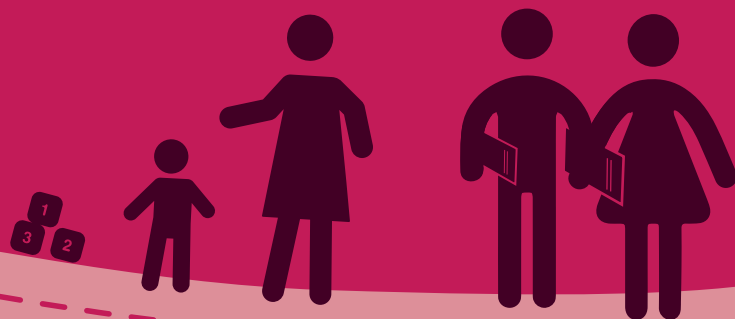




Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Evaluation of Diversity in Democracy

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



# What is Diversity in Democracy?



Diversity in Democracy (DiD) was a programme delivered by Welsh Government. It ran from **July 2014 to March 2017**.

The programme aimed to **increase diversity** in Welsh local government. It was delivered in five strands:

- **Mentoring Initiative**
- **Communications Campaign**
- **Employer Engagement Initiative**
- **Door to Democracy**
- **Engagement with political parties**

The programme has been evaluated. This shows what went well and what could be improved.



# Mentoring Initiative



## Why?

Mentoring aimed to encourage people to run in a local government election.

## How?

Members of the public (mentees) were paired with councillors (mentors). Mentees carried out a range of activities. These included:

- attending meetings and council events
- training about local government and role of councillors
- regular guidance and support from their mentor.

## Outcomes

### Mentees

Fifty-one mentees and 64 mentors took part. They were from a range of diverse backgrounds. DiD mentoring took place in 20 out of 22 Welsh local authorities.

At the end of DiD, 20 mentees said they were open to standing in a local government election. Some of these did, and a small number were elected.

Mentees said that their knowledge and awareness of local government had improved. Others said they became more active in other areas of public life. This included by becoming a school governor.

# Mentoring Initiative

Some barriers cannot be addressed through mentoring. These include arranging childcare and having a low income. These are being addressed through a new law.

## Mentors

Some mentors became more aware of barriers faced by people from diverse backgrounds. Many said they would be interested in being a mentor again.

## Going forward

A development phase is needed. This would plan the programme's important activities and resources. It would also establish monitoring and evaluation processes at the beginning of the programme.

A future programme should be clearer about what barriers it can address. Support should be tailored to the needs of each mentee.



# Communications Campaign



## Why?

The communications campaign aimed to:

- promote DiD to potential participants
- improve public awareness of local government
- improve local government engagement with communities.

## How?

DiD used:

- A website and social media
- Magazines
- Radio
- Leaflets
- Events.

DiD also asked other organisations to promote the programme. These included One Voice Wales and Chwarae Teg.

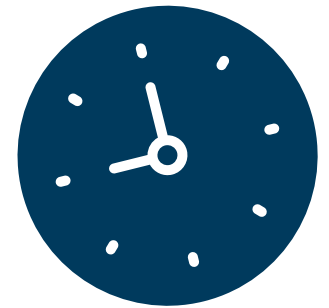
# Communications Campaign

## Outcomes

The campaign used lots of different ways to communicate with the public. A larger media campaign was needed to improve awareness of local government.

## Going forward

A publicity campaign is still needed to address negative views about local government. This includes councillor pay, responsibilities and time commitments.



# Employer Engagement Initiative

## Why?

This strand aimed to get employers to encourage their employees to stand for local government.

## How?

Employers received communications and invitations to events.

## Outcomes

This part of the programme was not fully delivered.

Mentees and mentors said it was often difficult to have a job at the same time as being a councillor. Some said employers had negative views of councillors and were unlikely to hire them.

## Going forward

Work with employers should be carried out to explain the skills their employees can gain as a councillor.





# Door to Democracy

## Why?

This aimed to address financial barriers faced by disabled people who are standing for election.

## How?

Financial support would be provided to disabled candidates. This is because they face extra costs during an election. This might be used to improve accessibility, such as paying for an interpreter.

## Outcomes

This part of the programme was not fully delivered, because regulations prevented Welsh Government directly funding candidates.

Disabled mentees were given some funding and assistance to help:

- attend mentor meetings
- attend events and training
- travel

## Going forward

A scheme to support disabled candidates and councillors is needed due to extra barriers they face.



# Engagement with political parties



## Why?

Political parties are often in charge of selecting election candidates. DiD encouraged them to increase the diversity of candidates and party members.

## How?

Project team members met with political party representatives. Ways of improving diversity were discussed. Political parties were sent updates about the programme.

## Outcomes

Political parties agreed that diversity of elected representatives needs to be improved.

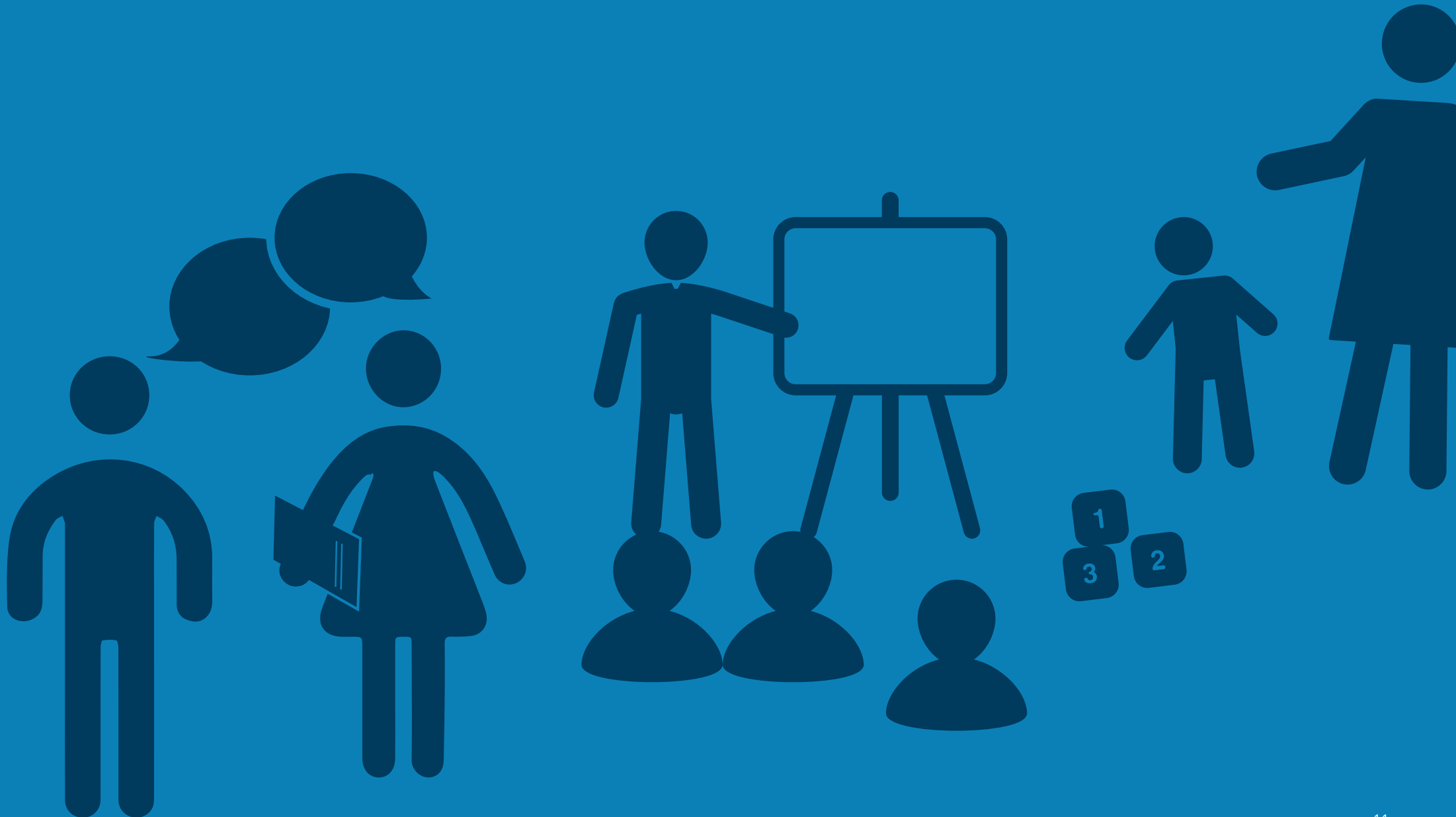
Each political party is taking steps to improve the diversity of candidates.

## Going forward

People in political parties with influence are needed to engage with the programme.

There needs to be buy-in across all parties.

Unconscious bias on selection panels needs to be addressed.



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