Fit for the Future

Supporting Ministers to Deliver for Wales

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our purpose

Making a difference for people in Wales is the unifying purpose of everyone who works for the Welsh Government. Supporting Ministers to achieve a better quality of life for our own and future generations is what the organisation is all about. Whatever your current role, whether it's in frontline delivery, policy development or the central services that help us function efficiently, delivering better outcomes for people and communities is what unites us. The FM and Cabinet have been clear on their priorities for this Assembly term: delivering the Programme for Government including our ambitious legislative programme; boosting the economy and jobs and tackling poverty. These are the priorities for our Civil Service.

Our vision

Our goal is to be one of the best performing public sector organisations in the UK and to see that improved performance reflected in better outcomes for people and communities. The First Minister set out his vision for what Ministers need from the Welsh Government Civil Service in his statement in June responding to the UK Reform Plan. The UK Civil Service now serves three separate governments. **Fit for the Future**, our renewal programme, is aligned to the Whitehall reform agenda only where we share the same improvement goals, but it is distinctive and different where we believe we need a different approach to deliver for the people of Wales. Whilst the Civil Service Code and Nolan Principles remain fundamental to our expectations of everyone who works for us, our priorities for improvement reflect our Cabinet's priorities rather than those of the UK coalition.

The Civil Service we need for Wales will be focused on joining up to improve outcomes rather than operating in silos. It will be underpinned by a belief in collaboration rather than competition to drive improvement in public services. Our **Fit for the Future Action Plan** is designed to equip the organisation to deliver for ministers with professionalism, pace and ambition.

Progress so far

Improving our performance while managing big reductions in our budgets hasn't been easy but we've already made a lot of progress. We started earlier than comparable organisations on tackling our budget reductions and increasing our efficiency. We've done this through a combination of Managing with Less, reducing the size of our estate and getting more value from our contracts. It is only by taking these actions that we have been able to avoid compulsory redundancies and instead pursue a programme of voluntary severance. We think this early action has put us in a strong position to manage within current financial constraints and allow us to focus on renewing the organisation.

We've already introduced the Delivering Results Principles to improve the quality of the advice we put to ministers and make the steps from planning through to outcomes more rigorously embedded in the way we do things. We've also started to strengthen our approach to planning, legislation, financial management and programme and project management and will continue to treat this work as a priority. On the people side, we've set out our commitments in our People Strategy and already begun a more systematic approach to performance and progression, introducing the Assessment Centres and the 9 Box Grid although we know there is more to do to develop a fully integrated approach to performance and progression.

Your feedback

Since February, everyone who works here has had the chance to take part in discussion sessions about what more we need to do to improve our performance and achieve our vision; in particular how we develop the workforce and workplace we need over the longer term. More than 1200 pages of feedback were received and analysed. Not surprisingly, there were many different, sometimes conflicting, views about what we need to do to equip us to deliver for Wales in the future in a tough financial environment. You can see a full report on what people said in the Fit for the Future discussion sessions here (link). Your views from these sessions and the results from our last People Survey have directly influenced the DG team's decisions on the Fit for the Future Plan. We have explained how your feedback has been taken on board and what we are doing as a result within the report.

We are committed to continue engaging people in improving the organisation and making sure everyone has a voice. We will be using Re:New as our main channel for getting people involved in implementing the action plan and finding solutions to some of the challenges facing us.

Fit for the Future: Our Action Plan

Wales needs a strong and effective Civil Service and one that is committed to improving its skills and capability to match the challenging context in which we must deliver. We must learn from the best and always strive to be the best. The **Fit for the Future Action Plan** sets out what we need to do to ensure we can deliver for Ministers and make a difference for people in Wales over the longer term.

We've structured the action plan around three main goals for improvement:

- **Strengthening delivery, planning and prioritisation**
- **Building a modern workforce and workplace**
- **Developing excellent leaders and managers**

Under each of the three improvement goals we've set out three priorities and listed some of the detailed actions that will contribute to addressing them and achieving the changes we need. Some of these actions aren't new – they are part of our ongoing effort to continuously improve how we work. Their inclusion in the plan means that these areas remain a priority and that we need to do more work to make sure they are fully embedded in the way we do things. Other actions reflect the fact that we are now 1000 peole fewer and will need to do things differently to achieve our goals.

Fit for the Future is about supporting ministers to deliver for Wales. Everything in the Action Plan is designed to contribute to achieving our vision of becoming one of the best performing public service organisations in the UK so that we can deliver better outcomes and make a difference for the people and communities we serve. You should be able to see very clearly why we've identified each priority and how it will contribute to improving how the organisation performs. All of us will need to play our part in achieving our vision and building an organisation we know is up there with the best. With 1000 people fewer we don't have room for bystanders. This is a time for clear direction, common purpose and commitment. If we harness that purpose to the talent and professionalism we have within the organisation we know we can face the future with confidence.

The DG Team