

# Equality of Opportunity Committee

## Minutes (EOC(2)-08-06)

**Meeting date: 27 September 2006**

**Meeting time: 09.15 – 12.45**

**Meeting venue: Committee Room 3, Senedd, Cardiff Bay**

### Assembly Members in Attendance

Assembly Member	Constituency
Gwenda Thomas (Chair)	Neath
Lorraine Barrett	Cardiff South and Penarth
John Griffiths	Newport East
Mark Isherwood	North Wales
Helen Mary Jones	Mid and West Wales
Laura Anne Jones	South Wales East
Jenny Randerson	Cardiff Central
Leanne Wood	South Wales Central
Catherine Thomas	Llanelli

### Standing Invitees in Attendance

Will Bee	Disability Rights Commission (DRC)
Chris Myant	Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)
Liz Morgan	Stonewall Cymru
Kate Bennett	Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)

### Others in Attendance

Name	Representing (if applicable)	Agenda item (s)

Jane Hutt AM	Minister for Assembly Business, Equalities and Children	
Helen Thomas	Strategy and Equality Division	
Gavin Moore	Strategic Equality and Diversity Unit	3 and 5
Andrea Nicholas-Jones	Strategic Equality and Diversity Unit	3
Dr John Marek AM	Chair of House Committee	3 and 4
Paul Silk	Clerk to the Assembly	3 and 4
Denise Rogers	Members' Research and Committee Service	3 and 4
Sir Jon Shortridge	Permanent Secretary	5

## Committee Service

Name	Job title
Virginia Hawkins	Committee Clerk
Liz Wilkinson	Deputy Committee Clerk

## Item 1: Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions, Quorum and Declarations of Interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Huw Jones and Andrew White of the Welsh Language Board.

## Item 2: Minutes of the previous meeting, matters arising and report from the Chair

Paper: EOC(2)-07-06(min) – 27 September 2006

EOC(2)-08-06(p.1)

2.1 The Committee agreed the minutes of the 27 September meeting.

2.2 The Chair gave an oral report, which included an update on progress with actions from the previous meeting as well as matters arising since the meeting.

### Action points

- The Chair agreed to write to the Chair of the Committee on Standing Orders to convey the views of the Equality of Opportunity Committee on functions of its successor in the Third Assembly.
- The Chair agreed to include discussion on representation of Standing Invitees on the Equality

of Opportunity Committee in the Third Assembly.

### **Item 3: Assembly's draft Disability Equality Scheme**

Paper: EOC(2)-08-06(p.2) and EOC(2)-08-06(p.3)

3.1 The Chair welcomed Jane Hutt AM, Minister for Assembly Business, Equalities and Children, Dr John Marek AM, Chair of House Committee; Paul Silk, Clerk to the Assembly; and Denise Rogers of Members' Research and Committee Service, to the meeting.

3.2 The Minister briefly explained the background to the Disability Equality Scheme, which was required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

3.3 Dr John Marek advised that the Assembly Parliamentary Service's draft Disability Equality Scheme would be considered by the House Committee in November and that issues raised during today's discussion would be taken into account when finalising the Scheme.

#### **Action point**

- The Minister, in conjunction with the Disability Rights Commission, agreed to provide a list of all conditions coming under the definition of disability, as set out in the Disability Discrimination Act.
- The Chair of House Committee agreed to e-mail all Members and their support staff advising them of the current Display Screen Equipment (DSE) and workstation assessment process, which included annual reviews for all users.
- The Chair of House Committee agreed to provide a note setting out Assembly Members' responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act to include information on funding within the Assembly Parliamentary Service's Budget for adaptations for Members' constituency offices to ensure disabled access.
- The Chair of House Committee agreed to provide figures on expenditure on training and development for Assembly Parliamentary Service staff.

### **Item 4: Assembly's Seventh Equality Annual Report for**

2005-06 – Assembly Parliamentary Service Report

Paper: EOC(2)-08-06(p.4)

4.1 The Chair of the House Committee briefly introduced the Assembly Parliamentary Service's Equality Annual Report 2005-06., which was followed by Members' questions and discussion.

### **Item 5: Assembly's Seventh Equality Annual Report for**

2005-06 – Welsh Assembly Government Report

Paper: EOC(2)-08-06(p.5) and EOC(2)-08-06(p.6)

5.1 The Chair welcomed Sir Jon Shortridge, Permanent Secretary, to the meeting.

5.2 The Minister briefly introduced the Welsh Assembly Government's Equality Annual Report 2005-06, which was followed by a summary of staffing issues from the Permanent Secretary.

Action point

- The Minister and Permanent Secretary agreed to provide written responses to questions raised by Members during discussion which were not addressed due to time constraints.

## **Item 6: Update on the Commission for Equality and Human Rights**

Papers: EOC(2)-08-06(p.7)

6.1 The Chair welcomed Meg Munn MP, Under Parliamentary Secretary of State for Women and Equality to the meeting via video conference. Ms Munn briefly explained the background to the Commission, its role and progress made in its establishment to date.

### **Private Session**

The Committee agreed to go into private session to consider its draft report on service provision for disabled people. One Member registered her objection to the use of private sessions, in principle, but agreed to take part in discussion of the draft report.

## **Item 7: Policy review of service provision for disabled young people**

Paper: EOC(2) 08-06(p.9)