



diverse  
cymru



Annual Report  
2017 - 2018

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# Chief Operating Officer's Report



Since 2016-17, which saw unprecedented change in the organisation, Diverse Cymru has continued on its journey to provide high quality services that make a real difference to the lives of those we support.

This year has not been without its challenges, in June of this year we lost the Cardiff Direct Payments contract that we have held for over 10 years.

This was followed by the loss of the "families first" contract for giving advice and advocacy to Cardiff council.

Whilst these losses had a significant impact on finances it was not catastrophic, and with some cost reduction the loss has been managed effectively as we outlined in our risk management plan.

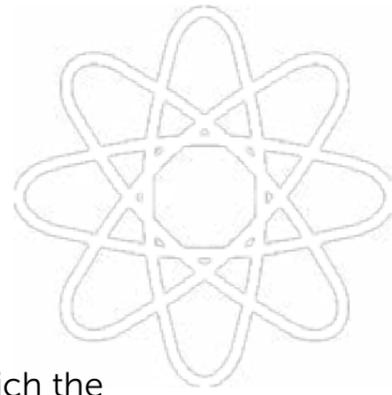
The management team and staff did not stand still but instead have put extra time and effort into finding alternative funding, this was paid off by being awarded the DP contract for Newport in March of 2018.

However through all the difficulties one thing has remained constant throughout and that is the dedication and commitment of all staff to ensure we never lost sight of what really matters, "Our Service Users".

As you can see from the following overview we have also been successful in delivering positive results in all other areas of our operation.

I will also take this opportunity to thank all the staff, trustees, volunteers, clients and service partners for their support, ensuring this year ended with a very positive outcome.

# Finance Report



## Results for the year

This is the sixth year of operation for the Charity during which the organisation has continued to grow with a surplus of £163,694.

Total funds carried forward are £433,724.

At the year end the bank balance was £311,555 compared with £175,908 as of 31st March 2017.

## Reserves Policy

The Trustees regard the on-going review of the reserves policy as part of managing the Charity. The operating results are identified and reported upon each month.

On completion of the audit of the annual accounts, unrestricted funds are identified and analysed.

The reserves policy is then reviewed by the Trustees as part of the Charity's strategic planning process.

## Principal Funding

During the year, the principal funding of the Charity was through West Wales direct Payments operations and Cardiff City Council. In June of this year, the Charity lost the Cardiff Direct Payments contract but on April 1st 2018, the Charity began delivery of a Payroll and Managed Banking Service to Newport County Council.

## Material Investments Policy

The bank account is reviewed daily. At present, the Charity does not consider itself to have sufficient funds to invest elsewhere and receive a beneficial return.

This however is a matter which is continually under review.

# BME Mental Health Projects

The 'Get Your Kicks on' project worked with over 200 youth in Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Wrexham.

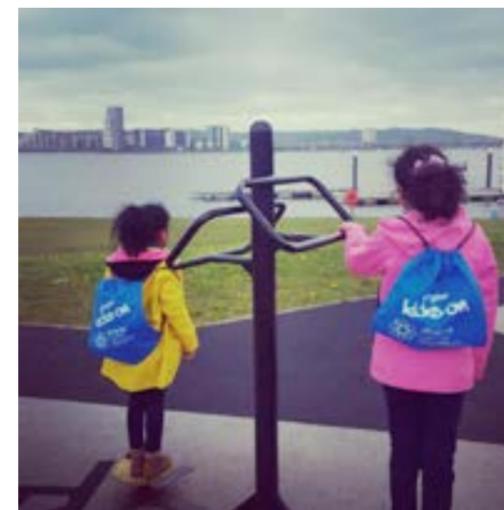
The project delivered mental health awareness sessions to the youth and the youth workers.

The project took several groups out for walks with the green prescription activity, visiting Pen-y-Fan, Cardiff Bay and Mount Snowdon.

On every walk, the youth received bags full of information on mental health and organisations to help with mental health issues. The bags had activities in for the younger participants to help talk about feelings.

Every activity had feedback forms, to document the benefits of the green prescription.

The feedback was positive and all participants noticed a difference.



The **BME Mental Health Policy** project went on the road in 2017, with the United Kingdom Investors in Equality and Diversity (UKIED), to promote an Accreditation scheme for practitioners working with diverse communities in mental health.

The need for this scheme stems from the recognised and acknowledged inequality in the services provided to BME people accessing mental health services, as compared to non BME people.

Research over many years has identified that a major cause of this inequality, relates to the lack of culturally competent mental health services for the BME community. This will be the first of its kind in the UK.

We held Stakeholder and Information events in Cardiff and Carmarthen. Follow-up meetings and take-up of the scheme sessions were planned for summer 2018. We also delivered 10 BME mental health awareness sessions around Wales. Sessions were delivered to mental health/psychology practitioners, independent advocates and voluntary sector workers in Hywel Dda, Pontypridd, Cardiff and Swansea.

All sessions were positively received.

## Mental Health Project

We are receiving a lot of referrals from Colleges & Universities with students needing support with their mental health while studying, and we are advocating on their behalf making sure they have the right support from the College & Universities.

Cardiff Met Social Sciences invited the BME Mental Health project to deliver a presentation.

A fundraiser organised on the day, saw over £300 raised for Diverse Cymru.

## Welsh Gymnastics Project

The role of BME Project Coordinator is coming to an end on May 31st 2018. This has been a 4 year project, as the first year was a pilot, and 3 years was funded by Sports Wales with Welsh Gymnastics(WG) as the lead.

The objective was to gain advice and understand the barriers and challenges facing girls from Ethnic Minorities, not traditionally engaging with Gymnastics. Samira guided WG to engage with the children, parents and schools.

The advertising pamphlet stated that leggings and t-shirts were appropriate dress for the gymnasts and mothers, female guardians or carers would be welcome to stay and watch.

It was emphasised that the coaches were highly qualified and female.

These are areas WG would not have addressed if it had not been for Samira's advice.



The letter from Welsh Gymnastics read:

*'None of this would have been possible without Samira's enthusiasm, motivation and support for WG. As a Sporting Organisation we would have found it difficult to engage with the community without Samira there as an advisor, facilitator and bridge. The time that Samira has spent supporting WG and the project is priceless.'*

The Fantastic Gymnastics gym club is now an established club in their own right. It is run by parents of the local BME community and the participants have grown to over a hundred girls.



## Training Delivered to organisations

We delivered BME Mental Health Raising Awareness to Cardiff & University Health Board. We also delivered Cultural Awareness training at Cardiff Met, Cyncoed Campus.

## Note from Edna

Since April 2017, I have been providing support to five clients and recently accepted a new one. Most of the support provided to all my clients have involved me signposting clients to various organisations,

### Case study

One client came to the project as a self-referral in November 2017, needing support with a number of issues such as housing. He had been experiencing high levels of stress from his landlord and was living in fear of eviction.

The client also wanted support to help him appeal his Personal Independence Payment (PIP) decision and to help him retrieve his driving licence from the DVLA.

Due to the impact of the client's current situation, his mental health had started to deteriorate. He lacked confidence and low self-esteem and was feeling depressed and anxious, on top of his diagnosed mental health issue.

The support offered to the client since he started with our project, has been:

to make him aware of appropriate agencies that offer legal advice, attend appointments with the relevant housing

agencies to help him find appropriate accommodation, and attend GP appoints in order for him to have a voice and choice in his care and treatment.

Following a stressful period, the client has now moved into temporary accommodation, which has helped him feel settled.

He is waiting to hear on an appointment to attend his PIP appeal decision and he has obtained his driving licence back from the DVLA. This will help his independence to grow, and he has reported that his mental health has greatly improved already.

He is now ready to start volunteering and is interested in attending short courses at Adult Learning Centres to help improve his reading and writing skills.

## A Note from Sarah

- I have organised four focus groups for 2 Cardiff University PhD students discussing the mental health needs of Asylum seekers and refugees.
- Attended Refugee and Asylum Seekers comms meeting to discuss the welcome to Wales pack, including information for mental health services in first arrival.
- Attended Race, Poverty and representation conference at Temple of Peace. I delivered an impromptu focus group discussion on BME mental needs and barriers, which contributed to the solutions report of the event, yet to be delivered by Eyst.
- Working with Cardiff City of Sanctuary, as chair and discussing co-produced response to government consultation for mental health services.
- Met with Mind in the Vale to introduce our services, sharing activities and practice and offering of training, as a means of partnership development and accessing the diverse community members of the Vale.
- Attended Welsh Government offices with a stall to promote our mental health service and diverse Cymru in general. Spoke with 15 people working for Welsh Government, offered additional advice and information on worker's rights in relation to mental health.
- Attended Llandough and spoke with health professionals in both statutory and voluntary services about our services and resources available.
- Attended annual conference for improving mental support for Asylum Seekers and Refugees.



# Advice

The year began with our work for Families First continuing in Cardiff, providing advocacy and benefit advice.

This service ended on 31st March 2018 following funding being redirected to Cardiff Council.

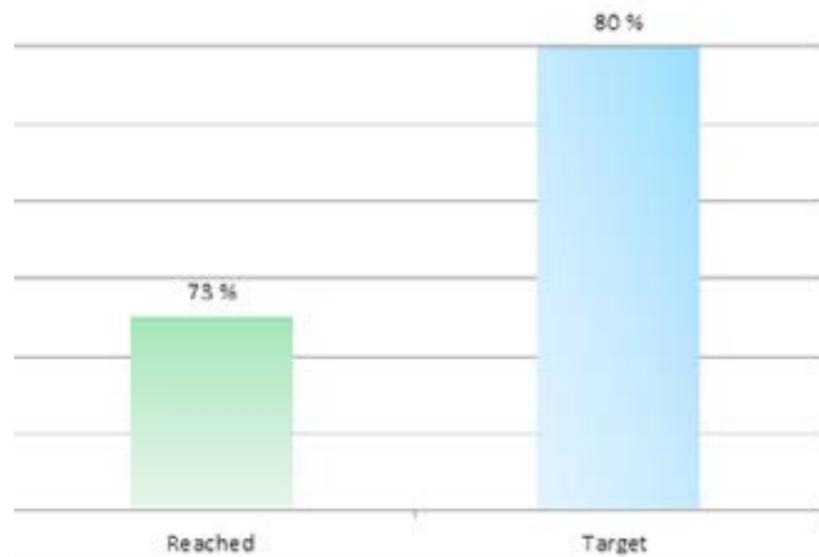
A smaller advocacy service continued to be provided for the Vale of Glamorgan.

Additionally, an arbitration service for the Hynt scheme was also provided.

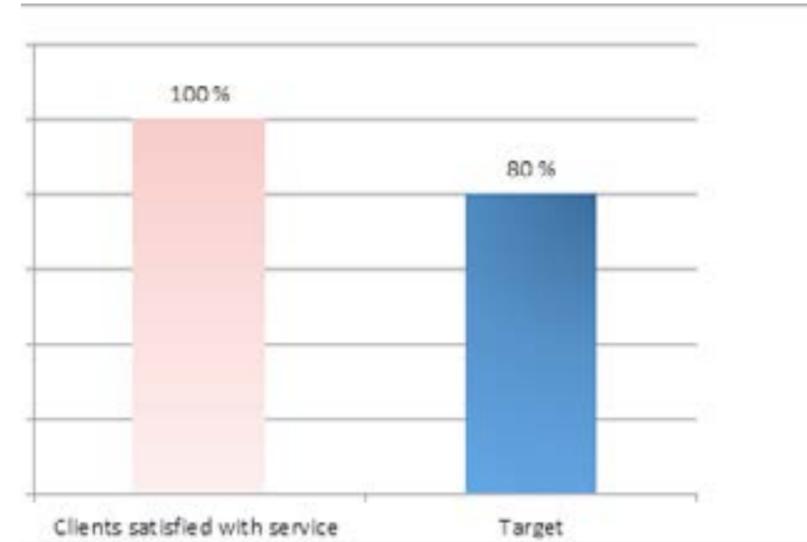
As part of the Families First programme delivered by Action for Children, we provided benefit advice for families with disabled children and for young disabled people who live, or wish to live independently.

The team just missed achieving the targets set by Families First, however the team were heavily impacted this year by 2 members of the team being on extended sick leave.

The team manager took medical retirement at the end of March 2018.



In the past year, 73 families (target was 80) were provided with advocacy services on a range of subjects such as additional educational needs and healthcare and adapted housing.

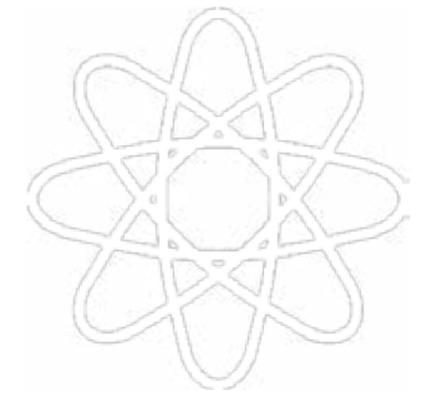


It was reported that 100% of clients were satisfied with the service (target 80%) and 18% of families perceived a significant change in their life as a result of advocacy (target 75%).

The Advice Team provided benefit advice to 44 young people (target was 40) and to 177 families (target was 180).

Financial gains for clients, due to our interventions reached **£765,433.00**. This included immediate pay out of arrears of benefits, plus projected payments for the following 12 months.

# Outcomes



The target for families who have 'perceived a significant change in their life as a result of advocacy' was 75%, and the actual figure reached was 18%.

The Advice Team also provided advocacy to disabled people in the Vale of Glamorgan, with priority to those with critical and substantial care needs.

The service is funded by Vale of Glamorgan Council Adult Social Services and is limited to 30 cases a year.

In 2017/2018: this target was met and in fact exceeded as **43 cases** were undertaken.

This contract has been renewed for 2018/19 with a 1% increase in funding to **£17,341.70**.

The work undertaken includes welfare benefits (applications, assessments, appeals and Tribunal representations), social care, housing and complaints against public bodies.

Financial gains for clients due to our interventions reached **£45342.00** in payment of arrears and **£133,313.00** in ongoing awards.

The team consisted of 3 part time staff members: a Families Welfare Benefit Advisor, a Young People Welfare Benefit Advisor and an Advocacy Officer as well as a full time Advice Manager who was responsible for the team.

Additionally the Manager undertook the work in the Vale of Glamorgan and the Hynt arbitration.

In May 2017 the team welcomed a trainee advisor on secondment from the St Giles' Trust for a period of 6 months.

The team has undertaken the following training:

- Health & Safety Level 3 training
- Information, Advice and Guidance Level 4 on-going
- ILM level 4 on-going
- Universal Credit up-date
- Challenging PIP decisions
- Charity Accounts & Budgeting

The team has received very good feedback from clients and below are some of their comments:

*"Fantastic service and support from Dawn Ashton"*

*"Without this service my son would not have benefitted – my mental health has been helped by this service. I cannot thank everyone enough!"*

*"They really supported me with my PIP application. Brilliant service"*

*"Without this service I would not have been able to cope. This service has helped my mental health, alleviated anxiety and helped gain a financial outcome that has changed my son's life and mine. Can't thank you enough for all your support"*

*"Anna was able to indicate to us exactly what the DWP was looking for in ways we would not have thought of. I believe I would not have been awarded PIP without her help and guidance"*

*"The service has been fantastic from people who are dedicated to their job. The service will be sadly missed!! Thanks for your support most of all your hard work! Appreciate it so much"*

## Funding and Projects

In this period Diverse Cymru continued to receive funding from Cardiff Council in support of our engagement programme and the third sector partnership (with Cardiff Third Sector Council and Race Equality First)

Cardiff Third Sector Council funded Co-Creating Health Change Project - November 2017 saw the end of this successful engagement project that brought together people from diverse communities to share views about health, social care and wellbeing services.

Our Policy and Engagement department continue to develop opportunities for people to feedback about services and policies that affect them.



### My Wales: Stories from Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Wales -

Commissioned by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to film asylum seekers and refugees across Wales, making a series of short films to highlight people's 'lived experiences' in Wales.



### Diversity in the Film and TV Sectors in Wales –

Funded by the Welsh Government's Creative Unit, we have developed a network of engaged professionals to take forward recommendations from the Strategy report written in 2016.

### Golden Thread Advocacy Project Board Member

– a Welsh Government funded 3-year project to run alongside and support the implementation of Part 10 (Advocacy) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Diverse Cymru is a member of the Golden Thread Advocacy Project Board.



### BME Girls Gymnastics Project – funded by Welsh Gymnastics, this project implemented and manages a new gymnastics club for BME girls in Butetown, Cardiff.

Our management of this project will come to an end in May 2018 but as a result of our successful management, the project will continue to be delivered by parents and others involved.



## Direct Payments

In 2017-18 Direct Payments under Diverse Cymru is looking very healthy with the statistics reported below:

Prior to losing the contract in June 2017, we had 858 active service users and 15 members of staff dealing with the contract.

In West Wales in **March 2017** we had:-

**Carmarthenshire** – 453 active Service Users

**Ceredigion** – 308 active Service Users

**Pembrokeshire** – 349 Service Users

Totalling – **1110 Service Users**; we also have **18 members of staff** spread across the three counties.

In West Wales in **March 2018** we had:-

**Carmarthenshire** – 508 active Service Users

**Ceredigion** – 358 active Service Users

**Pembrokeshire** – 341 Service Users

Totalling – **1207 Service Users**; we also have **19 members of staff** spread across the three counties.

The growth has been the result of the team, promoting both Direct Payments and the Role of the Personal Assistant, resulting in increased referrals and a faster recruitment process.

The Service Users were pleased by this, as the results from the Annual Evaluation of Services illustrate a high level of satisfaction.

With the need for staff in West Wales, a number of staff, due to TUPE across to the new provider, were successful at interview, and made the change to homeworking ILA's.

The home working environment works well in this situation, as ILA's can work remotely for the majority of the week, and then cluster required visits in one day.

It also brought a lot of different experience to the team, as things were done differently in Cardiff, and it has been good to be able to develop our systems and advice, as a result of wider, diverse experiences.

Staff numbers changed a lot through the early part of 2018, with 4 members of staff going or having gone on maternity leave.

This allowed us to bring more of the former Cardiff based ILA's into the fold of the West Wales team, with Sean Gilmore and Hannah Zaplatynski joining us.

Unfortunately, Matt Jones left the team, but this opened the door for Christine Morgan to transfer to the West Wales team from the advice section, when the contract ended.



# Engagement, Research and Policy department

## Engagement projects

During 2017-18 we undertook a joint engagement project with C3SC.

The Your Wellbeing, Your Government project (WCVA Open Government Network Wales funded) looked at skilling up diverse individuals in engaging with public sector organisations and co-produce new ways of engaging diverse communities between diverse individuals and public sector organisations.

2 launches and 6 engagement events in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan were held in 2017-18 with an initial report produced. This project will be completed in 2018-19 with further engagement events and an end of project event launching the new model and working together to implement it.



We also completed the 4 ½ years Co-creating Healthy Change project. This involve forums, meetings, engagement and developing co-production in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

The network of contacts who want to get involved in engagement, policy and influencing has fed into our Cardiff Third Sector Partnership and University Service User involvement work.

We continue to engage these diverse individuals and influence local, Welsh and UK policy, legislation and practice design building on the legacy of this project.

As Laura Armytage was one of those on maternity leave, Sally Grenfell has covered her role within the Direct Payment section, as Deputy DP Manager and acting Manager, as well as remaining in her role as SILA for Ceredigion.

The SILA's Sean Gilmore and Emma Rees also had increased input into the management aspect, each taking on additional duties, to cover some aspects of day to day management.

Although we are on the framework for Direct Payments support for Neath Port Talbot, we have yet been chosen to deliver any services.

On April 1st 2018, we began delivery of a Payroll and Managed Banking Service to Newport County Council, with **101 Service Users**.

It is expected that we will continue to build the service in the following year.

As of March 31 2018, our total number of DP Service Users is to 1308.

This figure pushes us closer to being the largest provider of DP services in Wales.



## Research projects

Our team delivered 4 specific funded research projects in 2017-18. We undertook an evaluation of Powys County Council's Syrian Vulnerable Persons' Resettlement Scheme. This involved interviews with Syrian refugees, support organisations and public services. A report with recommendations was produced.

We delivered a project looking at public sector organisations' compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duties for Wales commissioned by the EHRC Wales. This involved extensive desk-top research, questionnaires, interviews and case study and report development alongside compliance data.

We delivered a project with C3SC by engaging third sector organisations in developing resources for third sector organisations throughout Wales. The aim was to understand and use the Public Sector Equality Duty specific duties for Wales. We produced a range of resources for the EHRC to distribute to third sector organisations in Wales.

We delivered a project for the EHRC Wales, by evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the identifying and tackling discrimination course. This involved conducting surveys, extensive interviews, and developing recommendations and reports.



## Engagement and Cardiff Third Sector Partnership

We are funded by Cardiff Council to deliver engagement, policy and influencing work as part of the Cardiff Third Sector Partnership.

We also deliver engagement and strategic advice for the Age Cymru Golden Thread Advocacy Project. We delivered 8 engagement events with diverse communities with over 40 different diverse individuals attending.

These fed into responses to 8 Cardiff based consultation or influencing opportunities and 10 Welsh or UK consultations, inquiries and other influencing opportunities. We have engaged quarterly with 6 strategic networks and have been part of 15 different Welsh strategic partnerships, networks and meetings during the year.

We have held 2 training events skilling up individuals from diverse communities and brought a number of external organisations to discuss their priorities and projects with diverse communities. We arranged and facilitated engagement on their Strategic Equality Plan for Social Care Wales, which they funded. We have hosted 2 student placement and 4 volunteers with the department this year.



## University service user involvement

We continue to deliver equality lectures and service user and carer involvement and development activities in relation to the social work courses at Cardiff University and Cardiff Metropolitan University.