

Registers of Scotland

Board Meeting

9-10 March 2021

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Progress Report

Purpose

1. To provide the Board with an update on recent activities and priorities with regard to RoS' Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) agenda.
2. RoS Board are invited to review and comment on the activities and make any suggestions for change on the proposed next steps.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that the Board:
 - Review the activities undertaken since the previous Board update in August 2020;
 - Comment on the progress made;
 - Discuss and agree the proposed next steps;
 - Offer any insight and expertise based on their experience of supporting EDI initiatives.

Background

4. As Board members are aware, RoS has several statutory obligations with regard to EDI. RoS must also engage with the SG approach to EDI, as well as, of course, the moral and business productivity and effectiveness imperatives to do so.
5. To support this agenda, and to reinvigorate the approach to EDI, the Board was briefed in August 2020 of actions I intended to take and make progress on. Board members provided useful feedback, which was taken into consideration.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion – Progress made since August 2020

6. As a first stage, we reached out to colleagues to hold a series of 1-2-1 conversations about their lived experience of working within RoS. We were able to hold these conversations with colleagues representing the interests of all nine protected characteristics. We also sought the perspective of these colleagues on the RoS approach to EDI and what they thought we should prioritise as the next steps.
7. These conversations were enormously valuable and thought provoking, offering constructive insight and ideas. All of the colleagues spoken to were very positive about their employment experience within RoS, which is reflected in the EDI analysis carried out on our 2020 CSPA results.
8. Additionally, we further examined our new draft EDI Strategy, through the lens of the colleague and Board feedback. Amendments were made and further comments

sought from our PCS representatives. We also sought feedback from all RoS colleagues via our Intranet. No adverse feedback was received. A further copy of the EDI Strategy is enclosed with this paper for Board members information. It has not changed substantially since the Board reviewed the draft last year.

9. One of the Board non-executive directors (Deepa Mann-Kler) has been providing additional support to the development of the EDI work to date and through this engagement has contributed some suggestions for updates to the draft of the strategy provided to the Board in this paper. These relate to ensuring the strategy reflects intersectionality, the importance of being clear that we will work to eliminate bias and setting out how delivery will be governed and resourced. Deepa has also highlighted that all RoS colleagues have a role in owning and delivering this strategy and this should be brought out more prominently in the document. The strategy document will now be finalised (taking into account Deepa's comments and any further feedback the Board wish to provide at this meeting) and published before the end of the financial year.

10. We have formed a Diversity Steering Group with representatives from HROD and Communications Teams and led by myself.

11. We have engaged with the Business Analytics Team to develop methods and targets to measure progress. Board members may remember that during 2020, we encouraged colleagues to complete their protected characteristic information within our HR system. The shift to a new HR system gave us an opportunity to repeat this request.

12. Work is underway to agree appropriate KPI/health measures for inclusion in the 2021-2026 corporate plan to enable us to track and measure our progress towards meeting our EDI objectives.

13. We have a renewed focus on Equality Impact Assessments. Those recently completed include our approach to Squads structure for colleagues, Fees Review and Digital Submissions Consultation.

14. We continue to respond to requests for information and input on SG EDI activities, and to share knowledge and best practice with the wider community of SG delivery bodies to identify effective mechanisms to address EDI issues.

15. The HROD Team are in the process of finalising a revised recruitment strategy which will include information on how to increase the diversity of applicants for those roles that are advertised externally.

16. As we are already aware of a rising amount of absence as a result of mental health issues, training has been provided to both managers and colleagues on a range of issues including reasonable adjustments and wellness action plans. The HROD Team have also commissioned new training for our Mental Health First Aiders and this will be rolled out during the early part of 2021.

Next Steps

17. As a result of colleague feedback, we will support colleagues to establish a comprehensive and self-sustaining set of colleague networks, including an overarching Colleague Diversity Forum to support completion of Equality Impact Assessments on RoS policies and procedures. RoS already has successful and

productive LGBT+ and Carers' colleague networks and networks for neurodiverse and European national colleagues are already in development.

18. We will also develop a comprehensive communications plan, to raise awareness with colleagues, particularly those who are unaware or unsupportive of EDI initiatives.

Conclusion

19. The Board are invited to note the content of this paper and provide comments and suggestions on the progress made and proposed next steps as outlined above; and specifically provide any further feedback they would wish us to consider in finalising the strategy document ahead of publication.

Keeper of the Registers of Scotland
March 2021