recommended action:** Accept this recommendation – although the potential for undertaking a full equality audit should be examined in further detail.

2. Training

Equality and Diversity training is available to all staff but is not mandatory and is dependent on a self nomination system except in the induction process.

Mandatory equality training including coverage of the statutory obligations under the positive race equality duty should be considered. This should assist in overcoming any cultural issues identified.

> **Recommended action:** Accept recommendation– this is consistent with our approach to developing mandatory training to complement and support delivery of the Single Equalities Scheme.

3. Outreach

The current outreach approach was reported as working well for both individuals and the organisation and has been critical in achieving positive BME recruitment outcomes.

Coaching in how to complete the application process particularly in relation to competencies has been very effective and opportunities to continue this should be sought. It may be possible to delegate this to recruitment agencies.

Tours of the Assembly Commission building and introductory meetings were again found to be a very positive experience, and this work should be expanded if possible.

> **Recommended action:** Accept recommendation – the Equalities Team is working with colleagues from HR and External Communications to expand this work

4. Advertising

Both in the previous research and throughout this review, where and how vacancies and opportunities were advertised was seen as critical. The work with the Cardiff South Enterprise Centre has been particularly effective. However, there are a number of suggestions to build on this good practice:

- Wherever operationally possible, posts should be advertised externally
- Use of posters and larger space for job adverts and opportunities
- Use of Mosques, community groups and centres for additional advertising
- Increased use of MEWN and other community databases, for example Race Equality Councils

- Ethnic Minority section of the Cardiff central library and other libraries in general

Recommended action: Accept recommendation – the HR team is working with the Equalities Team to widen recruitment advertising across the equalities strands. Changes to the recruitment procedure will form a separate proposal which will be developed in full consultation with the TUS.

5. Equality Impact Assessments and Consultation

Whilst the Assembly Commission does not currently have a requirement under the duty, it is envisaged that it will have shortly, and practice has been to adopt these principles in how it conducts its business from the outset. It should be noted that the Assembly Commission does have a Race Equality Scheme and Action Plan which are commended. However, there are a number of key areas where improvements could be made:

- Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) should be embedded within the culture and function of the Assembly Commission. This may require more EIA training with key staff
- Training on the requirement of the duty should be mandatory
- Consultation with both internal and external BME groups should be undertaken. This would greatly enhance the Assembly Commission's current efforts to increase BME representation and increase internal and cultural understanding of the issues involved.

Recommended action: Accept recommendation – work is in progress in developing a user-friendly equalities impact assessment tool for staff and to identify suitable training to support this process. We are also involving people from the BME community in the development of the Single Equalities Scheme

Full Report

The project aim

The project had two aims:

- To review the efficacy and appropriateness of current BME recruitment practice (HR recruitment procedure); and

- Identifying practical measures that might be taken to ensure recruitment practices support the Assembly Commission ambition of being viewed as an employer of choice by members of the BME community and deliver real improvements in measurable equality.

The review was carried out taking into consideration the following factors that may have an effect on BME recruitment practices:

- The current development of a Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan which will address the following equality strands: age, disability, gender/gender identity, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation;
- The development, growth and promotion of the Assembly Commission as an exemplar, working bilingual organisation; and
- The findings of the 'Diversity in the Welsh Assembly Workforce' report (K. Hunt and S. Withnall, August 2005: the perceived and practical barriers of BME people to working in the Assembly (pre-Government of Wales Act 2006).

Methodology:

1. Desk based review of existing policies and practices including:
   - Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan
   - 'Diversity in the Welsh Assembly Workforce' report (K. Hunt and S. Withnall, August 2005: the perceived and practical barriers of BME people to working in the Assembly (pre-Government of Wales Act 2006).
   - Current BME recruitment practice (HR recruitment procedure)
   - Dignity at Work policy
   - Grievance policy
   - Corporate strategy
   - Annual equalities review
   - Secondment policy
   - Draft staff survey data

- Staff training and development strategy

2. Face to face and telephone interviews with key staff responsible for strategies and policies which may impact on BME recruitment. These included:
    - Interview with Holly Pembridge and Ross Davies: Equality Team located in the Corporate Unit
    - Interview with Craig Stephenson: Head of Corporate Unit
    - Interview with John Chick: Head of Recruitment
    - Telephone interview with Dafydd Kidd: Recruitment Manager
    - Telephone interview with Rachel Prosser Learning and Development Advisor
    - Secondee from MEWN Cymru
    - BME member of staff

3. Review good practice on BME recruitment practices of:
    - Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body
    - London Assembly
    - Shelter
    - Help the Aged
    - Macmillan cancer relief
    - BT
    - London Transport and Underground
    - Devon Race Equality Council
    - Higher education establishments (various)

4. Compare current practice with other organisations good practice and draw conclusions – desk based research.

This report is the outcome from the above and makes recommendations on practical measures that might be taken to ensure recruitment practices support being viewed as an employer of choice by members of the BME community and deliver real improvements in measurable equality.

Key Findings

A wealth of data was gathered from both the policy reviews and from the interviews. The key findings are as follows:

1. Systems and Policies already in place
There are already a number of good practice policies in place within the Assembly Commission in relation to BME issues. These include:
- Some data collection and monitoring particularly at recruitment via an equality monitoring form

- A staff equalities survey is now in place and will be repeated every three years
- Positive outreach recruitment practices
- Mentoring and shadowing
- Work placement opportunities for BME candidates
- A single equality scheme is being drafted and will subsume the current Race Equality Scheme. This includes some Equality Impact Assessment processes and consultation
- Equality training is currently mandatory for all new recruits through the induction process. Further modules are available to all staff upon self nomination

Civil Service Recruitment Code: Nationality/Citizenship Rules
This Code includes a nationality requirement for staff working for the Civil Service. All staff working for the Civil Service must, besides having the right to work in the UK, be either UK/ EEA / Commonwealth citizens. See link: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/eligibility/nationality.asp

These nationality restrictions have meant that certain nationalities in and around Cardiff are unable to apply to work with the Commission as they fail to meet the criteria e.g. people from Somalia and Sudan. There have been several instances where the Commission have had to reject applicants who did not meet the eligibility criteria, solely on that basis. Cardiff South Enterprise Centre, with whom the Commission works on some recruitment schemes, checks the eligibility of the applicants that they submit before recommending them to apply for jobs with the Assembly Commission.

Following the Government of Wales Act 2006, the Assembly Commission is no longer bound by the above rules and is actively considering how to take this forward.

2. **External and internal perceptions of the Assembly Commission**
   Many of the issues raised in the 2005 report 'Diversity in the Welsh Assembly Workforce' report (K. Hunt and S. Withnall, August 2005: the perceived and practical barriers of BME people to working in the Assembly, although gathered before the separation of the Assembly Commission from the Welsh Assembly Government were still found to hold true. Critically these included:
   - The perception of the Assembly Commission as part of the Welsh Assembly Government and as a part of the Civil Service
   - The perception of the Assembly Commission as a white Welsh employer

- o A wide spread acceptance of the Assembly Commission as an exemplar of Welsh Language presenting a particular barrier to BME groups who do not identify as Welsh, or Welsh speakers

3. **Knowledge and understanding**
   Knowledge around BME issues and barriers to their recruitment was high in all participants and a desire to overcome barriers was evident in policies and practices throughout.

4. **Current position regarding BME employment**
   Evidence was found in both the policy reviews and interviews that BME staff remain clustered in low and front of house posts. They are also less likely to be successful in the appointment process, (see below under policy review Annual Equalities Report).

5. **Barriers**
   Access to information appears from the interviews to be the largest single barrier to successful recruitment of BME staff. Barriers include what information is available, how accessible it is in terms of language and information, and where it is made available.

6. **Culture and factors affecting change**
   Throughout this project the pace and scale of change which the Assembly Commission has been subject to since its inception were obvious obstacles to progressing BME recruitment issues.

   The overall culture within the Assembly Commission is very proactive in relation to the equalities agenda. Both in interviews and in the policies reviewed, equality is given a high priority and understood.

   Areas where understanding was lacking were identified in relation to the new, 'positive' duties on race, gender and disability and in particular in relation to Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) and the consultation requirements of the new legislation.

7. **Leadership and commitment**
   In all of the good practice studied, leadership and commitment to the equalities agenda from the top of an organisation was deemed to be paramount.

   It is evident that the Assembly Commission demonstrates a high level of commitment to equality, for example, a message from the Chief Executive outlining the Executive Board's commitment to promoting equality and diversity was sent to all staff in January 2008. This is attached at Annex B to this paper. However, more work could be undertaken to mainstream equality and embed its practice. This should include a more transparent

commitment from the Assembly Commission Leadership where opportunities should be sought and taken to put equality issues on the agenda.

8. Single Equality Scheme risks

The Assembly Commission is actively working towards the adoption and implementation of a Single Equality Scheme (SES), which is still currently in draft form.

Whilst the Assembly Commission's commitment to embracing all equality strands in the new SES is to be applauded, certain risks have been identified in this approach. Explicit compliance with the Race Equality Duty may be jeopardised unless the SES contains clear links with the Duty requirements. (See Policy review 1.)

It is advised that a separate Race Equality Action Plan is retained as part of the SES and considers the recommendations set out below.

9. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a general duty on public authorities to promote race equality. Under the duty, public authorities are required to have due regard to:

- eliminating unlawful racial discrimination,
- promoting equality of opportunity, and
- promoting good relations between people of different racial groups

As well as the general duty, the Act imposes specific duties to assess the impact of all their policies on staff and service users of different ethnic groups. The duty states that public bodies must produce a race equality scheme which sets out:

- A list of all functions and policies assessed as relevant to the General Duty
- Making arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of new policies and functions
- Meeting specific duties as an employer and monitoring employment data
- Publishing the results of assessments, consultation and monitoring
- Monitoring policies for adverse impact on the promotion of race equality
- Ensuring the public has access to information and services provided by the Assembly Commission.
- Training staff in connection with the general and specific duties
- Reviewing the assessments made and Policies every 3 years.

Whilst the Assembly Commission does not currently have a requirement under the duty, it is envisaged that it will have shortly, and practice has been to adopt these principles in how it conducts its business from the outset.

However, this review has identified that Equality Impact Assessments and consultation with BME groups both internally and externally have not been fully embedded. It is critical that this is done in order to increase internal understanding of the issues.

Policy Review

I. Single Equalities Scheme (SES) and Action Plan

The Single Equality Scheme for the Assembly Commission is still in draft form. However, it is proposed that The SES will refer to the differing general and specific duties for race, disability and gender. The Action Plan will set out objectives some of which will cross-cut multiple strands. Race-specific objectives will be clearly identified. A single equality impact assessment (EIA) tool is being developed, which should help identify areas of multiple discrimination across all the strands. Whilst this strategy appears to be an appropriate approach in accordance with good practice elsewhere, there are a number of risks attached to this approach.

- Without a separate Race Action Plan, priorities may become conflated. Provided the Race actions are clearly identified, and the audit trail made clear for compliance with the different aspects of both the general and specific duties, this risk should be mitigated
- Consultations with BME groups both internal and external should be conducted and clearly audited
- The single Equality Impact Assessment Process should have safeguards built in to it to ensure that risks and actions do not get conflated. Experience from the statutory equality Commissions prior to September 2007, found this to be a significant risk of Single Equality Schemes. That is, where single equality impact assessment processes were put in place, organisations had a tendency to conflate priorities across the strands and identify the most significant (or easiest to deliver) of them all. This led to significant failure in compliance with each of the duties. Where possible, specific Race Equality Impact Assessments should be conducted. If the single EIA approach is adopted, there should be a clear audit trail from the various aspects of the general duty and the specific duties to identified actions, and the findings and actions taken as a result published and made widely accessible

II.   '**Diversity in the Welsh Assembly Workforce' report** (K. Hunt and S. Withnall, August 2005: the perceived and practical barriers of BME people to working in the Assembly (pre-Government of Wales Act 2006).

Many of the findings and recommendations of the above report were found to be still pertinent despite the change of structure since its publication.

The following are key comments from the report which were echoed in the conduction of this review:

Training

> *Although the Assembly did provide training on legislation etc, the group felt that this was not adequate to change the culture of the organisation.*

> > *'A two hour session once every three years isn't going to change attitudes!'*

Application Process

- *Recruitment advertising could be extended beyond the mainstream media eg advertising in minority press such as The Voice.*

- *Provide user-friendly, concise supporting information with the application form, explaining what is meant by competencies etc.*

- *Offer workshops to specific communities, explaining how to fill in the application forms.*

Liaison Work

- *HR should go out into BME communities in a proactive way, explaining the role of the Welsh Assembly and the types of jobs available. Although there was an awareness that the Welsh Assembly did currently engage with BME communities, the feeling was that it could do much more.*

- *The Assembly could make more use of its existing links with BME service users and service providers with regard to targeted recruitment.*

- *The needs of different BME communities should be recognised; ie refugees, first and second generation BME people should not be targeted in the same way.*

- *It was recognised that the Welsh Assembly placement and shadowing schemes for BME individuals have been very successful. However, these schemes should be ongoing rather than short term. The group felt that there have been a lot of schemes at the Assembly, but that what was needed was a sustained strategy.*

- *The Assembly needed to find out what people within Wales thought about the Welsh Assembly. There was a need to emphasise that the Assembly was open to all the communities in Wales, not just the white Welsh majority.*

- *A belief that there is an underlying racism in Wales which means that BME people do not get offered 'good' jobs, but are 'kept in their place'. In particular, young Muslims felt that Islamaphobia was getting worse.*

- *A belief that BME people are only offered jobs that requires them to work within or for BME communities (in the Voluntary and Public Sectors). BME people tend not to be seen in 'mainstream' jobs.*

- *The Public Sector not being seen as an attractive career for BME young people.*

Barriers
- *For Muslims, the need for a prayer room at work, and permission to pray during the working day.*

- *The Bangladeshi community does not have a tradition of young people entering FE or HE, therefore they were not able to apply for professional jobs (although this is gradually changing).*

- *Those young Bangladeshis who do go on to university find it hard to gain graduate jobs in Wales and so tend to move away to England.*

- *For Bangladeshi young men, the lure of the restaurant trade was strong as they could earn large sums of money, cash in hand.*

- *Childcare issues. Women needed to know that their place of work would provide appropriate childcare facilities and incorporate family friendly policies.*

- *Some (highly qualified) refugees were able to speak English but found it difficult to understand the Welsh accent.*

- *Large application packs were off-putting, particularly if individuals were applying for lower grade posts.*

- *Individuals often did not know how to complete forms to show themselves in the best possible light. This is particularly true for those forms that use the competency model, as many people did not understand what a 'competency' meant.*

- *Islamaphobia. Young Muslim men and women argued that wearing a hijab (headscarf) or having a beard would immediately count against them in an interview situation*

- *A common perception amongst BME groups that only Welsh-speakers can work for the Welsh Assembly or at least you needed to be a Welsh-speaker to have a good career there. The fact that the Welsh Assembly Channel broadcast in Welsh confirmed this view.*

  'When a job advert says 'Welsh language desirable', what it's really saying is 'only White Welsh people need apply'.'

- *A few individuals from BME communities did not feel that they had a Welsh identity and so would not consider working for an organisation that identified so strongly with being Welsh.*

- *A misconception by one group of young BME people that only individuals with degrees can work for the Welsh Assembly.*

- *Conversely, BME participants who were refugees claimed that the only BME people they knew who worked at the Welsh Assembly were in manual jobs e.g. cleaners.*

- *A number of Bangladeshi participants did not think that the Welsh Assembly would have a prayer room or allow Muslim women to wear a hijab.*

The recommendations contained in this report include consideration of the above comments and action where appropriate. However, it should be remembered that the Assembly Commission can only take appropriate mitigating action. Cultural resistance to employment at the Commission within certain ethnic communities cannot be overcome by the Commission alone. However, closer working with community groups and increasing understanding within the Commission staff will greatly enhance the current efforts.

III.   Current BME recruitment practice (HR recruitment procedure)

In general, the recruitment policy and procedure has been specifically designed to be non-discriminatory. However, the most recent data seen are below:

The BME recruitment monitoring data for the staff of the Assembly Parliamentary Service (April 2006 – March 2007) and Assembly Commission (April 2007 to current) is below:

Breakdown of Employees (as of 31 March 2007)	
Number of employees	276
No. that have declared their ethnic background	252
No. of people from BME groups	11 (4%)
Current Breakdown of Employees (as of 1 November 2007)	
Current number of employees	285
No. that have declared their ethnic background	262
No. of people from BME groups	13 (5%)
External Applications*	
Total number of applicants (that have declared their ethnic background) in current year (from 1 April 2007)	200
No. of applications from BME groups (from 1 April 2007)	21 (10%)
Total number of applicants (that declared their ethnic background) in last financial year (April 2006 - March 2007)	210
No. of applications from BME groups in last financial year (April 2006 - March 2007)	18 (8%)
Appointments	
No. of external appointments in current year (from 1 April 2007)	21
No. appointments from BME groups (from 1 April 2007)	2 (10%)
No. external appointments in last financial year (April 2006 – March 2007)	33
No. appointments from BME groups (April 2006 - March 2007)	1 (3%)

These data demonstrate that although 8% of applicants (April 06-March 07) were from BME groups, only 3% were successful to appointment.

This may be for a number of reasons, not least that the BME applicants were not the most suitable for the post. However, taking into account BME groups' consistent under-representation in employment, other barriers may be relevant.

Where possible, consideration should be given to using a BME representative on sift and appointment panels. This could include external partner organisations. This will assist in deepening the organisations understanding of BME issues. It would also increase partnership working, promotion opportunities within BME communities, and potentially reduce barriers at interview for BME candidates.

In particular, the policy cites the following selected, specific responsibilities:

Recruiting Managers Responsibilities
- to ensure that they have received training on recruitment including equality and diversity. Refresher training should also be attended on a periodic basis
- prepare a job description, vacancy request form and any business case forms (e.g. Welsh essential / immediately advertise externally) as appropriate
- agree the timetable for recruitment
- prepare a list of evidence based questions
- identify appropriate recruitment methods for the post – e.g. tests, assessment centres etc and decide how these will be weighted, if appropriate
- objectively sift the candidates on their ability to evidence the competency behaviours and job specific criteria, reaching decisions by consensus and only on the evidence presented by applicants

Human Resources Responsibilities
- ensure that all legislative requirements and Commission policies are adhered to
- maintain accurate documentation and statistical information relating to each recruitment scheme and publish in line with agreed timetables

Panel Chair Responsibilities
- to ensure that they have received training on recruitment including equality and diversity. Refresher training should also be attended on a periodic basis
- to treat all candidates fairly and declare any interests as appropriate
- to ask appropriate, consistent lead questions to each candidate
- to provide feedback on request

- to ensure that a fair and consistent approach is maintained throughout the scheme

Currently, equality training is optional for all staff except through the induction process. Specific and mandatory training for staff involved in the recruitment process should be implemented. This should included training in how to identify bias in job descriptions, tests, questions and assessment centres.

HR staff responsible for data collection should know what to do with the data, how to analyse it and take effective action where necessary.

A diary of religious holidays and events should be used by HR to ensure that these days are avoided for recruitment activity.

IV.   **Grievance policy**
The recruitment policy states:

> **Grievance and Complaints**
> There will be no appeals procedure for posts advertised either internally or externally and the appointment panel's decision will be final. However, anyone who believes that they have been treated unfairly or has a grievance or complaint about how the process was conducted should write to the Head of Human Resources outlining their concerns. The complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the Grievance procedure or the Commission's complaints procedure as appropriate.

This indicates that external candidates would use the complaints procedure and internal candidates the grievance procedure.

The grievance procedure is thorough and transparent and is based on ACAS good practice guidelines. The complaints procedure is available via the Commission website, and is equally transparent and designed to avoid bias or prejudice.

However, both processes are very technical and lengthy and may be inaccessible in language and content to people from different ethnic backgrounds. Simple English versions for both should be considered.

Data from both procedures should be collected by ethnicity and ways of capturing equality data should be explored. As in other recommendations, analysis of the data should be done regularly with actions identified and take to mitigate any negative outcomes for different groups.

V. Dignity at work policy

This policy is designed to address harassment and is very comprehensive. Again, there are accessibility issues regarding the language and complexity of the policy which may present barriers for potential users. Simple sign posting from the internet, or intranet to HR or support staff should be considered. This policy is due to be reviewed and equality-impact assessed.

VI. Corporate strategy (Strategy for the Third Assembly 2007-11)

Commitment to equality is contained within the corporate Strategy document,

> 'The Assembly Commission has statutory duties to promote sustainable development, equality of opportunity and to give effect to the principle that the English and Welsh languages should be treated equally.'

However, this equality statement is subsumed within the general document and is not explicit either within the Goals or Values statements. It would be helpful, and demonstrate leadership and commitment, to have equality enshrined in a more prominent manner throughout the document.

VII. Annual equalities report

The annual equalities report contains a useful overview of strategies being undertaken on all equality strands including BME issues and the policies being reviewed. It also contains the Race Equality Action Plan which is being reviewed as part of the move to a Single Equality Scheme.

Progress against this process will be useful in identifying future priorities regarding BME issues.

VIII. Secondment policy

The inward and outward secondment policies are already being used to address BME issues through positive action, for example the secondment from MEWN Cymru. This opportunity has been found to be extremely beneficial already for both the secondee and the organisation. Learning should be captured from the secondment. Further opportunities for this type of action should be sought. Data on secondments should be collected by ethnic group, analysed and actions identified and implemented appropriately.

IX. Draft staff survey data

The draft staff survey data was being collated at the time this report was produced.

X.   Staff training and development strategy

Equality and Diversity training is available to all staff but is not mandatory and is dependent on a self nomination system except in the induction process.

Mandatory equality training including coverage of the statutory obligations under the positive race equality duty should be considered. This should assist in overcoming any cultural issues identified.

A further review of training materials and modules is recommended to ensure all BME and RRAA issues are appropriately addressed. A Race Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out on all training modules and specific training for trainers implemented. All training courses should contain an equalities section in some format to include BME issues.

The Commission is proposing to review training for staff/Members when the consultation on the draft Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan is complete.

Recommendations

1. Data collection

Data collection on equality is not currently embedded or used to its full effect. More robust systems for collecting, analysing and acting on data are essential.

Data sources recommended for better collection include:

- Performance appraisal system
- Training and development opportunities take up rates
- Staff surveys
- Bully and harassment cases
- Grievance and disciplinary cases
- Exit interviews

When collecting data, it is recommended that there is a clear explanation given to staff regarding why the data is collected and what action is going to be taken on it. This could in turn be linked to positive case studies.

2. Communication and training

There are a number of communication strategies which would assist the Assembly Commission in raising the profile of BME equality issues. Not only would this raise internal awareness, but would, in the long term, increase the likelihood of the BME community identifying the Assembly Commission as an employer of choice.

- Communicate to raise awareness regarding behaviours expected of employees, particularly line managers. This could be incorporated in an overarching equality and diversity policy and needs to simple and aspirational.
- Instigate training and follow-up workshops and campaigns e.g. so that all are aware of differing religious practices. This may be through published policy statements but needs to gain engagement with employees – it is not sufficient to simply send an email saying that a policy is available.
- Positive action training – self nomination training and BME not yet in scope of Leadership development training – check release protocols and ensure opportunities for BME under positive action.
- Embedding equality issues into all courses and training delivered should be considered

3. Policies and processes

Positive action measures are designed to meet the needs of Black and minority ethnic people arising from a history of disadvantage. Such measures could include:

- Undertaking an equality audit. This would give the profile of the current workforce – but there needs to be careful communication about what is being asked, why and how it will be used for employees to feel confident in giving information. The Equality and Human Rights Commission have guidelines on ethnic categorisations to use.
- Harassment and bullying cases should be analysed to audit for BME issues.
- Consider introducing a support network or other body to encourage networking.
- Make equality policies and statements readily available.
- Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are an essential part of complying with the Race equality legislation. There is little evidence that EIAs are being conducted or that the process is embedded in the Assembly Commission. An action plan identifying the priority and time line for the EIAs is highly recommended. Both conducting and acting on EIAs will assist in increasing understanding of BME issues.
- Consultation is a further feature of compliance with the legislation. Full consultation with BME groups will fully inform the Race Equality

Scheme. Consultation should take place with a clear explanation of what the scheme means for the BME groups in order to engage them fully in the process and make its outcomes meaningful.

- Consultation should be both external and internal.
- A clear link between the consultation and action taken to address issues raised should be made.
- Methods for establishing and using new partnerships should be considered. This should include making better use of local community groups, for example Community First Partnerships. Work with others in community to tackle racism promote good relations should be considered.
- Shadowing and mentoring policies should be extended and embedded. These could include identifying positive role models when appropriate and case studies available on the internet site and linked to recruitment and other appropriate policies.
- A BME equal pay audit could be considered and its outcomes published.
- A permanent prayer room should be considered. This was a particular recommendation from current BME staff. If such a facility is possible, it should be advertised on the internet website.
- Exit interviews should be conducted with all staff and analysed by BME status.

4. Recruitment and outreach

- The existing outreach programme should be continued and built on. In particular the review demonstrated that positive action in coaching in the application process was helpful for BME candidates.
- Review advertising process and places. In particular mosques, community centres, doctors' surgeries and other venues used by BME groups should be considered. Recommendations were made that poster worked particularly well in these venues. Other possible venues for advertising include: Race Equality Councils and the minority ethnic section of the Cardiff Library and other libraries in general. Advice should be sought from community centres about the best way to proceed.
- Continue tours and introductions. Interviewees cited these as extremely helpful. Ways of extending and targeting them to BME communities would help address barriers.
- Advertise employment benefits – Work Life Balance, flexitime etc.
- The Assembly Commission could consider the setting of targets for numbers of ethnic minority employees. Targets have been found to be effective in other organisations, but do carry the risk of negative backlash from existing employees.

- Where agencies are used to recruit casual staff, problems for BME staff were encountered more commonly than with the Assembly Commission's own recruitment processes. These problems included a lack of understanding of BME issues and sensitivity. Where agencies are used, they should be screened for good positive action on BME issues.
- Work experience placements are already in place and are linked in particular to Fitzalan High School with a high representation of BME pupils. This scheme should be extended if possible with other BME community groups and schools.
- The current equality monitoring form is not completed or collected from 100% of applicants. The monitoring form process should be reviewed to enable more robust data to be collected and acted upon. The ethnic monitoring forms should be kept separate from the application form.
- A religious calendar including holiday and significant dates should be produced, published on the intranet and all staff made aware of it. This can help ensure that recruitment activity is sensitive to different BME group issues and help raise awareness among staff of different cultural issues.
- Recruitment staff should seek to work more closely with the outreach officer to target BME groups.
- Positive images of BME people should be used in all literature
- Recruitment panels should, if possible, include BME people. These do not always have to be drawn from internal staff. Working in partnership with BME representative groups could lead to a sharing of expertise and an exchange of staff time for recruitment process. Again, this will lead to a deepening of understanding amongst staff of BME issues.
- Thorough ethnic monitoring at all stages of the recruitment should be in place.

5. The Business Case

One area of action could be to actively promote the business case for employing BME staff. This could include:

Why recruit BME staff?
Here are some positive reasons for recruiting BME staff
- A more diverse work force will enhance the quality and skills portfolio of an modern organisation
- BME workers contribute to changed culture and improved reputation of an organisation
- Employing BME staff ensures that policy is put into practice in a practical way.
- Embraces a more representative community

- Many BME people may bring additional benefits like language skills, international and national experience as well as having the skills for the job.

Here are some negative reasons that people give for recruiting BME staff
- o We've been told to employ more ethnic minorities
- o Our ethnic monitoring figures need a boost
- o We are under our target
- o We need people who can understand some of our new clients
- o We need to be politically correct.

Unless the rationale for employing BME people fits into the positive category it may be that an organisation is not clear or ready to try to improve recruitment of BME staff. Recruiting as a point of 'positive discrimination' or 'tokenism' will always produce a poor corporate image with other employees and customers and may result in waste of management time spent on grievances and tribunal claims.

Annex A

Summary of Good Practice
The following sources were used to identify good practice and form the back ground to some of the recommendations above.

Some of the good practice case studies make useful background reading. Summaries of the most useful are included here with references for further research.

1. **Leeds University**
www.leeds.ac.uk/cers/toolkit/toolkit.htm). The toolkit includes examples of good practice in student recruitment (publicity literature, open days, widening participation strategies, the interview process) and student support (counselling and careers services).

2. **Devon Race Equality Council**
www.devonrec.org.uk There is evidence that some minority ethnic communities rely on ethnic minority media above national media to put messages across and to obtain information. This is because some BME people, like some people in the wider community, have a mistrust of the media and all too often do not see communities fairly represented or reflected. Research in the St Paul's area of Bristol 4 years ago showed that less than 1% of the minority ethnic population read the local press. This means that despite St Paul's and Easton having over 30% BME population, the local press are not showing interest in or getting the business of this community. There are a number of BME radio stations, press and television channels nationally and a vast array of special publications. If you know the ethnic make-up of your community you can target a potential work force through recruitment advertising and general information sharing, visit www.devonrec.org.uk for further information about ethnic minority press and media.

3. **Buses and Transport Providers**
Go-Ahead employs enough staff from minority ethnic and faith communities to enable them to run buses on 365 days of the year. Roistered rest days accommodate the needs of different faiths and bridging of leave periods allows for extended family holidays to mother countries.

London Underground analysed human resource data and identified the need to reform and adapt selection and promotion processes, to bring more minority ethnic staff into management posts.

Some Train Operating Companies allow staff, especially from groups under-represented in management grades, to have a trial period in a more senior post, with the opportunity to return to their old grade if they wish.

"Buddies" can be used to support people with special needs in designing and using a travel plan. Buddies are volunteers who can be selected to match language, culture or disability needs and can work with individuals or groups. A good example of this approach is work in travel training being carried out by Newham Community Transport.

First Group provide prayer facilities for staff at some bus garages.

Mentoring of promotees from minority ethnic and faith communities is a valuable way of improving confidence and performance.

Metroline buses (London) have converted a bus into a mobile I.T. skills training centre which offers an introduction to technology and also helps to improve English language skills. Working in partnership with the College of North East London (CoNEL), Transport for London and more recently the Department for Education and Science, the Learning Bus now goes into the local community to (in the organisers' own words) "aid job recruitment and help break down barriers" in areas where people of different cultures and ethnic groups can be encouraged to learn. More than 140 people have completed the I.T. familiarisation course in the first year. The project cuts across race, levels of seniority within Metroline, age and sex and shows how effective such partnerships can be.

4. **North Tyneside Mechanics' Training**

The initial purpose of this project was to meet demand for skilled mechanics in the bus industry in the area of North Tyneside. Northumbria Youth Action (a charity), the North East Refugee Council and Northumbria Police have set up a workshop where asylum seekers with existing mechanical skills and young offenders from disadvantaged backgrounds are taught new skills, or have them developed to meet the relevant National Vocational Qualification standard.

- One problem faced by trainees, especially asylum seekers, is what happens to them once the course is completed. Arriva Bus will be taking some of those who have completed the course and providing further, specialised bus-related training. It is likely that some will subsequently be employed by Arriva itself or other bus operators. Arriva is also providing free passes for public transport to cover the trainees' travel costs.

- The project was facilitated by this study and addresses both the job needs of the individuals concerned and the skills shortage in a key area. There is much potential for extending the concept and further ideas are being explored, for example, in respect of recruiting bus drivers in a similar way.

5. British Telecom

BT recently put plans into action to address the imbalance of the BME representation within its existing engineering workforce with the launch of its 'Openreach' programme which proactively encourages applications from ethnic minorities.

BT involved a wide range of stakeholders in the creation of its new recruitment model which, amongst others things, entailed speaking to applicant samples to review their experience of the recruitment process providing invaluable insight into the training requirements of their engineering interviewers. This led to re-training of all engineering interviewers ensuring the new 'Openreach' programme and approach was well understood and cultural barriers better appreciated.

BT also gave more thought to where they advertised and the kind of message relayed in the advertisement. Clear diversity leadership was also seen as critical to the success of the programme

Overall recruitment rate of 10% from ethnic minorities against an overall national target of 13%

6. Common Purpose and the Office of the Commission for Public Appointments

A campaign to increase the number of people from black and ethnic minority communities on UK public boards has been hailed a success. Known as 'About Time', it actively seeks to support and encourage diverse leaders to take on board-level opportunities and put their skills and experience to work in community and public life. Its achievements include the placement of non-executive directors on hospital and housing trusts and a governor on a school board.

Run by leadership development organisation Common Purpose, the 'About Time' campaign is supported by Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales and specialist executive search company, Odgers Ray & Berndtson. The campaign identifies non-executive positions on boards and assists candidates from black and minority ethnic communities in applying for them. It also provides ongoing support through mentoring and shadowing to enable them to make a valuable contribution to the work of the board.

The campaign is timely as figures from the Office of the Commissioner for

Public Appointments (OCPA) have found that people from BME communities make up just 8.6 per cent of people on boards of public bodies.

The campaign is based on the principle that the benefits of diversity are much more than simply ticking boxes, that the essence of diversity is difference and this is as much about different ways of thinking and seeing the world as it is about categories and classifications such as race, gender or age. That diverse teams generate more energy, challenge the status quo and spot new angles faster than those that are not.

Adirupa Sengupta, of Common Purpose, explains: " We are delighted with the success of About Time as it's vital to the future of UK society that our public bodies are led by people who reflect the diverse society they serve."

7. London Borough of Tower Hamlets
http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/data/your-council/data/strategy/downloads/diversity-race-scheme2005-2008.pdf

Tower Hamlets are a Beacon Local Authority in respect of Promoting Race Equality. As such their Race Equality Scheme (and their equality pages in general) make useful reading. They include strategies to positively address BME representation in the workforce including:

To support the Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy the Council has identified a comprehensive programme of actions and positive action initiatives. These include:

- **Releasing Potential** – Developing People – a management development programme launched in March 2004 to contribute to the target of increasing representation of BME people in senior management positions. Run in partnership with the local Primary Care Trust it impacts across other public sector employers in the borough
- **BME Graduate Development Scheme** – provides graduates from local minority ethnic communities the opportunity to gain work experience and a post graduate qualification - this has provided 88% of people, who were taken onto the programme to date, with permanent employment with the local authority
- **Recruitment and Retention** – the positive action scheme encourages local Bangladeshi and Somali people to train as social workers and occupational therapists - there are similar schemes in place to train and provide employment as teachers and teaching assistants
- **Recruiting local job seekers** – this scheme, where Council vacancies up to Scale 6 are automatically referred to Skillsmatch, was introduced in 2003 to increase the number of job opportunities offered to local people - initially introduced as a pilot this has been a great success and will be established as a permanent arrangement

8. Gravesham Borough Council
http://www.gravesham.gov.uk/media/pdf/5/n/RESMay2002.pdf

Gravesham is another Beacon Council on Promoting Race Equality. Their policy includes:

Gravesham Borough Council has identified five main themes or areas of strength in their working to promote racial equality.

These five themes are Effective Consultation, Effective Partnerships, working with the North West Kent Racial Equality Council, the Corporate Approach and Working with Young People

Gravesham prides itself on its willingness to share and promote good practice and as a result has produced a series of toolkits giving practical guidance around each of the five themes, to enable other local authorities to emulate Gravesham's approaches within the area of community cohesion.

If you feel that you need more detailed information surrounding individual tips please do not hesitate to contact us as in most instances we will be able to provide you with background information. More specifically in relation to the Effective Consultation theme we have developed a comprehensive toolkit attached to the tips. These additional sections are available upon request and should you require these then once again please contact us and we will forward them to you in an electronic format.

Effective Consultation

Gravesham Borough Council recognises that building a cohesive and sustainable community requires involving all of the community in consultation work carried out around policy and service provision and delivery. Gravesham has recognised that to achieve this there is a requirement to reach out to people who are less likely to participate in conventional forms of involvement. The council continues to work hard in this area to develop initiatives to improve community engagement with Minority Ethnic groups.

A 'People Bank' was developed by the council, initially to represent residents, with a strong focus on ensuring good representation from minority ethnic groups, and with the opportunity for involvement in consultation surrounding housing related policy. A Reading Group has emerged from this initiative. This group ensures that all information material is accessible to all tenants, particularly those from minority ethnic communities.

The council are currently developing a Residents Panel for the borough, which will be consulted regularly using a range of consultation methods on a variety of policy issues. The panel has been recruited through postal questionnaires with additional face to face interviewing methods to ensure that it is fully representative of our community in Gravesham.

At the council's flagship community festival, the Big Day Out, a Council Village was developed to enable residents to talk informally to staff and Councillors about council related issues that affect them. In addition to this the Cabinet are now holding several of their formal meetings away from the Civic Centre in various local meeting places around the borough. These Cabinet Roadshows enable local people to engage with the political process, and provide a platform for leading figures in the council to demonstrate commitment to the race equality agenda.

Effective Partnerships

Gravesham has a strong record on partnership working across a wide spectrum of community life, which not only enables the development of innovative joint ventures but also influences and is influenced, by the work of other partners. This is beneficial for opening fresh channels of communication between the council and the local community.

Gravesham has built significant and effective partnerships on a wide scale both locally with tenants, hard to reach groups and the North West Kent Racial Equality Council and beyond the Borough. Within the Kent Thameside growth area, Gravesham has established strategic partnerships across political and geographical boundaries to ensure that new and existing communities are involved in the decision making processes that will affect their quality of life and life chances.

Gravesham's effective partnership work is informed by extensive community involvement and consultation, engaging with local communities in ways designed to build understanding, trust and support.

These effective partnerships do not stop at information sharing. With its partners Gravesham is also striving to re-profile services in order to achieve a better fit with the needs and aspirations of local communities, including those voices which may not previously have been heard, in an incremental approach to service planning.

The Community Safety Partnership has the council, Kent Police and REC as core members and is a further example of a strong partnership at work. This partnership has a key role in monitoring racist incidents and coordinating community safety initiatives.

The Corporate Approach

There is strong political and managerial support within Gravesham Borough Council to the race equality agenda. This approach is driving forward the theme of community cohesion within the council's own organisational structure, as well as providing a basis for improving services tailored to the needs of the local community and individual services users.

The council's Leader has a key role in leading the council's executive team, which is committed to championing the benefits of social inclusion and community cohesion. The Lead Member for Community Well-being, along with Cabinet Members, have clearly defined work plans and roles, which include a strong commitment to race equality. There is a firm political and corporate commitment not only to consult with minority ethnic communities on key strategic and policy areas, but also to ensure through the use of more innovative consultation methods, that engagement with harder to reach groups within the community is continuously improved.

Gravesham has deliberately avoided developing a specialist race equalities team, and has adopted an alternative corporate approach to race equality across the authority. A top level Community Cohesion Group was set up by the authority in 2003 to advise and coordinate community cohesion and race equality issues across the council and this has been a major driver for change. The group is chaired by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, and includes an officer from North West Kent Racial Equality Council, and the Lead Cabinet Member for Community Well-being. The group is responsible for coordinating the development, implementation and review of the Race Equality Scheme, as well as driving best practice and change within the council's corporate culture.

Working with the North West Kent Racial Equality Council

Gravesham Borough Council's commitment to racial equality in the borough is underpinned by the very strong links the council has established with North West Kent Racial Equality Council (NWKREC).

This transparent partnership founded on mutual respect played a significant role in Gravesham Borough Council achieving Beacon Status for promoting racial equality. The council and the REC have worked together on numerous projects promoting community cohesion and race equality in the borough. Notable achievements include the Big Day Out, the Annual Vaisakhi Celebrations, Connecting Communities, Football Festival, Future Citizens Youth Events and the Racial Harassment Group.

Gravesham Borough Council views the REC as a critical friend which is prepared to support and advise the council in an open and honest way on community issues. The council often uses the REC as a facilitator to disseminate information to, and as retrievers of, real feedback and opinion from the local community.

The council recognises that the REC has a key monitoring role to play with the council, and the open door policy which the council has developed with the REC ensures that feedback is taken in a positive light and is usually adhered to.

The close working relationship with the REC has also opened the doors to improved dialogue with local minority ethnic community groups, and has fostered the development of genuine partnership working between the council and the minority ethnic voluntary and community sector in the borough.

The Council has also invited representation from the REC to sit on the Community Cohesion Group, which is made up of Senior Officers and co-ordinates the council's work around promoting race equality both within the organisation and in the borough.

Working with young people

A key element of Gravesham Borough Council's work around promoting race equality in the borough has been the work carried out with young people.

In partnership with North West Kent Racial Equality Council, Gravesham has developed a series of events specifically designed to bring together young people from different ethnic backgrounds within Gravesham. A Youth Council has been established and is made up of representatives from local schools and youth organisations. Proactive work took place to ensure that minority ethnic youth were represented on the youth council.

A Future Citizens Project was developed which involved working with local secondary schools, to run a series of seminars discussing issues around diversity, good community relations and what promoting race equality means. This allowed young people to become more aware of the work that the council, in partnership with the REC, were doing to promote good community relations within the borough.

Gravesham has also used sports and the arts as a means of engaging with young people. Recent successes include the Connecting Communities Cup, the work done through the Kent Football Partnership, the Big Day Out and the Vaisakhi Education Day.

This proactive approach has allowed the council to not only send out a positive message to the young people around the work it was doing on race equality, but it has also allowed the council to develop a dialogue with schools, youth groups and with young people in the borough, to ensure that meaningful projects are worked on for the future.

8. Bristol City Council

http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Community-Living/Equality-Diversity/equalities-policy-documents.en

Bristol City Council is the third Beacon Authority promoting Race Equality. They have a particularly interesting easy read version of their equality policy:

Equality and diversity

Welcome to the Equality and Diversity section of our website. As a council we are committed to promoting equal opportunities through our policy and strategy, in providing equal access to all our services and to making sure people have equal opportunities in getting jobs and in career development.

These pages explain in more detail our policies and strategies for achieving this as well as the background to the sometimes complex equalities issues underlying what we do. We have also made a number of reports, policies, strategies, booklets and statistics on equalities issues available to download from the related documents sections of each page. Please use the 'pages in this section' list on this page to navigate your way around.

Whilst we have made every effort to make these pages as useful and as user-friendly as possible, should you see anything lacking, have any suggestions or require more information about any issue please do not hesitate to contact us. We welcome your input and ideas!

Introduction

This is the Easy English summary of the council's equal opportunities policy about work.

Equal opportunities for people from black and minority ethnic communities

We will make sure that

- more people from black and minority ethnic groups get jobs at all levels
- more people from black and minority ethnic groups become bosses
- We give Black people access to good training and lots of other opportunities.
- Make sure race equality is important to all our policies.

Equal opportunities for Disabled People

As well as making sure we act legally as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 says we must, we will make sure that:

- Disabled People get the support and equipment that they ask for to do their job.
- We make reasonable changes to buildings to help disabled people do their jobs and make sure it is safe
- People who become disabled while they work for us get support to stay in their job

Equal opportunities for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals

We will make sure that:

- People who work for us who are lesbians, gay men and bisexuals feel safe to tell people about their sexuality.
- Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals can keep their lives private if they want to.

Equal opportunities for older people

We will make sure that:

- People have a choice about what age they are when they retire
- Pensions are good so that people will not have money worries when they retire
- Run workshops to show people good things about retiring

Equal opportunities because of religion or belief

We will make sure that:

- we ask people who have different beliefs how we can respect their beliefs and give staff time to pray in working hours.
- Policies say that peoples' religious beliefs are to be respected

Equal opportunities for men and women

We will make sure that:

- We offer people leave for family and to adopt a child.
- We offer flexible working times.
- We support men to take some of the responsibilities at home that mainly women do now.

Equal opportunities for transgender women and men

We will make sure that:

- People are given the right to be who they want to be.
- We respect transgender people the same as other people

Equal opportunities for young people

We will make sure that:

We don't use age when we advertise for jobs

We encourage staff to be interested in the careers of young people looked after by Bristol City Council

Easy English summary by Bristol & District People First

Message from the Chief Executive: Commitment to Equality and Diversity

The Executive Board and I are wholly committed to ensuring that as an employer and service provider, we are an exemplar organisation in our promotion of equality and diversity and provision of accessible services. In order to achieve this, we will be developing a Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan as a guide for our staff to deliver and promote fair, accessible services and achieve positive outcomes for people.

In terms of equalities, our vision is to be an organisation that:

- Promotes, respects and values equality and diversity;
- Values the contribution provided by all employees and those who interact with the organisation;
- Challenges and eliminates both harassment and discriminatory behaviour; and
- Is regarded as an exemplary employer and an accessible service provider.

In order to implement our equalities vision we aim to:

- Encourage applications for work from all sections of the local community ;
- Widen participation and engagement in the work of the Assembly; and
- Promote good relations between all groups of people.

We want to achieve equality, diversity and accessibility for all the following equalities strands: age, disability, gender/gender identity, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation. As an employer and service provider, our organisation is committed to ensuring that no-one is disadvantaged or discriminated against on these grounds: discriminatory behaviour will be dealt with via our disciplinary procedures. We will use these equalities strands to plan, implement and monitor our equalities objectives strategically. As an employer, we encourage flexible working practices whilst accommodating our business needs. We also have a Welsh Language Scheme and Action Plan which

details how our organisation aims to promote and mainstream bilingualism through its workforce and services.

By Autumn 2008, we aim to have a Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan in place, taking into account all the equalities strands listed above. This will eliminate the need for separate schemes and action plans. We believe this approach is required to achieve positive outcomes as there are often complex interactions between the various equalities strands: individuals have differing and sometimes overlapping needs. Therefore, equalities considerations should be planned, delivered and monitored cohesively. We will look to develop and consult on a draft Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan in readiness for publication later this year.

In order to understand the composition of our workforce and identify potential trends, we need to gather statistical evidence from staff to identify where they fit in with the equalities strands. In order to acquire this evidence, we will be carrying out a short equalities survey which will include all permanent, casual and seconded staff. The survey is voluntary and data will be collected anonymously but I strongly encourage all staff to complete the survey so that the data collated is suitably representative of the organisation. This data will then be collated and published in the Annual Equalities Report. The survey has been designed so that no individual can be identified from his/her responses and the content of the survey has been agreed with TUS. I will be writing to you shortly about the survey in more detail.

On a final note, our Equalities Statement, schemes, action plans and other supporting policies are the starting point. We aim to achieve the best possible equalities outcomes for both our workforce and everyone who interacts with the National Assembly for Wales. I hope you will do all you can to work in a way that achieves real, measurable improvements in equalities that we can be proud of.

Claire Clancy
Chief Executive