

Board Paper

12th February 2013

Paper Title	Equality and Diversity Annual Report and Action Plan for 2014/15
Paper Reference:	NRW B O 8.14
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Purpose of Paper:	- To seek agreement to publish the 2013/14 Equality and Diversity Annual Report - Agree the Equalities and Diversity Action Plan 2014/15 - Note the work planned to develop the Equalities and Diversity Action Plan 2015/18
Recommendation:	- To agree the Annual Report - To agree the 2014/15 Action Plan
Decision Required:	Yes
Impact: To note – all headings might not be applicable to the topic	Impact on the Environment: Non applicable Impact on the Economy: Non applicable Impact on Community: As an employer of staff in Wales, working with partners and communities across the country, it is essential that Natural Resources Wales is compliant with the law and that it sets a high standard across the full range of the equality and diversity field. Impact on Knowledge: The development of the Annual Report and the Action Plan has pulled together a significant amount of workforce and business performance data. Much of this information will need to be retained for future benchmarking and performance management purposes The Annual Report and Action Plan will need to be published on Natural Resources Wales' website.

Issue

1. To seek the Board's agreement to the publication of the Natural Resources Wales Equality and Diversity Annual Report, which includes our proposed Action Plan for 2014/15.

Summary

2. This paper attaches the proposed Equalities and Diversity Annual Report for 2013/14, together with our proposed Action Plan for 2014/15 and proposals for the development of a subsequent three year Action Plan for the period 2015/18. We seek the Board's agreement to publish the report and implement the Action Plan.

Background

3. At its December 2013 Board meeting, the Board received a paper¹, which set out Natural Resources Wales's legal duties in terms of equality and diversity, together with the business benefits of a proactive approach to equality issues, before then explaining the work we needed to complete before 1 April 2014 in order to comply with our legal duties. The paper then set out our plans for completing this work. Specifically, the paper explained that, following discussion with the Equality Commissioner for Wales, we would need to publish the following:
 - An Annual Equality and Diversity Report, setting out our work and achievements during 2013/14.
 - Our Strategic Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2014/15.
 - Our plans for developing a Strategic Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2015/18. As the three year plan would require us to carry out both internal and external consultation, it is important for this work to be planned at an early stage.
4. This work has now been completed and the three products are now enclosed as a single document.
5. Firstly, the Annual Report for 2013/14 provides a summary of the excellent progress we have made in the last year in establishing and embedding Natural Resources Wales's approach to equality and diversity. Many of the issues covered in the report were highlighted in last month's paper to the Board, but we would particularly highlight our success at integrating our equality and diversity plans into wider Natural Resources Wales Corporate and Business planning activity, together with our People Strategy, where we see these linkages as invaluable to help us get the full benefits from our equalities work. The report also highlights the benefits of our recent work to collate evidence and data on the composition and characteristics of our workforce, all of which will be invaluable in informing the development of optimal HR policies and processes, with our current work on the Total Reward Package being an excellent case in point. Taken as a whole, we believe our first year represents an excellent year of progress in our equalities work.
6. Looking ahead, the report then sets out a proposed equalities Action Plan for 2014/15. This plan very much builds upon the good work to date and focuses on four overarching objectives:
 - Leadership

¹ NRW B O 52.13 Equality and Diversity Way Forward

- Business performance and culture
 - Realising the potential of our workforce
 - Our services to our customers
7. Within these objectives, the Action Plan, contains a number of subordinate tasks, together with milestones. Performance will be managed through the Equality and Diversity Forum and periodic reports on key issues will also be made to the Board.
 8. Finally, the report sets out a number of tasks and milestones for the development of the three year Action Plan. This represents a sizeable piece of work, with extensive consultation, but the range of inputs received will be important to help shape our longer term equality plans.

Risks

9. The publication of our Annual Report and our Action Plan for next year are important issues in order for Natural Resources Wales to meet its legal obligations and it will also be an important element of our governance assurance statement for 2013/14. Failure to complete these tasks in time would present significant risks to Natural Resources Wales, both in terms of the law, our governance and reputation.

Financial Implications

10. This work is already funded and can be delivered by current staff resource.

Communications

11. The publication of our report will be of interest to our staff and may also attract interest externally. We will develop an appropriate Communications Plan.

Equality impact assessment (EqIA)

12. Not required at this stage.

Annex:

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| Annex 1 | Natural Resources Wales Equality and Diversity Annual Report |
| Annex 2 | Natural Resources Wales Equality and Diversity Action Plan |