

Y Pwyllgor Cyfle Cyfartal

EOC(3)-07-07(p2) : 6 Rhagfyr 2007

Gwasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad – Adroddiad Blynyddol ar Gydraddoldeb 2006-07

Diben

1. Gofyn am farn y Pwyllgor ynghylch yr Adroddiad Blynyddol ar Gydraddoldeb 2006-07 gan Wasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad.

Cefndir

2. Mae'r adroddiad sydd ynghlwm yn Atodiad 1 yn rhoi manylion y gwaith a wnaed yng Ngwasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad rhwng mis Ebrill 2006 a mis Mawrth 2007 i ofalu bod busnes y Cynulliad yn cael ei gynnal gan roi'r sylw priodol i'r egwyddor y dylid sicrhau cyfle cyfartal i bawb – yn unol â'r gofyniad blaenorol a nodwyd yn adran 48 o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Cymru 1998. Mae Atodiad 1 hefyd yn cynnwys y wybodaeth ddiweddaraf am y cynnydd a wnaed ers mis Mawrth 2007 a'r cynlluniau ar gyfer y dyfodol, yn unol â gofynion Deddf Llywodraeth Cymru 2006.

3. Mae adroddiadau am y cynnydd a wnaed o ran gweithredu'r Cynllun Cydraddoldeb Hiliol a'r Cynllun Cydraddoldeb i Bobl Anabl gan Wasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad ynghlwm yn Atodiadau 2 a 3 yn ôl eu trefn.

Camau i'r Pwyllgor eu cymryd

4. Gofynnir i'r Aelodau roi sylwadau ar yr Adroddiad Blynyddol ar Gydraddoldeb 2006-07 gan Wasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad.

Yr Uned Gorfforaethol

Tachwedd 2007

Assembly Parliamentary Service: Annual Equality Report 2006-07

1. Background

1.1 This report summarises the Assembly Parliamentary Service's progress made in achieving positive equality outcomes between April 2006 and March 2007 with respect to its statutory equality duties on race and disability and other equality areas.

1.2 From 1 May 2007, the Government of Wales Act 2006 made for distinct reporting arrangements between the Welsh Assembly Government and the Assembly Commission. This report also summarises the positive equality outcomes that the Assembly Commission as a new body has achieved since 1 April 2007 and provides an update on future plans.

2. Overview of Progress in Mainstreaming Equality: April 2006 – March 2007

Production and Implementation of a Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan

2.1 The production of a Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan was the priority objective for 2006 and was approved in December 2006. An update on progress in achieving equal outcomes for disabled people can be viewed in Annex 3 as part of the Disability Equality Action Plan update. Examples of positive outcomes include: the increase in the number of staff using Voice Recognition technology to enable them to carry out their jobs safely and effectively; the assessment of the Senedd Access Audit Report and suggestions made by disabled visitors have been taken to the Senedd's architects to discuss how access adjustments can be taken forward; and the recent Job Centre Plus 'Positive about Disability' award to the Assembly Commission in its capacity as an employer.

Equalities Steering Group

2.2 The Equalities Steering Group met three times and was chaired by the previous Clerk to the Assembly. The Group is still operative and consists of designated 'equality leads' from service areas across the organisation and contributes to the development of equality-related schemes and policies. The Chief Executive and Clerk now chairs the Group.

Stonewall Diversity Champions' Network



2.3 The Assembly Parliamentary Service became a member of Stonewall's Diversity Champions' Network for Employers - a good practice forum for sexual orientation issues in the workplace. Stonewall is Britain's leading gay equality organisation, and we are working with them and other members of the programme to improve the working environment for our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) staff.

2.4 Employers can share information as to how they can support and empower their staff. Also, there are the opportunities to attend tailor-made programmes giving LGBT staff the opportunity to realise their own potential, challenge their own preconceptions and enable them to learn from the perspectives of other participants.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Recruitment and Outreach

2.5 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%)

***Please note:** many applicants fail to submit our equal opportunities monitoring form at application stage.

2.6 The following initiatives to increase BME outreach and recruitment are either underway or planned:

- A six-month paid secondment has been organised for January 2008 from the Minority Ethnic Women's Network (MEWN). Included within the duties will be a requirement for this secondee to recommend how we improve our links with the BME communities. We also intend discussing our recruitment procedures with MEWN;
- We also intend discussing our recruitment procedures with MEWN, with other employers with high employment rates for people from BME communities and undertaking an external review of our processes from an equalities perspective;

- A series of two week work placements for people from ethnic communities will commence in 2008 alongside the above secondment;
- We have established links with Fitzalan High School to encourage pupils from BME backgrounds to undertake work placements at the National Assembly, which have already commenced; and
- External posts are advertised at Cardiff South Enterprise Centre whose customer base is largely made up of people from the BME community. We have also organised tours and briefings to coincide with any large recruitment schemes to encourage applications.

Internet Project – Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Compliance and Accessibility

2.7 The new contract awarded for our Internet site ensured that DDA compliance and accessibility considerations were paramount. There are ongoing technical adjustments being made to ensure that our published material is accessible and DDA compliant.

Disabled Staff Network

2.8 We attempted to establish a disabled staff network to contribute to policies that could affect staff and services with the aim of improving the working environment within the organisation. Volunteers, including members of staff with disabilities or caring responsibilities, staff who have disabled friends or relatives or staff who are simply supportive and interested in promoting equality were sought to join the network. There was however, a lack of take up amongst staff for the group. We acknowledge that there might be reasons for this, including the fact that some staff might not wish to disclose a disability or do not consider themselves to have a disability.

2.9 We will look at new ways in which to encourage disabled staff and indeed disabled Assembly Members and their staff to participate in a network via disability awareness-raising. We may be able to learn from our newly established Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) network on best approaches to establishing and supporting an informal network and/or using focus groups for specific issues.

3. Overview of Progress since March 2007

Establishment of an Equalities Team within the Corporate Unit

3.1 The Corporate Unit was established in May 2007 and the Equalities Manager is building up capacity to deal with equalities-related issues across the organisation. The Equalities and Access Adviser role has also been absorbed into the Corporate Unit. The Adviser can provide a source of advice to staff and Members on access issues and other equality-related issues.

Operation Blackvote

3.2 The Operation Blackvote Scheme was launched in the Senedd by the Presiding Officer on 10 October 2007. The Scheme involves nine BME people from all over Wales shadowing Assembly Members from the four main parties. The Scheme, aimed at encouraging people from BME communities to participate in the democratic process and increasing the number of BME Assembly Members, follows on from successful MP, Magistrate and Councillor shadowing schemes.

3.3 The participants, who come from a wide range of BME communities, will shadow Assembly Members for a minimum of eight days over a six-month period in order to gain experience of life as an Assembly Member, and to help Assembly Members understand the needs of their BME constituents. They will also become community ambassadors, promoting democratic engagement within their areas.



The nine OBV participants who will be shadowing Assembly Members over the next six months

3.4 The Scheme has recently been nominated for the Hansard Democracy Award, a category in Channel 4's Annual Political Awards. This particular award is given to organisations that advance the understanding of parliamentary democracy. The outcome will be announced in January 2008.

Access Adjustments in the Senedd

3.5 To ensure that we continue to provide a high level of accessibility to the Senedd, the original Senedd Access Report has been re-examined and we have taken into account feedback from disabled members of the public who have visited the Senedd. This work suggests that we need to make some adjustments in three broad areas:-

- Better definition on terracing and public areas around the Senedd;
- Some extra manifestation to glass within the building; and
- Clearer signage which is more accessible for people with visual impairments.

3.6 We have approached the building's architects to assist us with this work so that we are able to find the best balance between the integrity of the design and ease of access.

‘Positive about Disability’



3.7 The Assembly Commission has been awarded the ‘Positive about Disability’ Symbol by Job Centre Plus. The symbol demonstrates that we are positive about employing and retaining disabled people and that we have agreed to follow five commitments regarding their employment, retention, training and career development. Employers who use the symbol have agreed with Jobcentre Plus that they will take action on these five commitments:

- to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities;
- to ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss, at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities;
- to make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment;
- to take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work; and
- each year to review the five commitments and what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let employees and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans.

3.8 We aim to achieve a more diverse workforce and by using the symbol on job adverts and applications forms, we can demonstrate that we welcome applications from disabled people and are positive about their abilities. We hope it demonstrates to existing employees that their contributions are valued and they are treated fairly should they become disabled.

Age Positive



3.9 The Assembly Commission has recently been recognised by the Age Positive Campaign as an organisation that has demonstrated its commitment to tackling age discrimination and promoting age diversity in the workplace. The Assembly Commission now has Age Employer Champion status. Gaining Age Employer Champion status demonstrates our commitment to ensure that we do not have any discriminatory practices regarding age through our recruitment and/ or retention of employees. The accreditation panel also considered the way we offered training to our staff regardless of their age and how we offer further employment options regardless of the fact staff have reached their retirement age of 65.

Development of an informal Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) staff network

3.10 This year an informal lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered staff network was established by 'out' gay members of staff. The network is primarily a social network but has agreed to contribute to the development of policies, schemes and other equality-related issues through impact assessing our draft policies. Since an article regarding the network was placed in the staff newsletter, 'The Slate' in October, more members of staff have joined the network.

Stonewall's Recruitment 'Starting Out' Guide and Workplace Equality Index

3.11 The Assembly Commission has been included in Stonewall's 'Starting Out - Lesbian and Gay Recruitment Guide' 2007-08. The Guide is aimed at students and those wishing to change their careers, to advise them of gay-friendly employers.

3.12 The Assembly Commission has also made a submission for inclusion in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index 2008 – the guide to the top 100 UK gay-friendly employers. We are awaiting the results of our submission.

Awareness-raising of equalities-related issues amongst staff

3.13 Between April 2006 and March 2007, four equalities-related articles were placed on the intranet newspage and the staff newsletter, 'The Slate'. From 1 April 2007 onwards, there have been four equalities-related articles. Topics on which articles have focussed have included the Disability and Gender Equality Duties, International Women's Day, Stonewall Diversity Champions' Network and Operation Blackvote.

Draft Gender Equality Scheme

3.14 A draft Gender Equality Scheme was prepared over the summer of 2007 and impact assessments were carried out on existing work practices. A number of actions/desired outcomes have been identified and this work will be subsumed into the production of a Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan for 2008 (see below).

3.15 In 2008, the Assembly Commission will sponsor the 'Woman Advancing Democracy Category' in the Welsh Woman of the Year Awards. The Awards promote the role women have in the workplace and in every sector of society, raise awareness and reflect and reinforce the changing role of women over the last 14 years by celebrating their achievement and the value of their contributions to the stability of Wales.

4. Future Plans

Developing a Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan

4.1 The Assembly Commission will be developing a Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan for publication next year. The Scheme will cover the following equality strands: age, disability, faith/belief, gender/gender identity, race and sexual orientation. We aim to involve individuals and organisations at an early stage in the development of the Scheme and will consult widely in the New Year. The Equality of Opportunity Committee is invited to consider the Draft Scheme and Action Plan in early 2008 as part of this process.

Monitoring Staff Data/Workforce Profiling

4.2 The Assembly Commission recognises that in order to identify and inform our equalities objectives, we need to have robust mechanisms for gathering and monitoring equalities data in order to profile our workforce. The development of our HR IT information management system, specifically the roll-out of a 'U-Access' (self-service) module, will enable staff to enter and amend their own personal details on the system, which will include information relating to ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation. The information will be stored securely and will be confidential but will provide a generic profile of our workforce. This module will be rolled-out early in 2008.

Impact Assessment Tool

4.3 Alongside the development of the Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan, the Equalities Team is developing an enhanced impact assessment tool. A programme of training to accompany the new tool will be available for relevant staff to access.

Awareness-Raising for Members on Equalities Issues

4.4 By the end of this year, Members will be provided with a research paper to clarify the new arrangements for equality in relation to the statutory responsibilities of the Assembly Commission and Welsh Ministers respectively. This is for information and will help to raise awareness of equalities issues amongst Members and their staff. The research paper will be a precursor to further awareness-raising activities which are detailed below.

Awareness-Raising Activities/Events

4.5 The Equalities Team will consider imaginative ways in which we can raise awareness amongst staff, Members, Members' support staff and those who interact with our organisation. Activities such as focus groups, information stands in the Assembly buildings, use of the staff newsletter and articles on the intranet/internet pages could contribute to raising awareness.

Developing Targeted Training for Staff

4.6 As well as the need to raise awareness about how equality issues relates to our daily jobs in our workplace, there is a role for specific training to be offered to staff across the workplace. Staff who design policies and strategies need to be trained to undertake equality impact assessments. Also, staff in service areas such as Research (briefing Members), IT (accessible website) and Human Resources (employment policies) might identify opportunities to build in equalities considerations to their work. The Equalities Team and Human Resources Team will work with service areas to assist them in identifying their own equalities-related training requirements.

Corporate Unit

November 2007

ASSEMBLY PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE: RACE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2005-2008

1. Background

This report is an overview of progress made in implementing the objectives set out in the Assembly Parliamentary Service's Race Action Plan for Race Equality during March 2006 and April 2007.

The Assembly Parliamentary Service is committed to achieving the actions in the Assembly's Race Equality Scheme which are relevant to its functions and staff. This Action Plan should be read in conjunction with the Scheme which can be found here www.wales.gov.uk/themesraceequality/index.htm

The APS has six functions. This plan sets out the specific actions that APS will undertake to promote race equality in each of its functions.

In August 2004, the APS assessed the relevance of all of its functions to the general duty of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Each function was then classified using the system contained in Appendix D of the Race Equality Scheme. The full set of classifications is contained in Appendix B of the Assembly Race Equality Scheme. Below is a summary of the ratings for APS.

Function:	Classification:
Strategic Management	High
Formal Proceedings Support	Medium
Information and Advice	Medium
Facilities and Services	Medium
Public Information and Education	Medium
Human Resources	High

2. Timetable for further action

As part of the assessment process, the APS has identified further action that it needs to take to promote race equality. These specific actions are set out on pages 3-21.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the Plan are to:

- provide and promote good quality services for all ethnic groups;
- increase awareness of the Assembly among minority ethnic people;
- foster the promotion of race equality in the work of the National Assembly;
and
- ensure full compliance with the Government of Wales Act 1998, namely:

Section 48 (The Assembly shall make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that its business is conducted with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people); and

Section 120 (The Assembly shall make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that its functions are exercised with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people).

4. Future Race Equality Objectives

The Assembly Commission is developing a Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan which will subsume any outstanding race equality objectives contained in this update report.

Function: Strategic Management			Classification: High
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ensure implementation of the APS Action Plan as a whole; • to demonstrate clear leadership and ownership of the Plan by senior management; • to give due consideration to minority ethnic issues in senior management team meetings; • to give due consideration to minority ethnic issues in planning and reporting Assembly activities; and • to encourage consideration of the needs of minority ethnic people in all relevant Assembly activities. 			
Actions	Date	Lead	Performance Measures
Set up an APS Equality Steering Group	To be established May 2005	Clerk/Equality Champion	<p>The terms of reference for the group were extended in 2006 to reconstitute it as the APS Equality Steering Group. The Group consists of equality leads that monitor progress in implementing the Race Equality Action Plan. It met three times between April 2006 and March 2007 and its purpose is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to monitor and evaluate progress on APS statutory equality plans and reports; and • act as a catalyst and discussion forum for equal opportunities issues in APS.

Build capacity for a dedicated Equality Champion	To be appointed May 2005	Clerk/Equality Champion	<p>Denise Rogers was appointed as APS Equality Champion, working full time on an equality capacity building project between November 2005 and November 2006 and reported to the Clerk at regular intervals.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update From December 2006 – current: Holly Pembridge (Corporate Unit) has taken forward the role and is establishing an Equalities Team in the Corporate Unit.</p>
Ensure that race equality is a quarterly standing item on senior management meeting agendas	From May 2005	Clerk	<p>Third Assembly Update Equalities work is now planned through the Corporate Unit and the Equalities Team liaises with the Executive Board on a regular basis.</p>
Ensure that information about progress with the Race Equality Action Plan is reported to the House Committee and included in relevant House Committee and APS reports	From May 2005	Clerk	<p>The Clerk produced an annual report of arrangements to promote equality of opportunity, incorporating race equality elements in the financial year 2005-06 which was presented at Equality of Opportunity Committee – 25 October 2006. House</p>

			Committee considered the report on implementing the race equality actions on 13 July 2006.
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Function: Formal Proceedings Support			Classification: Medium
Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater awareness of minority ethnic issues amongst Members; and • improved scrutiny of Assembly Departmental Race Equality Plans 			
Actions	Date	Lead	Performance Measures
The Equality of Opportunity Committee Clerk will draw up a checklist, in consultation with Equality of Opportunity Committee standing invitees, for committees to use to assess their handling of equality issues (in line with recommendation 27 of Equality of Opportunity Committee report on Mainstreaming Equality).	By and from April 2005	Clerk to the Equality of Opportunity Committee	Prior to the production of the checklist, a seminar was held on 10 Feb 2005 with Clerks and Equality of Opportunity Committee standing invitees (including the CRE) to identify ways of assisting Committee Chairs to mainstream equality considerations into Forward Work Programmes and Agendas. A checklist was produced and distributed to Committee Clerks and Chairs on 11 July 2005, after consultation with Standing Invitees (including the Commission for Racial Equality). The checklist draws

			<p>attention to the requirements of the Race Equality Scheme.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update The checklist was produced as agreed and disseminated. There is little evidence to suggest that the checklist has been used by committees since its introduction which has largely been due to responding to the pressures associated with organisational change. The establishment of new committees in the Third Assembly is an ideal opportunity to re-issue and raise awareness of the checklist. The Equality of Opportunity Committee's view will be sought on this.</p>
Committee Clerks will use this checklist, in their discussions with Chairs on Forward Work Programmes and Agendas, to draw attention to the requirements of the Race Equality Scheme.	From April 2005	Clerks to Subject Committees	See above. All Committee Strategic Forward Work Programmes were forwarded to the Equality of Opportunity secretariat and the issue was discussed during the Equality of Opportunity Committee meeting on 14 June 2006.
Committee Service will ensure that Subject Committees submit their	November 2005 and on-going	Clerks to Subject Committees and	Subject Committees' Strategic Forward Work Programmes were

<p>strategic forward work programmes to the Equality of Opportunity Committee to assess whether they pay due regard to equality issues including race equality (in line with recommendation 26 of the Mainstreaming Equality report)</p>	<p>annually</p>	<p>Equality of Opportunity Committee Clerk</p>	<p>forwarded to the Equality of Opportunity Committee (EOC) for consideration at its 14 June 2006 meeting. The Committee felt that consideration should be given to more in-depth scrutiny of the programmes in future years.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update The Committee might wish to consider how best to scrutinise the work of Scrutiny Committees as part of its broader remit.</p>
<p>In discussions with Members on committee business, Committee Clerks will draw attention to the requirements of the Race Equality Scheme as appropriate</p>	<p>From April 2005</p>	<p>Clerks of Subject committees</p>	<p>There is little evidence to suggest that this has been taken forward but the Equalities Team can work with Committee Clerks to advise them of building race equality and other equality considerations into discussions concerning committee business.</p>
<p>Relevant race equality bodies will be included on a generic list of organisations to be consulted by Clerking teams for every policy review. The list will be reviewed annually with the Equality of Opportunity Committee Standing Invitees. Other relevant race equality bodies will also be included on</p>	<p>April 2005 and annually thereafter</p>	<p>Equality of Opportunity Committee Clerk</p>	<p>Full list of consultees agreed by the Equality of Opportunity Committee during the Summer term 2005 and forwarded to Committee Service teams. A comprehensive single database has been developed jointly in the Committee Service.</p>

<p>the list of organisations to be consulted by Clerking teams for specific policy reviews.</p>			<p>Third Assembly Update Consideration should be given to an update list being agreed by the Committee in the Third Assembly.</p>
<p>The Members' Research Service and Committee Service will ensure that minority ethnic representative bodies and communities are specifically targeted when gathering evidence to underpin committee policy reviews. The good practice guidance for policy reviews will be amended accordingly.</p>	<p>April 2005</p>	<p>Equality of Opportunity Committee Clerk and MRS Team Leader for Social Justice</p>	<p>A link to the Equality Consultee list (which includes details of bodies representing minority ethnic people) is included in Chapter Six – Policy Development, Committee Service Manual. Committee Clerks to submit six-monthly reports for Head of Service.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update The revised guidance on scrutiny inquiries (for the Third Assembly) makes reference to the Equality Consultee list.</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that six-monthly reports have been submitted. Again, this has largely been due to responding to the pressures associated with organisational change.</p>
<p>Committee Service will ensure that minority ethnic representative bodies and communities are specifically targeted when formulating agendas,</p>	<p>August 2005</p>	<p>MRCS Central Co-ordination Unit. Regional Committee Clerks.</p>	<p>Third Assembly Update The Handbook of Committee Procedure has been re-written to make it more relevant and user-</p>

<p>venues and speakers for regional committee meetings. Guidance for regional committees (section 4.4) will be amended accordingly as part of the review of the Handbook of Committee Procedure.</p>			<p>friendly for incoming Members to the Third Assembly. It also takes account of changes brought about by the Government of Wales Act 2006</p>
<p>Committee Service will provide the secretariat to the Equality of Opportunity Committee and, in so doing, ensure that it is provided with the support it requires to fulfil its role of monitoring implementation of the Race Equality Scheme</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of MRCS</p>	<p>Clerking team will work with the lead MRS researcher and Equality Development Officer to explore ways of streamlining and making more effective, arrangements for the Equality of Opportunity Committee to scrutinise the Assembly's statutory equality reports.</p> <p>In the Second Assembly, all Subject Committees were invited to scrutinise the relevant Departmental section of the Welsh Assembly Government's Seventh Equality Report and feed their views to the EOC. The views of Subject Committees helped inform the EOC scrutiny session on the Report at its 25 October 2006 meeting.</p>

Function: Information and Advice		Classification: Medium	
Objective: Greater awareness of minority ethnic issues amongst Assembly Members			
Actions	Date	Lead	Performance Measures
The Members' Research Service will provide briefing to the Equality of Opportunity Committee to enable it to fulfil its role of monitoring implementation of the Race Equality Scheme by Ministers and other Committees. General guidance already provided to Members and specific briefing to be provided as appropriate for agenda items.	April 2005 and ongoing thereafter.	Equality of Opportunity Committee Clerk and Team Leader - Equality.	<p>Briefing is provided to the Equality of Opportunity Committee for this purpose and has been offered to all subject Committees. Briefings include background information and suggested questions. The number of equality-specific briefings produced for subject Committees is beginning to increase, as is the inclusion of equality focused suggested questions into non-specific briefings. The equality development officer, MRS researchers, Clerking teams and Members will evaluate the impact of this in 2005-06.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update MRS will provide briefing to the EOC to support its scrutiny of the WAG Annual Equality Report in December 2007.</p> <p>MRS has provided a range of equality-focused briefings for the</p>

			<p>EOC and for individual Assembly Members through the confidential enquiry service.</p> <p>Some MRS briefing provided to Scrutiny Committees to support scrutiny of the 2007 Draft Budget has included suggested equality considerations, including some specifically relating to BME communities.</p>
<p>The Members' Research Service will invite the Chair of the Equality of Opportunity Committee to attend the Panel of Chairs at least once each year to discuss the handling of equality issues by subject committees.</p>	<p>By September 2005 and annually thereafter.</p>	<p>Head of MRCS</p>	<p>The Chair of the Equality of Opportunity Committee attends Panel of Chairs as an "Observer". Equality of Opportunity has been included as an agenda item at Panel on a termly basis. On 29 November 2005, the Panel agreed to the suggestion of the Chair of the Equality of Opportunity Committee that subject Committees should each look at the relevant sections of WAG equality reports to ensure better scrutiny. Most Committees have discussed the 6th WAG Equality Report or made plans as to how they will undertake scrutiny in the future. The impact of this will be evaluated during 2006-07 so that</p>

			<p>the EOC Committee can consider developments and areas which still need further work when they next consider the Assembly's 7th Annual Equality Report and RES for 2005-06 in the Autumn 2006.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update As the Panel of Chairs is no longer in existence, the Committee might wish to discuss how Scrutiny Committees might consider equality issues.</p>
<p>The Members' Research Service will, as part of its internal quality assurance process, assess the written briefing that it provides to individual Members and Committees for balance and appropriate consideration of equality issues.</p>	Ongoing	Head of MRS	<p>The MRS quality assessment tool which is used to check MRS outputs, includes questions which focus on the degree to which written outputs address issues of equality and discrimination. The number of equality-specific briefings produced for subject Committees is beginning to increase, as is the inclusion of equality-focused suggested questions into non-specific briefings. The impact of this will be evaluated in 2005-06 by the equality development officer, MRS researchers, Clerking teams and Members.</p>

		<p>Third Assembly Update</p> <p>A formal evaluation of the impact of equality considerations included in MRS briefings was not carried out due to pressures on staff resources during organisational change.</p> <p>The MRS Draft Service Plan for 2007-08 however includes a number of actions which should enable us to better assess the impact of our briefing. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Committee Member use of MRS briefings is already being logged; ▪ A log of feed back from individual Assembly Members is also kept; ▪ A Customer Liaison Group will be established to identify and co-ordinate further actions which should improve our ability to assess the needs of Assembly Members and the ways in which they use our briefings; ▪ Guidance will be produced to support researchers to better incorporate equality considerations into their
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			<p>briefings; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Every member of staff will have a performance objective to demonstrate how they are contributing to the goal of undertaking our work within a framework that promotes sustainability and equality of opportunity.
<p>The Members' Research Service will ensure that one of its programme of awareness sessions for Members and their staff, is targeted at the implications of the Race Equality Scheme.</p>	<p>By April 2005.</p>	<p>Head of MRCS</p>	<p>Difficulties around session attendance has slowed down the programme. A RES session has not been held. Work has been undertaken by a group to better establish the needs of Members and Staff. A RES session will be held in 2006-07.</p> <p>Given the difficulties in arranging a session that Members are able to attend it was decided that this would not be an effective way of raising awareness. Written and verbal briefing was provided to the Deputy Presiding Officer, House Committee and EOC in 2006-07.</p>

			<p>Third Assembly Update Changes to the status of the Assembly, the Assembly Government and the establishment of the Assembly Commission have resulted in changes in responsibilities regarding the various statutory equality duties.</p> <p>We will identify the most effective ways of briefing Members and their staff on the various equality schemes. Colleagues in the Legal Services also have a role in this and briefing has been provided to the APS Executive Board on the application of current legislation to the Assembly and the Assembly Commission.</p> <p>MRS will produce a research paper for all Members and their staff, highlighting responsibilities and who they apply to by the end of 2007.</p>
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Function: Facilities and Services		Classification: Medium	
Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater awareness of minority ethnic issues; • provide a welcoming environment for visitors from minority ethnic communities; • increase awareness of the work of the Assembly amongst minority ethnic groups; • encourage all ethnic groups to participate in the work of the Assembly; • encourage participation in the electoral system by all ethnic groups. 			
Actions	Date	Lead	Performance Measures
Research contacts and readership of ethnic minority publications in Wales.	By March 2006	Head of Media Relations	<p>Database produced December 2006. In March 2007, press releases targeting specialist BME press and media were sent to raise the profile of Commonwealth Day events.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update Contacts researched but proving difficult to access circulation figures. Work will continue during 2007/08. From April 2007, press releases targeting specialist BME press and media were sent regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mohammad Asghar AM becoming the first Assembly Member from a BME background; and • The launch of the Assembly Member Operation Blackvote Shadowing Scheme.

In consultation with the Communications Directorate, build a database of national press/media aimed at minority ethnic groups in order to target with appropriate press releases.	By March 2006	Head of Media Relations	As above
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Function: External Communications		Classification: Medium	
Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to promote good race relations and increase knowledge, participation and interest in the work of the National Assembly for Wales amongst people from minority ethnic communities; • improve and increase voter participation among people from minority ethnic communities; • improve the services provided to the public and increase awareness of those services to people from minority ethnic communities; • work in partnership with community members from minority ethnic groups to increase participation, knowledge and interest in the work of the National Assembly for Wales; and • improve interest in the work of the Assembly via live broadcasting amongst people from minority ethnic communities. 			
Actions	Date	Lead	Performance Measures
Carry out an equality and social inclusion review of the Exhibition and Visitor Centres to ascertain if the diverse culture of Wales is fully represented.	March 2006	Marketing Manager	<p>The Marketing Manager in consultation with the Access Co-ordinator carried out an equality and social inclusion review of the exhibition and Visitor Centres. Exhibition Panels are changed in line with alteration to the Ministerial Portfolios and changes to Assembly services and political landscape. The panels will take note of recommendations made by the Access Co-ordinator to ensure that the cultural diversity of Wales is represented as far as possible.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update The Visitor Centre remains in the North Wales; however a feasibility study is currently underway regarding the future use of the Pierhead Building.</p>

<p>Prepare tender documents for the refurbishment of the Assembly Exhibition centre to ensure that all exhibition panels are inclusive of all main ethnic groups in Wales.</p>	<p>By July 2007</p>	<p>Marketing Manager, in consultation with Purchasing Unit</p>	<p>Exhibition panels are changed in line with alteration to the Ministerial Portfolios and changes to Assembly services and political landscape. The panels will take note of recommendations made by the Equalities and Access Adviser to ensure that the cultural diversity of Wales is represented as far as possible.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update The exhibition panels in the North Wales Visitor Centre have recently been updated to reflect the changes related to the Government of Wales Act 2006 and are inclusive of the main ethnic groups in Wales. Pictures used in publications are also inclusive of the main ethnic groups in Wales.</p>
<p>Ensure that Assembly publications and information provided by the service have due regard for equality of opportunity for people from minority ethnic communities.</p>	<p>February 2006 (and annually thereafter)</p>	<p>Marketing Manager</p>	<p>Each publication is amended as required and images and language is scrutinised to ensure social inclusion. In addition, 'Your Guide to the Assembly' is currently produced in eighteen languages and is available on the Internet.</p>
<p>Review the eighteen languages that 'Your Guide to the Assembly' is produced in, ensuring that they reflect the diverse ethnic community in Wales.</p>	<p>Autumn 2007</p>	<p>Marketing Manager</p>	<p>Conduct research into the logic behind our selection of languages for multi-lingual translation of publications and update accordingly.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update This has not been carried out due to responding to the pressures associated with organisational change. This will be incorporated however in 2008 as part of an overall review of Assembly publications.</p>

<p>Monitor the distribution of publications and web-site take up of leaflets in minority ethnic languages.</p>	<p>Publish report by March 2006. Statistics will be collated quarterly.</p>	<p>Marketing Manager</p>	<p>The statistics for downloads of leaflets in minority ethnic languages are available but has proven to be problematic. It has not been possible to collate accurate figures to date but a solution is being sought from the IT provider.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update There is not the capability at present in the IT system to count the number of PDF downloads from the Internet site. We will take this into account as part of a wider review of our Internet site's capability.</p>
<p>Provide, in partnership with Human Resources branch, specific training for all new and existing front-line staff on the duties and responsibilities contained within the Race Relations Act. In addition, cultural, race and religious awareness training will be delivered.</p>	<p>Some front-line staff will have received this training by August 2005.</p>	<p>Equalities and Access Adviser</p>	<p>Access and Equality Training has been devised and has been delivered by the Equalities and Access Adviser in partnership with Human Resources during 2006. The training includes all aspects of equality including cultural, race and religious awareness issues. The training has been independently evaluated. Continuous evaluation at each session has been very positive. The training is mandatory for all new staff as part of the induction programme. Existing staff are encouraged to attend. The take up has been very high and will continue to be rolled out during 2006-07. All 'Welcome Host' training involves an equality element.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update Training will be adjusted accordingly to correlate with the Single Equalities Scheme and Action Plan 2008.</p>

<p>Obtain customer feedback from under- represented groups on the front line services provided by APS.</p>	<p>By December 2005</p>	<p>Equalities and Access Adviser</p>	<p>Efforts are made to obtain customer feedback. In 2006, the Equalities and Access Adviser has attended events, hosted in the Assembly and external events that are organised by under-represented groups. There have been no complaints or negative feedback received from under-represented groups and positive verbal feedback on the services the Assembly is directly responsible for have been good.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update Further work on this will commence in 2008.</p>
<p>Conduct or commission a feasibility study for an audio tour facility at the visitor and exhibition centres which would promote inclusivity and which would provide equal access for all. This would include an audio tour in minority languages used within Wales in addition to Welsh and English.</p>	<p>By October 2006</p>	<p>Equalities and Access Adviser</p>	<p>Third Assembly Update The audio tour facility was discussed but set aside on grounds of cost, but we will review this in 2008 alongside the feasibility study for the Pierhead and review of Senedd access.</p>

Promote the education visits programme to schools/colleges that have currently not visited the Assembly and that have a high number of minority ethnic pupils as identified from the research above.	By March 2007	Education Team Manager	<p>The Education Team has increased its weekly visits capacity in Cardiff. The resulting 19% increase in visitors in 2005-06 and 30% increase in visitors 2006-07 shows that the service is much more accessible to schools and as a result, pupil diversity is wider.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update Development of enhanced, accessible education facilities in the Assembly Office is underway. This is due for completion in early 2008.</p>
Review all education visit-booking forms to ensure that cultural and religious requirements of visiting schools are considered as part of the planning process.	By March 2006	Education Service Manager	<p>Schools and colleges provide information on cultural or religious requirements during visits to the Assembly. Schools are asked if they have any requirements and their requirements are subsequently factored into the visit.</p>
Identify and contact minority ethnic groups in Wales inviting them to have guided tours of the Assembly.	By March 2006 and annually thereafter	Visits Team Manager	<p>Letters were sent inviting groups to visit the Assembly in June 2005. The take up has been limited but there has been a small increase.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update This exercise will be repeated in 2008.</p>
Develop and maintain a data base of minority ethnic community groups and contacts within Wales in order to further promote the work of the Assembly.	By December 2005 and annually thereafter.	Visits Team Manager	<p>Database of contacts established and maintained. This is reviewed on a quarterly basis and letters of invitation inviting groups to visit are sent out annually.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update To be reviewed in 2008.</p>

Consider providing a direct link from the homepage to a new page, as part of the internet/intranet review project, which will bring together all available minority language material	By September 2007	Head of ICT	Third Assembly Update This has now been completed. New site went live on 4 May 2007.
Investigate with the Members Research Service and Public Information and Education Branch, as part of the internet/intranet review project, an e-forum to collect information on the demand for minority language material on the website	By September 2007	Head of ICT	Third Assembly Update The new website can facilitate e-forums and can be managed in-house.
Consider revising the Content Management System, as part of the internet/intranet review project, to include requirements for multi-language control and availability.	By September 2007	Head of ICT	Third Assembly Update The Livelink CMS has the capability to do this but any development for languages other than Welsh and English will have to be costed.
Consider providing the tools and procedures to allow publication in minority language to the website as html documents, as part of the internet/intranet review project.	By September 2007	Head of ICT	Third Assembly Update See above.
Set up a working group to consider the legal requirements of providing a language policy to take account of any responsibilities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act.	By November 2005	Equalities and Access Adviser in consultation with stakeholders	A working group has met three times since November 2005. The group has investigated good practice in similar organisations and discussed possible solutions with the Commission for Race Equality.

			<p>Third Assembly Update Assembly Commission to consider and review the requirement for a language policy.</p>
<p>Ensure that call-off contract for written translation in minority ethnic languages is robust so as to provide professional service.</p>	<p>By Spring 2005</p>	<p>External Communications Service</p>	<p>A call off contract is in place with three companies but take-up has been very low.</p> <p>We also offer a simultaneous telephone interpretation service which is a translation service in up to sixty languages for people whose first language is neither English nor Welsh.</p> <p>This service provides a telephone interpretation for individuals seeking public information about the Assembly and the services it provides. A simple phone call to the 'Public Information Line' identifying the language required and the call will be routed through an interpreter. There is no additional charge for this service and the calls are held in the strictest confidence.</p>

Function: Human Resources			Classification: High
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote good race relations; • ensure fair treatment for people from all ethnic groups; and • increase ethnic minority representation within the workforce. 			
Actions	Date	Lead	Performance Measures
Ensure that the training policy considers the Race Equality Scheme (RES) and provides opportunities for APS staff and Assembly Members to seek additional support where required.	Ongoing	Head of Learning and Development	Staff to identify training requirements in individual performance reviews (PMRs). Training Policy was reviewed in April 2005 and equality sections amended. Policy has been published on intranet.
Identify training and development needs of APS staff through PMRs, paying particular regard to the developmental needs of staff from a minority ethnic background	May 2005 - ongoing	Head of Learning and Development	This process is ongoing, utilising the annual Performance Management system.
Record and monitor ethnic background of staff applying for and/or receiving training. To analyse statistics for any inequalities.	Ongoing	Head of Learning and Development	Monitoring is ongoing through out year and issues dealt with as they arise. No issues have arisen.
Develop training for those members of staff who are responsible for the Race Equality Scheme and action planning process.	May 2005	Head of Learning and Development	Training has been included as part of a wider contract for equality training for staff. Third Assembly Update The programme is now delivered through the

			new Assembly training provider (Elieshia Training) from April 2006 onwards.
Provide all APS staff with refresher training consisting of a series of short 1-2 hour sessions on various equality (including race) issues. Staff will be expected to select at least one session, relevant to their work from a 'pick & mix menu'	September 2005	Head of Learning and Development	<p>Training is delivered for all new starters and has also been rolled out for all front line staff. Courses for other staff have been designed and are available but are demand led. Equality is also incorporated into the Parliamentary Skills training programme.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update We are currently considering the most effective ways in which to continue to raise awareness about equality issues.</p>
Monitor and review the new Induction training programme for all new staff and ensure that it raises awareness and enables staff to deliver elements of the Race Equality Scheme.	Late 2005	Head of Learning and Development	<p>Post-course evaluations have highly scored induction courses (all above our target rate of 8/10).</p> <p>The equality module of the induction has been revised to take account of emerging legislation.</p>
Develop a training course for HR staff to improve their ability to provide advice and guidance on equality (including race) issues.	2006	Head of Learning and Development	<p>Training which was delivered in April 2005 on discipline and grievance has included significant reference to race and other equality issues.</p> <p>Equality courses being run for all HR staff.</p>
Write a regular article on issues relating to equality of opportunity (including racial equality) for APS newsletter	2006/7 - ongoing	HR Equality Lead	Electronic APS newsletter started in April 2006. Articles referencing Race Equality to be included from July onwards.

			<p>Third Assembly Update Equality articles are routinely included in editions of 'The Slate' to raise awareness amongst staff.</p>
Monitor and review recruitment to APS for any possible discrimination and undertake further action if necessary	October 2005	HR Equality Lead	<p>Review of Recruitment completed in 2006. The Commission for Racial Equality's code of recruitment was used during review and recommendations adopted.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update We are now considering engaging external consultants to recommend improvements to our recruitment processes to improve interest amongst the BME communities. We are also liaising with employers of best practice with the same objective.</p>
Review the way that posts are advertised and develop improved mechanisms for promoting employment opportunities.	October 2005	HR Equality Lead	<p>Recruitment review completed. Cardiff South Enterprise centre (CSEC) used for promoting posts to ethnic minority groups. Advice taken from Chwarae Teg and Mewn Cymru with regards to female BME recruitment.</p>
Develop an outreach programme for minority ethnic communities to raise awareness of APS recruitment procedures and competency framework.	June 2005	HR Equality Lead	<p>An outreach programme was launched in summer of 2005 and in the summer of 2006.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update HR colleagues continue to liaise with the voluntary sector to seek best practice advice. We are establishing paid secondment opportunities for people from the BME</p>

			community.
Deliver the outreach programme above to minority ethnic communities to raise awareness of APS recruitment procedures and competency framework.	May 2005	Head of Human Resources	Pilot outreach programme in partnership with Cardiff South Enterprise Centre (CSEC) to target groups and raise awareness of APS's recruitment practices. Programme has been successful in recruiting three new members of staff from minority ethnic staff backgrounds.
Network with community organisations and groups to raise APS profile (using the partnership developed with CSEC)	May 2005	Head of Human Resources	<p>Network of contacts for future outreach programme partially established through council and job centre. Contacts to be extended (will also include other equality strands) by March 2006.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update We have liaised with Chwarae Teg and MEWN Cymru with regards to female BME recruitment. A secondment has been arranged with MEWN Cymru.</p>
Target schools with a high proportion of students from a minority ethnic background, offer work placements and opportunities to shadow senior members of staff and Assembly Members.	Early 2006	Head of Human Resources	<p>Participation in the Cabinet Office Development Placement Scheme for students from Minority Ethnic backgrounds - one student undertook a summer placement in 2005 and another in 2006.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update Specific local schools have been targeted for placements in summer 2007. APS has also</p>

			continued to offer work-placements to students and this has included three from minority ethnic backgrounds.
Evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach programme and make improvements where necessary	July 2006	Head of Human Resources	Review of this scheme is ongoing.
Expand existing outreach networks via additional community organisations to raise APS profile	Early 2008	HR Equality Lead	Will utilise visits by Public Information Team to promote our equality agenda.
Evaluate contact list of community organisations to ensure that outreach programme is reaching the right audience	2007	HR Equality Lead	HR outreach plans in place.
Assess the effectiveness of work experience programme	2007	HR Equality Lead	Ongoing monitoring.
Monitor all alleged race harassment incidents	Ongoing	Head of Human Resources	Monitoring is ongoing. One case has been raised in 2005-06 and has been dealt with in line with Assembly policy.
Implement a new “dignity at work” policy, and ensure that staff are aware of the policy	2006/7	Head of Human Resources	Third Assembly Update Policy was reviewed for administrative and legal separation between the Assembly Parliamentary Service and the Welsh Assembly Government prior to April 2007.
Assess the effectiveness of the policy	2007	Head of Human Resources	‘I am treated with fairness and respect at work’ elicited a 79% favourable response in 2006 staff survey.

<p>Promote use of U-Access (package on HR IT system) to provide accurate information on ethnicity which can be cross referenced with personnel practices such as training, internal recruitment and performance management</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of Human Resources</p>	<p>Monitoring of recruitment and development continues. Staff have also been asked to refresh their equality monitoring information and this is being manually added to the HR IT system. This objective has been partially met and is due for completion by January 2008.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update</p> <p>The U-access (self-service module) is currently being revised and will be re-launched in early 2008. It will then include all equality strands including disability, sexual orientation and religion. Staff will be able to update their own information confidentially.</p>
<p>Prepare reports to senior management team indicating why staff are leaving, which can be broken down by ethnicity</p>	<p>2006/7</p>	<p>HR Equality Lead</p>	<p>Statistics are monitored on an ongoing basis.</p>

ASSEMBLY PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE - DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME: OUR PLAN OF ACTION 2006-07

1. This report is a retrospective overview of progress made in implementing the objectives set out in the Assembly Parliamentary Service's Disability Equality Action Plan during March 2006 and April 2007 to meet the requirements of the Disability Equality Duty.

2. Our Action Plan focuses on the three broad groups who are affected by the work we do and the ways in which we do it:

- **Assembly Members and their staff**
- **APS Staff**
- **The public**

3. Feedback from these groups will provide important evidence of whether actions are making a difference. We will seek feedback through:

- A short visitor survey;
- A disabled staff forum which we hope to establish;
- Established and developing relationships between APS branches and disability organisations;
- Contact between the APS Equalities and Access Adviser and disability organisations;
- Internal staff surveys;
- Publicising our Scheme on our website and inviting comments;
- Informal feedback provided to members of our visits team;
- AMSS feedback group; and
- AM surveys.

4. Future Disability Equality Objectives

The Assembly Commission is developing a Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan which will subsume any outstanding Disability Equality objectives contained in this update report.

APS SERVICES AND WAYS OF WORKING WHICH IMPACT ON ALL GROUPS			
Area of work	What we are already doing to promote equality	How we'll know if we're making a difference	Lead
Provision of accommodation and facilities which are secure, accessible, available, fit for purpose and safe.	Maintenance of accessible accommodation Third Assembly Update Comments from visitors to the Senedd, including disabled visitors regarding access have been fed into consideration of the recommendations outlined in the original Senedd access report.	Positive feedback from disability groups and disabled individuals through our visitor questionnaire and feedback given to our access adviser through contact with organisations and individuals. Feedback from AMs and staff via the disabled staff forum we hope to establish.	Office and Facilities Management/ Equalities and Access Adviser
	Security and other front line staff all have equality awareness training.	Feedback from front-line staff and disabled people.	HR / Equalities and Access Adviser
	The equipment needs of all staff are assessed annually and on request and any adaptations made.	Staff feedback to APS Health and Safety team.	Office and Facilities Management
	Hearing loop availability. In addition to the permanent systems installed in key rooms, we now have a mobile unit.	Feedback and equipment testing.	Office and Facilities Management
	Our room booking system should alert us to any requirements of disabled people, e.g. for a disabled parking space, wheelchair access and induction loop.	Feedback. Changes made in response to any problems encountered by disabled people.	Office and Facilities Management

	New actions we plan to take to promote equality	How we'll know if we're making a difference	APS Lead
	<p>We have received feedback from disabled individuals and organisations who have suggested a range of improvements which could be made to the Senedd building and Assembly Office to make them more accessible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer signs in Braille, large font and pictorial representations at the entrance to the Senedd • Clearer visual markings on the steps and terraces and barriers on wheelchair ramps to avoid accidents • 'Manifestations' (e.g. etchings or markings) on internal glass • Automated or magnetised doors in the Assembly Office and the chamber public gallery • Monitors available to visitors using the wheelchair spaces in the public gallery • Ensure that the reception desk in the Senedd is accessible to staff or potential staff with mobility impairments <p>Third Assembly Update To ensure that we continue to provide a high level of accessibility to the Senedd, the original Senedd access report has been re-examined in the light of experience and we have taken</p>	<p>The Assembly Commission will be provided with information about costings and options in 2007-08.</p> <p>Feedback from visitors. The Equalities and Access Adviser is able to advise staff, Members and the public as to access issues.</p>	<p>Office and Facilities Management/ Equalities and Access Adviser</p>

	<p>into account any problems and feedback from visiting members of the public. This suggests that we need to make some adjustments in three broad areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better definition on terracing and public areas around the Senedd; • Some extra manifestation to glass within the building; • Clearer signage which is more accessible for those with visual impairments. <p>We have approached the building's architects to assist us with this work so that we find the best balance between the integrity of the design and ease of access.</p> <p>A design specification for IT monitors for wheelchair users in the Siambur's public gallery is currently being developed.</p>		
	<p>Tender exercise and subsequent contract for post separation website included criteria for DDA compliance and a track record in finding innovative ways of ensuring accessibility.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update New internet site went live on 4 May 2007.</p>	<p>Feedback from staff, AMs and the public. Use of online fora.</p>	<p>ICT</p>

ASSEMBLY MEMBERS AND THEIR STAFF			
Area of work	What we are already doing to promote equality	How we'll know if we're making a difference	Lead
Delivery of research and information services	<p>Research briefings are provided to Members to assist them in scrutinising the arrangements made by the Assembly Government and APS to promote equality. Legal advice is available to Members on equality related issues.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update Members' Research Service (MRS) will provide briefing to the EOC to support their scrutiny of the WAG Annual Equality Report in December 2007.</p> <p>MRS has provided a range of equality-focused briefings to support the EOC, including those produced in relation to the Committee's Inquiry into physical access to polling stations which is due to report at the end of 2007. We have had some good feedback from Members. We have also provided information to individual Assembly Members through our confidential enquiry service including a number relating to issues raised by disabled constituents.</p> <p>We are going to establish a Customer Liaison Group within MRS to help us identify and co-ordinate further actions to improve our ability to assess the needs of Assembly Members and the ways in which they use</p>	<p>Feedback from Members.</p> <p>Members requesting and using information provided.</p>	<p>Members' Research Service</p> <p>Legal Services</p>

	<p>our briefings. We will also produce a research paper for all Assembly Members and their staff about the responsibilities of the Assembly, Welsh Ministers and the Assembly Commission in respect of equality duties, including the duty to promote equality for disabled people under the DDA.</p> <p>Every member of staff in MRS will have a performance objective over the next year to demonstrate how they are contributing to the goal of undertaking our work within a framework that promotes sustainability and equality of opportunity.</p>		
	Advice to Members on financial support available to make their constituency offices accessible. This can be found in Members' (Salaries and Allowances etc.) Determination.	Members are aware of this funding opportunity and make use of it.	Fees Office
	Informing Members of their responsibilities as regards the Disability Equality Duty through briefing the Equality of Opportunity Committee and through the provision of information to all Members	Members' provision of feedback and suggestions and support for suggested actions to promote equality.	Equalities Team and Members' Research Service
	New actions we plan to take to promote equality	How we'll know if we're making a difference	Lead
	See section above on what we plan to do which will impact on all groups		
	We have run an AM equality awareness raising session and identified training requirements for the Disability Equality Duty.	Member attendance and feedback.	HR

APS STAFF			
Area of work	What we are already doing to promote equality	How we'll know if we're making a difference	Lead
Recruitment, training and development of staff	<p>Staff are generally recruited to the APS on the basis of their ability to demonstrate their skills and competence in various areas. Formal qualifications are 'essential criteria' only where necessary. This ensures that people who have had less opportunity to gain formal qualifications are not excluded from working within the Assembly.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update Following a rigorous assessment, we were successful in our application for the 'Positive About Disability Award' which demonstrates our commitment to recruiting and retaining disabled staff.</p>	Disabled people apply for posts and are successful.	HR
	All new staff and all existing frontline staff have equality awareness training which includes a focus on ensuring disabled visitors and members of staff are treated appropriately and with equal respect.	Feedback from staff and visitors.	Equalities and Access Adviser/ HR
	A number of staff have been supported to undertake advance study to increase the capacity of APS to promote equality, e.g. one member of staff is currently studying for an MSc in Access and Equality.	Advice and suggestions provided by those staff who have been supported which lead to improvements.	HR / staff who are being supported to study
	Training on key Assembly policies such as attendance management address disability issues.	Absence of poor management and harassment of disabled staff.	HR

Employment policy advice to staff	The Assembly operates flexible working policies such as flexi-time, part time working and home working arrangements which can help to meet a range of staff needs.	Requests for and take up of flexible working arrangements, staff feedback.	HR and individual branches
Internal communications	<p>The APS intranet news page and e-magazine, 'The Slate', have been used to promote awareness of the Disability Equality Duty and to encourage staff involvement in the preparation of the Scheme.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update An equalities intranet page is being developed as a resource for staff and Members. 'The Slate' and Newspaper have been used to raise awareness amongst staff. Three articles have been related to disability.</p>	Staff involvement in the preparation of the Scheme. Around 20 members of staff have played an active role in assessing the work of their branch and identifying positive actions which might be taken in the future to promote equality for disabled people.	Equalities Team
	New actions we plan to take to promote equality	How we'll know if we're making a difference	Lead
	See section above on what we plan to do which will impact on all groups.		
Collation of data about the make up of the APS staff and those who apply for jobs within APS to inform actions and policies to ensure equal opportunities	A new system of staff data collection and management will be introduced post January 2008 which will allow staff to enter information about themselves directly. We will make preparations by using our intranet pages and e-magazine, <i>The Slate</i> , to raise awareness that the Disability Equality Duty legislation is inclusive in its definition of disabled people. We will explain that the reason we'd like disabled people to feel able to identify themselves as such is so we can ensure that we're meeting the	Existing staff who have not previously identified themselves as disabled will do so if they wish and feel able to provide feedback on their experiences and make suggestions for improved working practices.	HR

	<p>needs of all staff to enable them to do their job and so we can encourage feedback.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update New U-Access (self-service module) on the HR IT system is under development and will be ready for roll-out in early 2008.</p>		
Review of job advertising practices	We will ensure that our review of job advertising practices considers how we might increase disabled people's awareness of our organisation as a potential place of work generally and of specific job opportunities.	Feedback from disability organisations who have been asked to inform the review in terms of the targeting of disabled people. Increase in the number of disabled people who apply for jobs.	HR
Development and review of employment policies	<p>We will establish a forum of disabled staff who will be asked to provide feedback on issues which may impact on disabled people, including the development of new policies.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update We have attempted to establish a staff network but take-up has been very low. We will learn from the experience of the LGBT network and identify new approaches.</p>	Staff forum established and feedback on a range of issues provided by the members.	HR/Equalities and Access Adviser
	We will ask for feedback from disability organisations when policies are in development.	Feedback from disability organisations.	HR/Equalities and Access Adviser
	A suggestion has been made that including a photo of each member of staff on the APS intranet will assist	Feedback from staff.	ICT

	<p>staff with visual impairments to identify colleagues. We will look at options for doing this take appropriate action.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update The intranet project group will consider this during the content section of the project in 2008.</p>		
	<p>We will continue to explore the use of voice recognition (VR) technology within our translating and reporting service. This has the potential advantage of opening up employment opportunities to people who have difficulties in using keyboards or impairments which make headphone use difficult.</p> <p>Third Assembly Update There are now ten members of staff using VR technology. This is mainly in Parliamentary Translation and Reporting Services (PTRS) due to the IT intensive nature of the work associated with PTRS and individuals' specific needs. It is likely to become more widely used in this service area. We have also received some requests from Assembly Members as to the use of VR.</p>	<p>If the technology and other considerations allow, we will be able to offer this way of working to current and potential members of staff. Some colleagues from PTRS, Committee Service and Members' Research Service are using VR technology. VPN (broadband at home) has allowed users to use fully, VR as home-workers.</p>	<p>ICT</p>

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC			
Area of work	What we are already doing to promote equality for disabled people	How we'll know if we're making a difference	APS Lead
Provision of information and education about the Assembly	Assembly educational publications are available in a range of formats. 'Your Guide to the Assembly' is also available in eighteen languages.	Take up of alternative formats and feedback.	External Communications Service
	Guided tours and CD audio tours of the Senedd, exhibition and visitors centres	Take up of these services and feedback gained through the visitor questionnaire.	External Communications Service
	Changes have been made to publicity material to ensure that the pictures used reflect the diversity of Wales.	Feedback.	External Communications Service
Supporting the involvement of groups and individuals in the work of Committees	<p>The Second Assembly's Equality of Opportunity Committee established a disabled young person's reference group to advise them in their review of services for disabled young people. In response to feedback from the young people a number of changes have been made to enhance their experience and increase the effectiveness of the reference group, e.g. use of innovative forms of communication involving video and puppets and ensuring the young people have an opportunity to make the points they wish to make at the beginning of the meeting.</p> <p>Hearing loop provision in Committee and Plenary meetings. BSL provision on request (with 14 days</p>	<p>Feedback from disabled young person's reference group and other disabled people who provide feedback to Committee Clerks will request feedback after each meeting.</p> <p>Request and take up of BSL and other formats from disabled people who wish to access and engage with Assembly business.</p> <p>Disabled people attending</p>	Committee Service/ External Communications Service

	notice) We use an accessibility check list to ensure that all external venues used for Assembly buildings are accessible.	Assembly proceedings in external venues.	
Promoting awareness of the work of the Assembly through the media	We promote the work of the Assembly through a broad range of media including radio, television, newspapers and special interest publications and internet sites. We have worked with a number of disability organisations to provide information and plan to seek advice on how we might target disabled people more effectively through the media.	Feedback from disability groups.	External Communications Service
	New actions we plan to take to promote equality	How we'll know if we're making a difference	Lead
	See section above on what we plan to do which will impact on all groups		
	Guidance on the provision of Committee and Plenary services and information in BSL and other formats is being produced. Third Assembly Update Guidance relating to arranging communications support is available on the Intranet pages.	Request and take up of BSL and other formats from disabled people who wish to access and engage with Assembly business.	Equalities and Access Adviser