



 GIG CYMRU NHS WALES	Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales	Name of Meeting People and Organisational Development Committee Date of Meeting 16 July 2026 Agenda item: 5
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Network Requests to Board – July 2026 update	
Executive lead:	Neil Lewis, Director of People & OD
Author:	Ffion Grundy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager

Approval/Scrutiny route:	Business Executive Team – 17 June 2026 People & OD Committee – July 2026
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Purpose
The purpose of this paper is to give an update on the progress made on Staff Diversity Network requests made to the Board from September 2023, ongoing until the final presentation in the July 2024 Board meeting for assurance and seek comments feedback from the Committee

Recommendation:				
APPROVE ☐	CONSIDER ☐	RECOMMEND ☐	ADOPT ☐	ASSURANCE ☒
The People & OD Committee are asked to: - Take assurance on progress with requests made to the Board by the Staff Diversity Networks to date. - Provide comments and feedback to Ffion Grundy by 31 July 2026				

Link to Public Health Wales [Strategic Plan](#)

Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives.

This report contributes to the following:

Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	2 - Promoting mental and social wellbeing

Summary impact analysis

Equality and Health Impact Assessment	An EHIA is not required as this is an update paper, and no decisions are required.
Risk and Assurance	
Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act	Identifying areas for improvements and addressing them links to the Health and Social Care Act, in particular: Equitable – This work aims to move us to our equality goals and beyond, both as a public sector organisation and as an employer.
Financial implications	There are no financial implications as this is an update on actions taken.
People implications	The requests from the Staff Diversity Networks agreed by the Board will support EDI awareness raising and knowledge with employees. This will create an inclusive culture that supports employees in the organisation to deliver inclusive services.

1. Purpose / situation

The purpose of this paper is to give an update on Staff Diversity Network requests made to the Board from September 2023, ongoing until the final presentation in the July 2024 Board meeting.

This follows the previous update provided during the April 2025 Committee meeting.

2. Background

Between September 2023 and July 2024, each of our Staff Diversity Networks presented to the Board, updating them on their activity over the previous year and their forthcoming plans.

They also had the opportunity to make requests to the Board on initiatives and improvements they would like to see take place that would benefit their members and the wider organisation.

Below are the dates of their presentations to the Board:

- REACH and Enfys – September 2023
- We Care and Porffor – November 2023:
- Ymlaen – January 2024
- Women's Network – July 2024
- Men's Network was set up in June 2025, therefore haven't presented to the Board.

Further updates will be shared with the People and OD Committee as work progresses.

3. Description/Assessment

It is important to note that the purpose of this update is to provide details of progress with requests made to PHWs board by Staff Diversity Networks between September 2023 and July 2024 and that it therefore does not represent the wider programme of work or achievements of the Networks. The full list of requests that were made can be seen in the appendix and the paper provides an update on those which were not completed in April 2025 when assurance was last provided to the Committee.

Each of our Staff Networks has an Executive Sponsor and the current sponsors are:

Enfys LGBTQ+ Network	Jim McManus
Men's Network	Neil Lewis

Porffor Network and Neurodiversity Sub-group	Iain Bell
REACH Network	Tracey Cooper
WeCare Network	Paul Veysey
Women's Network	Claire Birchall
Ymlaen Network	Meng Khaw

Work has progressed on several actions since the last update to the People and OD Committee:

Minority Ethnic Development (REACH)

Leadership and Management Development

The Leadership and Management Academy began in January 2025. It is one element of a systematic programme of work which will increase leadership and management skills, capacity and confidence. The academy provides a safe, supportive space for leaders and managers and aspiring leaders and managers to test new ways of working and contribute to positive change across Public Health Wales. 300 colleagues will attend in total over 3 years.

At the outset of the programme, we reviewed the diversity data of our leaders and managers and ringfenced a minimum of 20% of places on each cohort for underrepresented colleagues (disability, LGB and ethnic minority). In addition, our aim was for 50% of each cohort to be female, per year.

Analysis in May 2026 demonstrated that of cohorts 1 – 9, 13% of attendees were ethnic minority and 70% female.

We will continue to monitor the diversity of each cohort and work with REACH and our other networks to achieve our objectives.

Skills for Recruitment and Selection

In April 2026, we received feedback from REACH network members that they would like support in developing their interview skills in response to colleagues sharing that they had been unsuccessful in progressing through the recruitment process in the organisation.

We are currently looking into a variety of options to support skills development for colleagues. We are also progressing best practice organisational level action, which includes ensuring more recruitment panels are diverse by developing diverse colleagues to take part in them, and supporting directorates and networks to implement mentoring schemes.

Carers Policy (WeCare)

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Our [Carer's Policy](#) as developed in partnership by the Carers Network and People and OD and launched in November 2024.

Reverse Mentoring Scheme (Enfys)

Reverse Mentoring guidance was created and is regularly promoted with Enfys network members. It has also been promoted to all colleagues through news articles.

One Exec and one LGBTQ+ colleague were paired to support their understanding of the LGBTQ+ lived experience. We haven't had any additional colleagues sign up to the programme which means that whilst the request to the Board has been fulfilled, its reach and impact has been limited.

Accessibility - create best practice and roll out across PHW (Porffor)

The Porffor and Neurodiversity sub-group co-chairs met with Comms colleagues at the end of 2024 regarding accessibility in relation to email signatures, our external website, and PowerPoint presentations with the aim of creating templates and guidance to maximise accessibility and inclusion.

Further work is needed to discuss this further and agree what can be implemented.

Welsh Language - be supportive and lead by example. Help us normalise the Welsh language and embed a culture which embraces Welsh language and culture (Ymlaen)

The Ymlaen Network has a proactive Executive Sponsor who role models both the use of and learning of the language.

The Network has a buddy scheme which is run by the Welsh language team which allows people of similar levels to pair up with one another. We currently have 14 pairs, but the scheme is continuous and allows individuals to meet for however long that they see the benefits for.

Staff members who are beginners to the language (level 0 skills on ESR) are encouraged to attend our Croeso sessions provided by Coleg Cambria. Welsh Government's More than Just Words (Mwy na Geiriau) strategy aims for all health and social care staff to be able to achieve courtesy level of Welsh by 2027 – attendance at one of these sessions helps us reach that goal. If a staff member knows a little Welsh and would like to continue their learning, a wide variety of courses are available. The organisation will fund the opportunity for staff to attend courses to further their learning.

If staff members already have Welsh skills but have lost confidence or feel 'rusty' then we encourage staff to take part in the Magu Hyder / Confidence Building sessions offered by Coleg Cambria.

Below is data on the numbers of staff which attended the variety of learn Welsh opportunities available during 2025 - 2026:

Course attended	Numbers of staff
Croeso sessions, Coleg Cambria (with Powys THB & DHCW)	91
Magu Hyder / Confidence Building, Coleg Cambria (Welsh Government- funded)	13 staff (3 cohorts)
National Centre for Learning Welsh (Work Welsh). A variety of online taster courses by the Learn Welsh Centre: Short online taster courses Learn Welsh	34
Using Welsh at Work (Canolradd / Uwch / Gloywi) Nant Gwrtheyrn	3
Various other learn Welsh Providers - Mynediad to Uwch	31

The Using Welsh Effectively sessions delivered by HICO and facilitated in Welsh, explores how to support managers with using Welsh effectively in their roles – both incidental use and use in formal processes/settings. These sessions are available to all Welsh speaking staff to encourage the use of Welsh at work and explore the barriers to doing this currently.

In February, the Welsh Language Team worked with the Learn Welsh Centre to launch the Cynllun Siarad Iechyd / Health Siarad Scheme. The scheme will pair confident Welsh speakers with less confidence across each organization within the NHS, matching individuals based on location and roles and we look forward to developing this work forwards during 2026 – 2027.

There are plenty of opportunities to use and practice your Cymraeg skills at work too. Here are some of these:

- Join our Welsh language staff network, Ymlaen which has now been up and running for 3 years and continues to go o nerth i nerth (from strength to strength). Membership is now well over 130, with first-language speakers and learners of all levels from across the organisation coming together to promote the Welsh language and culture and demonstrate that the language belongs to us all. The network holds events all year round for PHW, NHS P&I and the wider NHS in Wales to attend.
- Be a part of our Buddy or Mentoring schemes
- Join our Cymraeg and Dysgu Cymraeg Teams channels and join the NHS Wales Dysgu Cymraeg Yammer group
- Join the 3 weekly Caffi Cymraeg

Support to develop a Women's Mentoring scheme (Women's)

The Women's Network Mentoring Scheme was launched in January 2026.

Sixteen colleagues expressed an interest in being a mentor or mentee, resulting in 8 mentor/mentee relationships. An introduction email was shared with each mentor/mentee relationship requesting the mentee to contact the mentor and arrange the first meeting. Mentors and mentees were provided with a link to the mentoring toolkit pages and were asked to sign a mentoring agreement to ensure both parties were clear on their role in the relationship.

A follow-up pulse survey will be conducted in June to seek feedback and inform the continuation of the scheme.

Once the results of the pulse survey have been analysed, a further call for interest will be issued to Network Members with a view to increasing the number of members of the scheme.

The full details of the progress to date can be seen in Appendix A.

3.1 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015



All the requests made by the Networks balance the short- and long-term needs for improvement. Regular review will ensure they are fit for purpose and achieving what has been expected.



Undertaking the work requested will ensure that we can prevent any issues that may arise and will help us to meet our strategic equality objectives.



These requests are aligned with the WG Anti-racist Wales action plan and our 2024-2028 SEP which aims to advance equality.



The network chairs sought the views of their members before making these requests; therefore we know that this comes from people across the organisation. We have collaborated with various groups and stakeholders across the organisation to deliver what is required.



Network Chairs are on the working groups for each request and have been integral to the design and delivery of this work.

4. Recommendation

The People & OD Committee are asked to:

- Take **assurance** on progress with requests made to the Board by the Staff Diversity Networks to date.
- Provide comments and feedback to Ffion Grundy by 31 July 2026