

## **MANAGEMENT BOARD**

### **Diversity and Inclusion Scheme: review of year two**

*Take note paper from Head of Diversity and Inclusion*

*For the meeting on 1 May*

#### **Purpose**

1. This paper informs the Management Board of progress of the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Scheme in the second quarter, plus a review of the second year of the scheme, as presented to the House of Commons Commission in March (see from page 4 below). It takes into account feedback from BMG after presentation at its April meeting.

#### **Action for the Board**

2. The Board is asked to take note of the progress made. Feedback on how best to take forward future consultation in departments is welcome.

#### **Consultation and equality analysis**

3. Heads of department, business management directors, the Head of HR Services, diversity champions and workplace equality network (WEN) committees were asked to contribute to capturing activities as part of the second year review of the D&I Scheme. Consultation on delivery of the scheme's final year and embedding the future strategy will continue with these stakeholders and others including the Trade Union Side, with equality analyses conducted when required.

### Key progress during year two

4. The Commission paper and action plan demonstrate that progress continues to be made in all areas, following quarterly reporting. It is encouraging that the House's long-term commitment to inclusive culture change is evidenced by achievements. This has been emphasised by benchmarking activities which show improved scores and feedback.
5. However, the work and pace will need to be reinforced in order to deliver the actions and achieve the outcomes of the Scheme in its final year and the under-representation initiatives. We will continue to work with action owners and other stakeholders.
6. The D&I team has held a facilitated workshop to plan how to communicate progress of the scheme and mark its second anniversary. We are not proposing to hold a specific anniversary event, but will feed messages into existing internal communication channels such as *Managers' Briefing*, as well as via the WENs and social media, where appropriate (e.g. permission has been granted for ParliOUT to have its own Twitter account). The D&I managers have been invited to present to some directorates' team meetings and are happy to continue to do this on request.

### Future strategy

7. The proposal for a future strategy (see annex, paragraph 8) – the setting of a central vision followed by implementation by departments in line with their business objectives – was accepted and ratified by the Commission. Consultation will begin this year on how to make this work in each business area. We will also consult on the suggested future actions in the plan.

### Financial and procurement implications

8. Some activities to support delivery of the scheme require money. These include initiatives from the WENs which are paid for by WEN budgets (and shared with the Lords). Others, such as proposals to work with the Windsor Fellowship to address under-representation, will involve business cases to bid for additional money. Many of the initiatives are low- or no cost and rely on the engagement and participation of our staff, which has been high and very much appreciated.

9. During the third and final year of the D&I Scheme, a review will need to be carried out to evaluate effectiveness and to inform the strategy to supersede it. It is proposed that this follows the format of previous reviews, i.e., is conducted by external experts in order to guarantee impartiality and transparency. Costs attributed to this will be paid for from the D&I budget. It is highly unlikely that such costs will necessitate a tendering process in order to procure services. This approach will be proposed in more detail in the autumn.

### **Risk management**

10. The key risks associated with this work are failure to improve the representation of staff in senior pay bands, and reputational damage linked to inclusion-related activities and events. On the former, many initiatives are already in place and others are being developed. On the latter, we are taking into account the recent Senior Leadership event focusing on media and communications by anticipating issues likely to receive media interest. This should assist in minimising risk and capitalising on good news stories (for example, the House has been nominated for 'Apprenticeship Employer of the Year' in the Mayor's Fund for London awards for the Clerk's Apprentices Scheme).

### **House of Lords implications**

11. This year has seen greater working with the House of Lords through joint participation in WEN activities, including Board-level sponsorship (to date David Beamish as overall champion, Liz Hallam-Smith as gender champion and Simon Burton as LGBT champion). We will be welcoming the Lords' involvement in the D&I Awards this year, now that the award categories are under review with less focus on Commons policy.

### **Conclusion**

12. The Management Board is asked to take note, is thanked for its championing of equality, diversity and inclusion, and is asked to continue to support it and the delivery of the D&I Scheme.

Anne Foster  
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