Equality of Opportunity Committee

EOC(3)-16-09 : Paper 6 : Paper to Note (Annex) : 1 December 2009

Committee Inquiry into Discrimination against People Living with AIDS and HIV within Healthcare and other settings by Healthcare Professionals

Doc 3

Organisations in receipt of core funding 2009/10 it is anticipated that there will be a full spend against this part of the budget.

AWEMA	£102,500
Cardiff Women's Workshop	£30,868
MEWN Cymru	£50,000
Somali Integration Society	£50,000
Stonewall Cymru	£78,797
Women's Voice (WWNC)	£78,797

Other grants and procured work

	Allocation	Remaining Budget
Faith Communities Forum	£10,000	£4,916
Building the Equality Evidence Base	£90,000	£0.00
Advancing Equality Fund & IWD 2009-10	£85,000	-£1,257
Single Equality Scheme	£30,000	£428
Equality Bill	£20,000	£16,762
Disability Duty - Implementation	£70,000	£58,658
Community & Public Engagement	£60,000	£ 29,623
One-off Grants Safer Wales – Mardi Gras Event – £15,0000 Women Connect First – Volunteering Co-ordinator – £14,000 EHRC – Small Grants Fund – £50,000	£79,000	£0.00
Total unallocated		£109,130

We are currently reviewing requests for the balance of the AEF for this year.

Full spend is anticipated for the unallocated budget.

Inclusion Grant 2009/10

	Committed	Remaining Commitment
Refugee & Asylum Seekers including: Welsh Refugee Council £273,300 Supporting Others Through Voluntary Action £55,317 Wales Strategic Migration Partnership £73,480 Displaced People in Action £152,027 Welsh Interpretation and Translation Service £120,000 Secondee £20,000 approx	£710,524	£270,137
Migrants including: Polish Welsh Mutual Association £64,057 Migrants Forum, publication of Welcome to Wales packs, including translation £24,000 approx	£88,152	£34,788
Gypsies and Travellers including: Cardiff Gypsy Travellers Project £55,713 Save the Children £48,225 Consultation events, publication of GT strategy & associated costs £46,000 approx	159,507	£69,494

It is anticipated that there will be a full spend against this budget.

Gypsy Traveller Refurbishment Grant

2009/10			
Local Authority	**Status**	**Amount £**	**Amount Claimed £**
Pembrokshire – Under the Hills	Approved	27,714	0
Pembrokeshire - Withybush	Approved	150,000	0
Pembrokeshire – Castle Quarry	Approved	83,273	0
Powys	Application being Assessed	970,696.60	0
Swansea	Application being Assessed	9,534.75	0
Cardiff	Application being Assessed	373,762	0
Torfaen	Application being Assessed	231,825	0
Rhondda Cynon Taff	Application being Assessed	684,531.53	0
Total		**£2,531,336.80**	**£0**

2008/09			
Local Authority	**Status**	**Amount Approved £**	**Amount Claimed in 2008- 2010 £**
Wrexham	On Going	193,894.50	90,484.10
Blaenau Gwent	On Going	30,000	13,500
Powys	On Going	21,000	18,900
Cardiff	On Going	238,838.32	111,457.88
Swansea	On Going	7,200	0
Total		**£490,932.82**	**£234,341.98**

2008/09 we launched the first year of the Gypsy Traveller New Sites Grant Programme for enable local authorities to establish new Gypsy Traveller sites. In the first year we awarded £1.2 million to fund one new site although this development (and subsequent grant award) is dependant on planning permission.

The Refurbishment Grant and New Sites Grant which amount to £2.5 million in capital funding, aim to improve the quality of life for Gypsy Traveller site residents.

Both grants cover 75% of the total project costs, requiring a 25% capital commitment from the local authority applicant.

In the first bidding round of the 2009/10 Gypsy Traveller Refurbishment Grant £260,987 was awarded to refurbish 3 Gypsy Traveller sites. In the second round of the 2009/10 grant we received 5 applications, which total £2,270,349.80. These applications are currently being assessed, and the outcome will be announced shortly.

Assessment Process.

All bids are assessed against the following criteria:

1. Need. The Accommodation Needs Assessment for Gypsy Traveller which has to be undertaken by every local authority has to be used to support the application. We examine how the quality of life of the residents and their access to services will be improved as a result of any proposed work.

2. Consultation. Is the proposed work acceptable to the residents and the surrounding area as well as being suitable for the site.

3. Confirmation of 25% contribution from the local authority.

4. Value for Money. The bids are passed to Value Wales for Technical Assessment.

5. Sustainability. Are the proposed work long term? Any bid needs to demonstrate that the work undertaken will be long term through a maintenance plan and a maintenance budget.

6. Management. A successful bid needs to demonstrate that a management structure for the managing of the work and the management of the site is in place. A site manager should have in place monitoring arrangements etc.

Where the programme is over subscribed bids will be rated on the greatest need. Some bids may then be refused funding on this occasion.
Applicants are asked to prioritise the work in their bids therefore it may be that each bid has an element of the work approved (eg Priority 1) at a lower cost.

Equally if Value Wales deem the costs to be too high/ over exaggerated, they may recommend a reduced level of grant award be offered.

Monitoring and Evaluation.

The Gypsy Traveller team monitor the projects through income and expenditure reports, qualitative progress reports and through site visits and inspections.

All of the above ensure that the work is being completed as per the application and continues to provide value for money.

10% of the total project cost is retained until the project is complete.

If the project has under-spent, the 10% (or a portion thereof) may be retained. Where a large under-spend occurs money may be clawed back.

ADVANCING EQUALITY FUND

Criteria and Application Pack

CONTENTS

Criteria and Application Pack for Advancing Equality Fund Award

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 CRITERIA FOR GRANT

2.1 Powers

2.2 Application

2.3 Statutory Requirements

2.4 Criteria for Application

2.4.1 Proposed Role
2.4.2 Governance
2.4.3 Standards of Conduct
2.4.4 CRB/Police Checks
2.4.5 Financial Viability
2.4.6 Other Criteria
2.4.7 Conditions placed on grant award

2.5 Making an Application

2.5.1 Making an Application
2.5.2 Future Applications
2.5.3 Full Applications

2.6 Timetable for Assessment of Application

Diagram 1 Application Process Map

3.0 POST-GRANT AWARD

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

3.2 Annual Returns

3.3 Contracted Out

3.4 Material Changes

3.5 Mergers

3.6 Other responsibilities

4.0 CRITERIA FOR THE SUSPENSION OR REMOVAL OF GRANT

4.1 Powers

4.2 Conditions for Suspension/stopping payment of Grant

Diagram 2 Grant Suspension/Removal Process Map

Appendices

1. Application form – Part 1 ‘The Organisation’

2. Application form – Part 2 ‘The Bid’

3 Summary of Documentation to be supplied with Application

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Wales is an inclusive multi-cultural and multi-faith country. The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government is committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all people living in Wales. Equality is about a fairer society where everyone can participate. It is appropriate therefore that 'One Wales sets out our ambition for a country where everyone can achieve their full human potential and can live free from poverty, discrimination, fear or abuse.

1.2 With this in mind, the Welsh Assembly Government developed the Single Equality Scheme; it sets out our commitment to promoting equality, diversity and human rights through six equality strands[1]. All six equality strands can be mainstreamed into Welsh life through shared values, cohesive communities and inclusive public services.

1.3 The Advancing Equality Fund was set up in 2000 for the purpose of building capacity of organisations and individuals from groups which have been under-represented or that have suffered discrimination.

1.4 The Advancing Equality Fund provides funding for services which address the needs of people who face multiple discrimination in their everyday lives, to enable them to access services and become fully active members of society. We need to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the economic, social, cultural, civil and political life of the country.

1.5 The Advancing Equality Fund can fund projects that achieve one or more of the following programme outcomes:

- Diverse and Cohesive Communities
- Fulfilling Potential
- Accessing Services
- Engagement in Policy Development

1.6 This application pack has been developed as a result of a review of the existing practices and processes for managing this grant and the experience and knowledge which has been gained since its inception. It forms part of a wider approach to manage the award and distribution of grant which best meets the aims of the Welsh Assembly Government's strategic vision of a fair and just Wales where everyone can live free from poverty, discrimination, fear or abuse.[2]

1.7 It is anticipated that this application pack will improve our service to you and clearly set out what we expect from you as part of the Terms and Conditions of Grant. It will also provide the Welsh Assembly Government with confidence in the Grant process and that public money is being appropriately

[1] See Single Equality Scheme (2008) for details of equality strands
[2] One Wales: A progressive agenda for the government of Wales

spent.

1.8 It will allow us to:

- Regulate service providers and the provision of services;
- Assess/ensure financial viability;
- Manage risk.

1.9 It will ensure that recipients of Advancing Equality Funds have the appropriate governance, skills and experience to provide support and advice services to vulnerable people. Furthermore, it aims to ensure that the grant recipient ("the Grantee") is able to sustain an Advancing Equality Fund funded service and to demonstrate accountability for the spending of public money.

1.10 Where recipients are small inexperienced groups, this Criteria and Application Pack can be used as a learning tool to develop an understanding of funding regulation and to develop skills and experience about appropriate governance and service provision.

1.11 From time to time, the Advancing Equality Fund Criteria and Application Pack may be amended to reflect changes to policies and procedures, and/or the introduction of non-statutory guidance. Grantees will be notified in writing of any changes that affect the Terms & Conditions of any grant award and will be expected to comply with the revised Terms & Conditions as appropriate.

1.12 Where changes are of a significant nature, for example, the change requires organisations to develop and implement a new organisational policy/procedure; Grantees will be issued with a time-limited compliance notice *(see 2.3.7* ***'Conditions placed on grant award'****)*

1.13 **Interpretation**

"Compliance Notice" is a document issued by the Welsh Assembly Government, which details the appropriate action the Grantee has to complete in order to fully meet all the Terms & Conditions of grant, including timescales for completion.

"Grantee" is a body/person to whom financial assistance is given under section 70 of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

"Small Groups" is the term used in this document to describe a group of people whose voluntary activities are carried out on a not-for-profit basis, to benefit under-represented groups or those who have suffered discrimination. They may have been recently formed with the intention of assisting others in their community. They will not be a registered charity or company and may have a limited 'track record' of working in this area. Their application for funding should not exceed £20,000 and the funded activities must be ongoing for at least 4 months, but no longer than one year.

2.0 CRITERIA FOR GRANT

2.1 Powers

In conjunction with the Assembly's functions under Section 180 of the Housing Act 1996, and in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 70, Section 71 and Section 77(1) of the Government of Wales Act, Section 1 of the NHS (Wales) Act 2006, Section 14 of the Education Act 2002, Section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1976, Section 71(1) and 71(6) of the Charities Act 2006, the Welsh Ministers require that the following conditions must be satisfied where financial assistance is suspended or stopped.

2.2 Application

2.2.1 **The Welsh Ministers will only consider an application for financial assistance (which includes giving grant) if:**

- **The body applying for financial assistance can demonstrate a proven track record (at least 1 year) of working with vulnerable service users and/or under-represented groups.**

- **Where applicants are small inexperienced groups, can demonstrate an understanding of the issues faced by those who are under-represented or that have suffered discrimination; and can provide two written references to that effect.**

In addition, the body will need to demonstrate:

- its services will comply with the Advancing Equality Fund terms and conditions; and
- compliance with all other statutory and non-statutory requirements as set down in this application pack.

Where bodies do not fully meet the requirements of the above two conditions, the Welsh Ministers may consider a grant award subject to a time-limited compliance notice. (See 2.3.7 ***'Conditions placed on grant award****.)*

2.2.2 Where the Welsh Assembly Government is not satisfied with the information provided in the application the body will be required to provide further information/clarification within 10 working days. Failure to provide this information/clarification within the specified time will mean that the application will be ineligible for funding.

Where the information/clarification is provided but the application continues to be unsatisfactory and fails to meet the criteria for grant award, the application will be refused. No further delays will be allowed or time given to demonstrate compliance. A body will be notified in writing of the decision to refuse a grant award, together with

the reasons for making the decision, within 8 weeks.

Bodies will not be eligible to re-apply for funding until the next bidding round in the following year.

2.2.3 Any queries will be dealt with during the assessment process and Ministers will base their decisions on the competing priorities and the availability of funding.

Refusal for funding in one bidding round will not prevent organisations from submitting a new application in future rounds of the same funding programme, providing they meet the eligibility criteria.

2.3 Statutory Requirements

2.3.1 A body is eligible to apply for an award of grant if it satisfies the following requirements, namely it is: -

(a) A relevant voluntary organisation[3] whose activities are carried on for non-profit, and directly or indirectly benefit the whole or any part of Wales, or:

(b) A public sector organisation working individually, together or with (a) above to directly or individually benefit the whole or any part of Wales.

(b) The organisation must also certify its agreement to provide services as specified in the Advancing Equality Fund Terms and Conditions including the provision of monitoring information as defined in the grant offer letter and a willingness to be reviewed against procedures as specified.

2.3.3 **You should provide a copy of your Governing Instrument with your application, or a copy of your Terms of Reference (small groups only).**

2.4 Criteria for application

2.4.1 Proposed Role

- A body must provide a statement of organisational aims and objectives. **(You should provide this as part of your application.)**

[3] Section 74(2) of the Government of Wales Act 2006 defines "relevant voluntary organisations" as bodies (other than local authorities or other public bodies) whose activities; (a) are carried on otherwise than for profit, and (b) directly or indirectly benefit the whole or any part of Wales (whether or not they also benefit any other area).

- If any element of the grant work is contracted to another organisation, the body must have a policy, which determines the nature of that contracting arrangement. This should include what services will be contracted, criteria on when the contract would be terminated, as well as criteria for contract monitoring. A body is not permitted to contract any part of the grant work to another organisation unless or until it has such satisfactory policy in place. **(You should provide this as part of your application.)**

- A body should not contract any part of a grant funded service unless or until they are satisfied that the contractor is able to provide the specified service as set out in the Advancing Equality Fund Terms and Conditions at a satisfactory level.

2.4.2 Governance

- The Body must be under the control of a Board of Directors or a Committee or of trustees (hereinafter referred to as 'the Board'). The Board must include persons of appropriate skill and experience such that the affairs of the body are likely to be conducted in a responsible and effective manner. The skills and expertise of the Chair of the Board is of particular importance and the body should ensure that this is taken into account when electing the Chair.

- There should be a published recruitment and selection policy which sets out how Board members are appointed. This should include details of how vacancies are advertised, the application process, short listing and interviews, references and any other information considered in the decision making process. It should also state how decisions are made and recorded. **(You should provide this as part of your application. Small groups should provide a detail of how any Committee was set up and how members were appointed.)**

- All Directors, relevant managers, staff and close associates must be a 'fit and proper person'. For example, someone who does not have a conviction for an offence of violence, dishonesty or any other relevant offence.

- Where the body is under the control of or subject to influence by another organisation (refer to question 12 in application form), the body must be able to demonstrate that, the body also meets the criteria included in this section (2.4.2 Governance). **(You should provide this as part of your application.)**

- No more than one third of the membership of the Board should be a current recipient of any of the body's services.

- The Board must not include any person who is an undischarged bankrupt or who has been removed from the Board of another

organisation.

- Changes to the governing instrument (for example Memorandum of Articles of Association) must be made by organisations in accordance with those conditions set down in the instrument. The Assembly Government should be informed and provided with a copy of the changes. If the changes do not meet the requirements of the Grant the grant award will be subject to review.

2.4.3 Standards of Conduct

The Welsh Assembly Government will need to be satisfied that the Board:-

(a) understands its own role and responsibilities, in particular the fiduciary duty of a Director howsoever appointed to act at all times in the best interests of the company;
(b) understands the constitution and statutory requirements within which they will operate, especially any relevant law relating to payments and benefits to members of the Board;
(c) understands and has policies that reflect the regulatory regime, which governs the award of grant.

2.4.4 CRB/Police Checks

The Assembly Government will not make a grant award unless it is satisfied that the body:-

(a) has obtained enhanced CRB checks for all staff working directly[4] with vulnerable service users.

(b) has obtained standard CRB checks for all other staff including Directors, Managers who have contact with or access to personal information on vulnerable service users;

(c) and that all checks are updated every 3 years.

You should certify and /or provide evidence of compliance of 2.4.4 with your application.

2.4.5 Financial Viability

All bodies must be able to demonstrate their financial viability and fundability. This will be done by providing a detailed business plan giving three year forecasts of income, expenditure and cash-flow. In

[4] Staff working directly with vulnerable service users may include volunteers, night porters, cleaners and kitchen staff. In such circumstances; enhanced CRB checks should be sought for these additional staff.

addition, bodies must provide a long term financial plan which demonstrates the long term sustainability of the organisation including any contingencies or an exit strategy, should the organisation fail to secure further funding. Bodies must also provide 2 years of certified annual accounts.

Small groups set up especially for the purpose of running a new project, should supply two written references which demonstrate their ability to keep accurate financial records including an income and expenditure account.

(You should provide all of the above as part of your application.)

2.4.6 Other Criteria

The Assembly Government require grant funded organisations to adopt and implement acceptable policies and procedures across various activities. These should include policies on:

- equal opportunities
- health and safety policy
- service user participation
- volunteering
- access to the service
- service provided (this will be an operational policy or service description which details the type and nature of the service).
- Recruitment. This must include procedures for the risk assessment and employment of ex-offenders where appropriate, including the process for follow-up of references and enhanced CRB checks.
- complaints
- monitoring and evaluation at both the strategic and operational level
- A body should also have a statement of the organisational values on which its service is based.

Organisations must either have these in place at time of application or present to the Assembly Government an acceptable strategy for their adoption. Small groups may provide a single document which sets out the group's understanding of and commitment to all of the above policy areas. **(You should provide all of these as part of your application.)**

2.4.7 Conditions placed on grant award

The Welsh Ministers may place conditions upon giving grant. Once given the body must observe those conditions as well as the Advancing

Equality Fund Terms and Conditions as defined in the grant offer letter.

This means, where bodies do not fully meet the requirements for financial assistance e.g. some policies need updating, then the Assembly Government will consider offering a grant subject to a compliance notice, which will detail appropriate action and timescales.

Decisions on whether to grant award subject to compliance notice will be dependant on the level and type of failing and will be decided by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government, who approves all awards. The application of a compliance notice will be qualified by the criteria and an organisation's ability to meet those criteria within a reasonable timescale.

2.5 Making an Application

2.5.1 To make an application, all organisations should complete the full application form. Small groups should complete Part 1 ('The Organisation') and Part 2 ('The Bid: Small Groups').

2.5.2 Future Applications

Where a body has already completed Part 1 ('The Organisation') of the application form and is currently being funded through the Advancing Equality Fund.

For applications for further funding, either as a fresh bid or as continuation funding, bodies only need to complete Part 2 ('The Bid') of the application form and inform us if there have been any changes to Part 1 ('The Organisation') since the last application.

2.5.3 Full Applications

All other bodies must complete the full application form and it should be submitted with all policies, procedures (etc) identified in the application pack and summarised in Appendix 3. Failure to provide this documentation at the time of application will result in delays to the application assessment process and may result in a failed application.

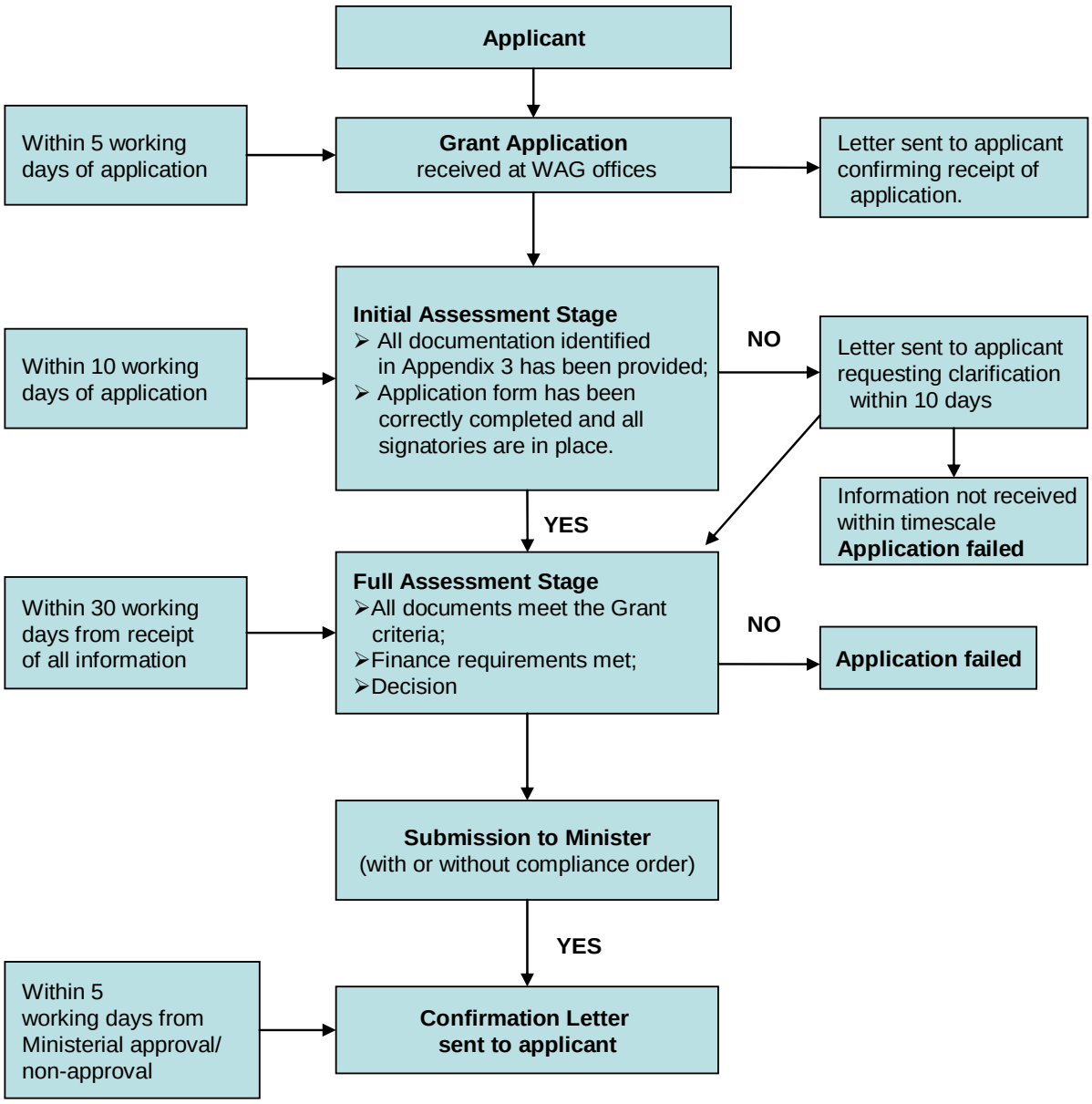
2.6 Timetable for Assessment of Application

2.6.1 The expected timescales for the process of assessment to be completed is set out in the Application Process map (Diagram 1) and is programmed to be completed within 2 months (40 working days) from receipt of the initial application. However, where further clarification is sought, the timescale for completion of the process may be extended. Bodies will be notified of any delays.

Diagram 1

Application Process Map

NOTE: Timescales are indicative only and may be subject to change



3.0 POST- GRANT AWARD

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1.1 Once awarded grant, organisations must continue to satisfy the conditions of grant as set out in the Advancing Equality Fund's Terms and Conditions included as part of the grant offer letter. Failure to meet any of these conditions may result in withdrawal of grant funding.

3.1.2 This will include the following:

- understanding the roles and responsibilities as a Grantee including where aspects of the work is contracted out to another provider.

- compliance with charitable rules and your Governing Instrument or (small groups only), your Committee's rules and Terms of Reference.

- compliance with all other statutory and non-statutory requirements set down in this application pack.

- compliance with Assembly Government grant monitoring procedures.

3.1.3 From time to time, the Welsh Ministers may issue revised Terms and Conditions to reflect changes to policies and procedures, and/or the introduction of new guidance. Grantees will be notified in writing of any changes that affect the Terms & Conditions of any grant award and will be expected to comply with these revised Terms & Conditions as appropriate. Where there are significant changes, Grantees will be given time to implement the changes, as appropriate.

3.2 Annual Return

Where Grantees have been awarded funding for more than one year, Grantees will be required to submit an Annual Return Form confirming that the organisational details (Part 1 'The Organisation') remain the same or provide revised information as appropriate. This return will also confirm whether policies/procedures as identified in Appendix 3 have been reviewed in line with the organisation's review cycle and provide the Welsh Assembly Government with confirmation of the organisation's continued grant eligibility and status.

The Assembly Government reserves the right to issue a compliance notice if the changes identified in the Return Form are not satisfactory.

3.3 Contracted Out

(Where grant work is not contracted out – move to 3.4 Material Changes

3.3.1 Where aspects of the grant work is contracted out to another provider(s) (third party organisation) the Grantee has a responsibility to ensure that the third party organisation meets all of the above conditions (as set out in point 3.1.2)

3.3.2 The Grantee must ensure that the relationship between itself and all third party organisations is fully documented and sets out:

(a) The role and functions each third party organisation will undertake in progressing the purposes;
(b) clearly defined outcomes relating to the involvement of the third party organisation underpinned by target milestones and related dates (performance measures) that need to be achieved in compliance with the purposes;
(c) the lead responsible officer within each third party organisation who will be responsible for reporting and verifying progress against the performance measures; and
(d) arrangements for the submission of requests for payment to the Grantee, supported by appropriate assurances on progress against targets agreed between the Grantee and the third party organisation.

3.3.3 The Grantee must satisfy itself that arrangements are in place to ensure that it is consulted in advance on any significant changes to the performance measures or timetable and related expenditure profiles agreed with the third party organisation.

3.3.4 The Grantee is authorised to provide Grant funding to third party organisations in connection with the Purposes. The Grantee must ensure that it binds any third party organisation undertaking activities in connection with the Purposes to observe the relevant terms of the Agreement.

3.3.5 The Grantee is responsible for ensuring that Grant funding is used in accordance with the conditions set out in point 3.1.2, including where expenditure is incurred by or grants are paid to third parties under lawful arrangements made with the Grantee in connection with the Purposes. The Grantee is required to impose conditions on the third party organisation to ensure that Grant funding is used in accordance with the activities agreed by the Grantee and to secure that such conditions avail the Grantor of the right to enforce against any breach of those conditions.

3.3.6 In addition, the Grantee must have a written agreement which sets out

the terms of the contract including the provision of financial returns to the Grantee, the performance management information to be provided and the arrangements for conducting annual reviews of the third party organisation.

3.3.7 Where Grantees are developing new policy/procedures in order to improve or maintain standards of service provision, for example where compliance/review recommendations have identified failings the Assembly Government would expect the third party organisation to endorse these revised documents.

3.3.8 If a service is sub contracted to a third party organisation, the Grantees shall remain primarily responsible for ensuring delivery of the service to the service users and the Assembly Government. Grantees should provide support/intervention where the third party organisation is failing to meet the requirements of the grant.

3.3.9 Ultimately, it is the Grantees primary function to ensure that an Advancing Equality Fund funded service is provided and that vulnerable service users are safeguarded from abuse and/or the failure of the service.

3.4 Material Changes

3.4.1 The Grantee has a duty to inform the Welsh Assembly Government of any material changes, including:

- Changes to Governing Instruments (a copy of the revision/addendum must be submitted to the Assembly Government)

- Changes to the constitution of the organisation including any mergers or memberships to group/parent organisations (see also 'Mergers' below).

- Changes to projects/service provision including i.e. change of location/property or remodelling[5] including change in size, change in service specification or change of client group.

- Change in Project Manager

The Welsh Ministers may suspend, withdraw or claw-back funding if any material changes are unsatisfactory.

3.4.2 In addition Grantees must inform the Welsh Assembly Government of any of the following:

- Failure of the Grantee (or contracted service provider) to provide

[5] Any remodelling proposals require Ministerial approval.

an Advancing Equality Fund funded service to vulnerable service users together with information on action taken and plans for any further remedial action as appropriate.

- Failure to meet any or some of the requirements/conditions attached to the giving of financial assistance by the Welsh Ministers, with information on action taken and plans for further remedial action as appropriate.

- Complaints made against the Grantee (or third party organisation) and how it was addressed.

- A serious allegation, incident or action has been made against/or by the Grantee regardless of whether founded or unfounded. The Welsh Assembly Government must be informed immediately and prior to any investigation(s) being carried out.

  This can include allegations of abuse, neglect, harassment, bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour, fraud or financial impropriety as well as any failures identified at the start of this sub-paragraph.

3.5 Mergers

3.5.1 Occasionally a Grantee will merge or be incorporated into another organisation which is not an existing Advancing Equality Fund funded organisation. In these cases, unless the Grantee is to retain its own rules, governing instrument and autonomy, the new organisation will need to apply for grant in its own right. That is, where the governance of the organisation is no longer related to the legal entity that was initially awarded grant and therefore the grantee will no longer exist, the new organisation will have to apply for a grant award in its own right.

The Welsh Assembly Government should be informed of this prior to amalgamation in order that arrangements can be made for the legal entity to provisionally manage the service provision whilst pursuing their own Advancing Equality Fund application.

Note – These arrangements can only be maintained for a period of three months, therefore early liaison with the Welsh Assembly Government is paramount to ensure continued service provision to vulnerable service users and payment of Advancing Equality Fund. This timeframe is at the Welsh Assembly Government's discretion.

3.6 Other Responsibilities

3.6.1 Grantees have a number of other responsibilities:

In summary they are:

- Grantees must engage with and provide information to the Welsh Assembly Government in order that we are able to fulfil our strategic and regulatory responsibilities.

- Grantees must provide service users feedback/facilitate service user participation in shaping their service and their community.

- Grantees must be open and accountable and co-operate with all review regimes as detailed within the Advancing Equality Fund Terms and Conditions and Criteria.

- Grantees must be open and accountable with sub-contractors.

4.0 CRITERIA FOR SUSPENSION, REMOVAL OR REPAYMENT OF GRANT

4.1 In conjunction with the Assembly's functions under Section 180 of the Housing Act 1996, and in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 70, Section 71 and Section 77(1) of the Government of Wales Act, Section 1 of the NHS (Wales) Act 2006, Section 14 of the Education Act 2002, Section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1976, Section 71(1) and 71(6) of the Charities Act 2006, the Welsh Ministers require that the following conditions must be satisfied where financial assistance is suspended or stopped.

4.2 Conditions for suspension/stopping payment of Grant

4.2.1 The Assembly Government will suspend or stop payment of grant paid to the Grantee in any of the following circumstances:-

(a) the Grantee has not been providing an Advancing Equality Fund funded service for which it is paid.

(b) the Grantee will no longer be providing an Advancing Equality Fund funded service for which it is paid.

(c) the body has failed to meet any or some of the requirements and conditions prescribed by the Assembly Government including those set out in these criteria;

(d) there has been a complaint against the Grantee (and/or any sub-contractors), which has been investigated, or reviewed by the Welsh Assembly Government, the findings of which are serious enough to warrant the removal of grant. This includes, where a serious allegation, incident or action has been made against/or by the Grantee (and/or any sub-contractors) and has proved founded. This could include allegations of abuse, neglect, harassment, bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour, fraud or other financial impropriety etc., or the provision of an unsatisfactory service or a failure to comply with any other requirements or conditions.

(e) the body has failed to meet the timescales within the compliance notice when grant was awarded.

4.3 Repayment of Grant

4.3.1 Where any of the above conditions apply or where there has been an under-spend of grant, the Welsh Assembly Government will require Grantees to repay any or the entire grant paid to the Grantee. The Welsh Assembly Government will take all reasonable steps to recover/claw-back grant as appropriate.

4.3.2 In certain circumstances, the Welsh Assembly Government may agree the use of an under-spend for additional work associated with the aims of the original grant award. Prior approval from the

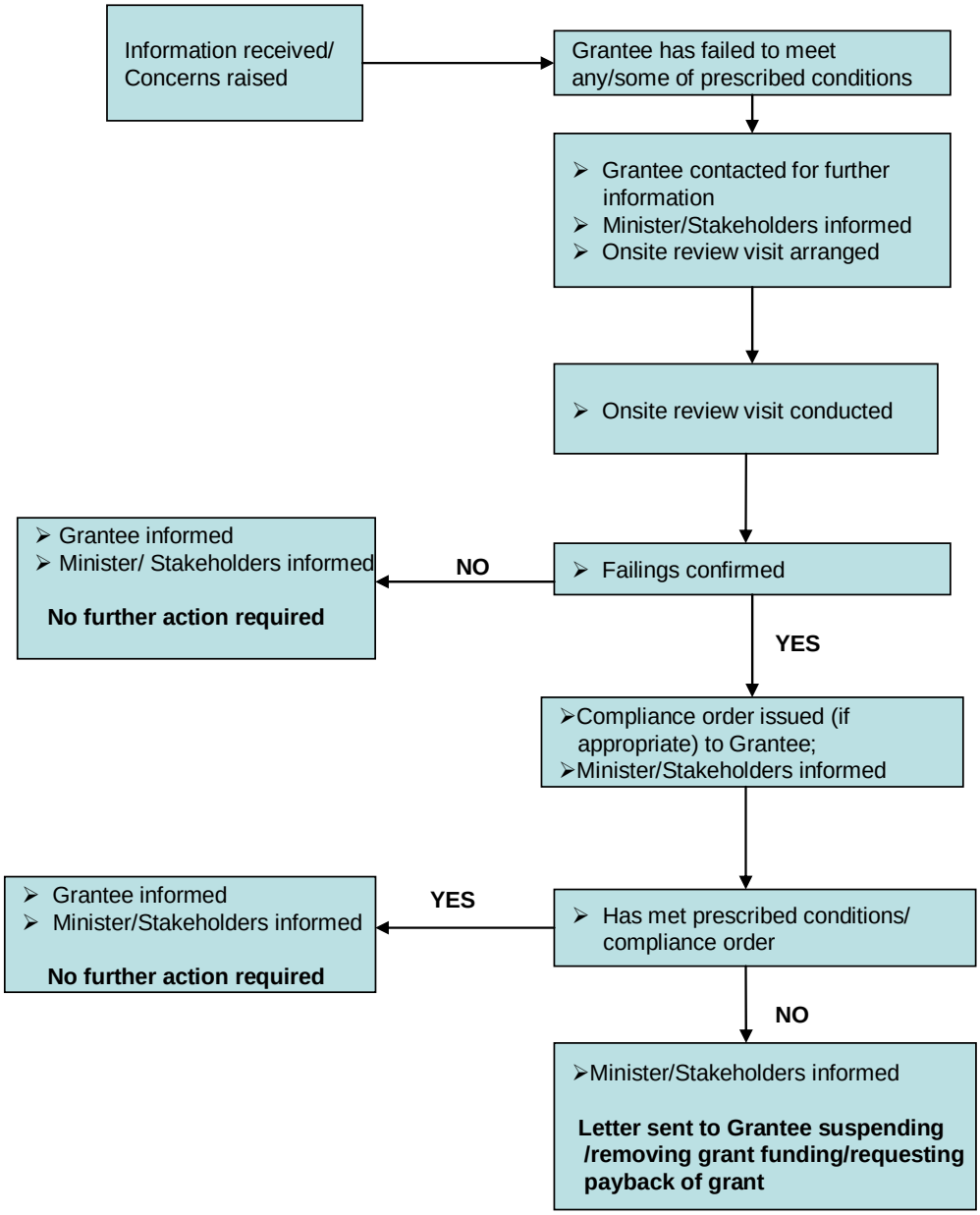
Welsh Assembly Government must be sought before using any under-spend for this purpose.

See Grant Suspension/Removal process map (Diagram 2)

Diagram 2

Grant Suspension, Removal and/or Repayment of Grant

Process Map



Welsh Assembly Government

Equality and Human Rights Division (EHRD)

Evaluation of the BSL Futures Project

FINAL REPORT

October 2008

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report highlights the findings of an Independent Evaluation of the BSL Futures project which was undertaken by Old Bell 3 Ltd in conjunction with Pawb and Equalta. The BSL Futures project was established with the twin aims of increasing the number of BSL interpreters and developing the BSL learning infrastructure in Wales. It was delivered via a partnership between the RNID Cymru, the Association of Sign Language Interpreters, Deaf Association Wales/British Deaf Association, CACDP and a number of other key organisations including further education colleges in Wales.

The evaluation took place between May and September 2008 and involved desk research, a range of interviews with key delivery partners and other stakeholders as well as focus groups with apprentice beneficiaries, tutors, mentors and supervisors.

Our evaluation found that the project was a largely successful attempt to achieve a very challenging set of objectives within a very confined timescale. The project has largely delivered upon its key objectives and enabled a step-change to take place as far as BSL provision in Wales is concerned. Not all of the objectives have been realised within the project timescales, however, and those that have yet to be fully achieved still need to be championed by partner organisations.

The main findings of our evaluation in relation to individual project achievements are:

- The project provided apprentice interpreter opportunities to 30 people – the majority of these interpreters received the full two years of training and support whilst those apprentices that did not were eligible for grants that enabled their learning to cover an equivalent period.
- Feedback from stakeholders suggests that the training and support made available to the apprentices was well thought through,

appropriate, relevant and of good quality. The support made available via the wide network of facilitators such as tutors, mentors and supervisors appears to have been appropriate and crucial to the progress made by apprentices, although there did appear to be some lack of clarity and confusion about these roles at times.

- The experiences gained from placements at host organisations was the least useful aspect of the project for apprentices, a view echoed by the host organisations.
- As at January 2009 27 of the apprentices will be registered as professional interpreters with the Independent Registration Panel with the remaining apprentices committed to registering within the next year. We believe this to be an excellent achievement for the project.
- The project provided four two-year training posts for BSL tutors but feedback suggested that not all four were ready to tutor at the highest levels by the close of the project. As a result we feel that the project could have invested more resources and had a stronger focus upon this area so as to make a radical impact upon the BSL tutoring and teaching capacity across Wales.
- All five colleges involved in the project reported positive developments in their BSL course provision, but only three were able to maintain these additional courses post project funding. Despite this we feel that the development of higher level courses at the remaining colleges, with what were very modest sums of money to kick-start activities, represents a very positive strategic long term infrastructural change.
- The original objective of developing a postgraduate course in BSL/Spoken Language interpreting changed over the project's lifetime to that of developing an undergraduate level course. We found that this objective had not been fully realised during the project's lifetime but recognised that the foundations for the course had been put in place.
- The project delivered a series of awareness raising and celebratory events to promote best practice which were generally well attended and well received. However the project could have done more to

engage and secure buy-in from the deaf community itself at the outset of the project.

Overall, we found that the project had been designed and managed effectively and in particular that partners who did not have a history of working well together joined forces and developed a strong working relationship that was focused on shared objectives and outcomes. The Partnership Board was perceived to be an effective, well-attended and well-chaired group. In our view the delivery of the project could have been improved had it achieved a better balance between generating the supply of, and the demand for, BSL interpretation as well as obtaining a greater engagement of the deaf community as advisors to, and champions of, the project. Furthermore the project could have benefited from being established in two stages – with the infrastructural developments taking place in the first instance and the recruitment and training of apprentices secondly. However we are mindful that the funding and timescale restrictions could not have allowed this to happen.

Based on the research work undertaken, this evaluation report recommends that:

- The remaining apprentices register and become qualified interpreters so as to minimise any potential loss of expertise and capacity;
- The demand for interpretation services amongst apprentices be monitored via the Interpretation Booking Services;
- A review of the 30 former Apprentices be undertaken in mid 2009 to enable a clear view of the extent to which they have found employment or self-employment opportunities within Wales;
- The objective of developing a BSL undergraduate course be fulfilled by the BSL Futures partners;
- The initial work underway to raise awareness and engage BSL users be continued and be given a high profile;

- The Assembly Government, in conjunction with its partners considers ways of increasing awareness of its Guidance “Delivering Services in British Sign Language: Advice for Public Services”;
- The Assembly Government explores and potentially funds other pilot projects that would meet the needs of a broader deaf community.

CONTENTS

1.0	**INTRODUCTION**	**6**
1.1	*Purpose of Report*	*6*
1.2	*Methodology*	*7*
1.3	*Structure of Report*	*8*
2.0	**CONTEXT**	**10**
2.1	*Policy and Strategic Context*	*10*
2.2	*Meeting Statutory Duties*	*13*
3.0	**PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**	**18**
3.1	*Project Rationale*	*18*
3.2	*Management and Operation*	*22*
4.0	**EVALUATION FINDINGS**	**24**
4.1	*Project Aims and Objectives*	*24*
4.2	*Progress made in developing infrastructure*	*27*
4.3	*Progress made in addressing BSL interpretation deficit*	*40*
4.4	*Project delivery and management*	*57*
4.5	*Broader Outcomes and Impact*	*62*
5.0	**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**	**67**
5.1	*Conclusions*	*67*
5.2	*Recommendations*	*75*

APPENDIX 1 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

APPENDIX 2 CONSULTEE LIST

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Report

Old Bell 3 Ltd., in conjunction with Pawb and Equalta, was commissioned by the Equalities and Human Right Division (EHRD) of the Welsh Assembly Government to undertake an evaluation of three projects funded via the Promoting Equalities Fund in February 2008. These three projects were the British Sign Language Interpreter Apprentice Scheme for Wales (BSL Futures), Croeso and Disability Equality in Action. This report is one of three reports that presents the findings of our evaluation and focuses upon the BSL Futures project.

The BSL Futures project was established *"to increase the level of BSL interpreters in Wales to compare favourably with the European median".* Over three years the project aimed to:

- provide more than 30 two-year apprenticeships enabling people to train and qualify as professional, freelance interpreters;
- provide at least four two-year training posts enabling BSL tutors to gain teaching practice and qualifications to teach the language at the highest levels;
- support at least five colleges in Wales to develop their BSL course provision;
- develop a postgraduate course in BSL/Spoken Language interpreting;
- support public service providers in Wales to develop the capacity to deliver services in BSL and promote positive relations with citizens who use BSL; and
- organise a series of regional conferences to promote best practice in service provision.

In addition the project was also committed to putting in place *"the necessary support that will remove the barriers that BSL users face to enable them to access employment opportunities and play a full part as economically active citizens in Wales".*

The purpose of this evaluation was to measure the extent to which these project aims have been achieved and more particularly to:

- Evaluate the level of progress of the project against its aims and objectives;

- Evaluate the effectiveness and value for money of the project, including an assessment of any added value provided by collaboration with partner organisations;
- Consider the contribution made by the project to achieving the Welsh Assembly Government statutory commitments under Equality and Discrimination Legislation and the Government of Wales Act (GOWA) 2006;
- Consider how the project has worked within the cultural, institutional and policy contexts in Wales;
- Identify lessons learnt from the project and develop recommendations for establishing, managing and evaluating future WAG funded equality projects.

This report presents our research findings.

1.2 Methodology

This report is based on an extensive work programme which has included the following elements:

Desk Research

- Reviewing key documentation including project information summary sheets, project implementation reports, quarterly monitoring reports, policy documentation and a review of the Promoting Equalities Fund.

Evaluation Framework

- Developing and agreeing with the client an Evaluation Framework for all three projects (see Annex 1).

Fieldwork

- Developing a questioning framework and discussion guides for use in undertaking consultations;
- Undertaking face to face consultations with representatives from delivery and partner organisations including the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID), Association of Sign Language Interpreters (ASLI), Deaf Association Wales (DAW), the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), the Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP), the Welsh Assembly Government and Further Education Colleges;
- Facilitating focus group discussions with apprentices, mentors, supervisors and tutors who have been involved in the project and undertaking consultations with a sample of host organisations.

1.3 Structure of Report

In the remainder of the report,

- We first, in Section 2, examine the policy and strategic context to the project (section 2.1) as well as the relationship of the project to the Welsh Assembly Government's statutory duties (section 2.2).
- Next in Section 3 we turn our attention to the rationale behind the project (section 3.1) and how the project was managed and delivered (section 3.2).
- In Section 4 we report on our consultation findings and the feedback received on the progress made by the project to develop the BSL infrastructure (section 4.1), the progress made in addressing the BSL interpretation deficit in Wales (section 4.2), on the way the project was delivered and managed (section 4.3) and on the project's broader outcomes and impacts (section 4.4).
- Finally, in Section 5, we present our Conclusions (section 5.1) and Recommendations for the future (section 5.2).

2.0 CONTEXT

We first turn our attention to exploring briefly the policy and strategic context (section 2.1) as well as the statutory environment (section 2.2) that influenced the design and development stages of the BSL Futures. Relevant parts of this Chapter are also replicated within the Croeso and Disability Equality in Action evaluation reports.

2.1 Policy and Strategic Context

2.1.1 Wales: A Better Country

The Welsh Assembly Government has published a plethora of documents setting out its strategic vision and commitments for the future. *"Wales: A Better Country"* (September 2003), detailed the Assembly Government's strategic agenda for Wales for the second term of the National Assembly (2003 – 2007) and was the key overarching strategy at the time the BSL Futures project was developed. As part of this strategy there was a specific commitment to the promotion of gender and race equality and tackling discrimination on age and disability grounds. The document refers to a previous publication *"The Learning Country"* in relation to education and training, with part of its aim being *"social cohesion and cultural enrichment"* and also to the culture strategy *"Cymru Greadigol – Creative Future"*, which includes a commitment to celebrating cultural diversity.

2.1.2 Making the Connections

In October 2004 the Welsh Assembly Government set out its vision for the second term in office in relation to public services in *"Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales"*. This vision states:

"Excellent public services are essential to a prosperous, sustainable, bilingual, healthier and better educated Wales. Joint working is vital to deliver public services of top quality: they must be responsive to the

needs of individuals and communities, delivered efficiently and driven by a commitment to equality and social justice" (section 2).

The document sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's preferred model to *"extract extra value from spending on public services"*. This model is based on co-operation and co-ordination between public sector agencies, rather than competition. Essentially the document focuses on how the Welsh Assembly Government will deliver, with its Partners*, "public services which reflect the distinctive nature, needs and values of Wales"* [6] with a five year programme of action to 2010[7].

Its four principles for better services include "*Citizens at the Centre"*, *"Equality and Social Justice"*, *"Working together as the Welsh Public Service"* and *"Value for Money".* Clearly all four of these aims fit in with the Promoting Equalities Fund. However, the equality principle is explicit in its intention that *"every citizen must have the opportunity to contribute to the social and economic life of Wales"* and sets out its commitment to promoting equality of opportunity across all the anti-discrimination strands.

As part of its commitment to *"putting the citizen centre stage"* it refers to *"radical approaches"* in the way in which services to particular groups are designed, delivered and evaluated, including for disabled people. There is also a clear commitment to the principle of equality and the Assembly's obligation to meet the public sector equality duties[8]. There is also a cross reference to *"Wales: A Better Country"* outlining the importance of ensuring that public services are *"truly accessible"*[9]. *"Making the Connections"* refers to the need to ensure that the public sector bodies promote equality for their employees and the need to go further to improve diversity and equality[10]. The document concludes

[6] section 1, para. 9
[7] section 2, para. 8
[8] Box 3.1
[9] section 3, para 7
[10] section 6, para. 6 and 7

with a commitment to ensure that in putting its proposals into action they will test it against, inter alia, their equality commitments[11].

2.1.3 One Wales Agreement

The *"One Wales Agreement"* of 27 June 2007 sets out the agreement between Labour and Plaid Cymru in forming a new Welsh Assembly Government after the elections of May 2007. There is strong emphasis on *"explicitly recognising the diversity of Wales"* in proposing its programme of government. Again this reiterates the vision of a *"fair and just"* society which includes promoting equality as part of its programme of government (section 7). This Agreement commits to fostering *"cohesive, plural and just communities"* where people can feel *"valued"* and making a success of the EHRC...It also promises to *"further develop and disseminate good practice models in Welsh public bodies which acknowledge and celebrate both diversity and commonalities"*, with particular emphasis on collaboration with the Interfaith Forum.

It is clear, therefore that the project sits comfortably within the overall strategy and vision of the Welsh Assembly Government – both at the time when it was developed and at present.

2.1.4 Review of Promoting Equality Fund

A Review of Promoting Equality Fund (through which the BSL Futures project was funded) was carried out by Martin Rolph, an Assembly Government official, in September 2007. This detailed document reviews the background to the Promoting Equality Fund, with its initial primary aim of developing *"capacity and structures to enable those who had long been under-represented or suffered discrimination to conduct real dialogue with the Assembly Government on policy issues"*[12].

The Review considers the developments which have taken place since The Promoting Equality Fund's inception in 2000, particularly the

[11] section 7, para 3
[12] Executive Summary

growth in its budget to nearly £900,000 pa and the development of the Assembly Government's equality policy at strategic level (as detailed above). It also notes that the budget is the Strategic Equality and Diversity Unit's[13] (SEDU's) only budget. Paragraph 4 of his Executive Summary notes that *"Compared with other Assembly Government budgets, the level of information about the fund and its use which have been put into the public domain have been limited"*. The Review goes onto conclude that *"changes must be made in coming years".* It then presents a number of options and recommendations, in particular proposing that in future the Fund should not normally be used to fund any activity which is clearly within the responsibility of any other Assembly Government department; that the proportion of the fund going to support core funding of equalities organisations should be reduced by 50%; that there should be greater publicity and transparency concerning the operation of the Fund, including setting annual priorities and that there should be a greater emphasis on exchanging information with other funders.

2.2 Meeting Statutory Duties

2.2.1 Equality Duty under the Government of Wales Act 2006

The Welsh Assembly Government has a very specific duty regarding equality of opportunity under the Government of Wales Act (GOWA) 2006. Under s.77(1) the Welsh Ministers have a statutory obligation to make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that their functions are exercised with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people. The Welsh Ministers also have a duty after each financial year to publish a report containing a statement of the arrangements made in pursuance of s.77(1) which had effect during that financial year and an assessment of how effective those arrangements were in promoting equality of opportunity and lay a copy of the report before the Assembly (s.77(2)).

[13] Now the Equality and Human Rights Division

2.2.2 Anti-Discrimination Legislation

There is a variety of anti-discrimination legislation that the Welsh Assembly Government must comply with, much of it originating from EU primary legislation and secondary legislation, such as the EC Directive 2000/78 (Employment Framework Directive). UK 'home grown' legislation, such as the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 have been amended in light of EU legislation and case law. The main legislation relevant to the BSL Futures Project is therefore the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. This Act introduced a wide definition of disability, made it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of an individual's disability and required employers and service providers to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. However, the main impact, and perhaps the driver for the project, has been the implementation of the public sector equality duties.

2.2.3 Public Sector Equality Duties

In addition to this statutory duty under the Disability Discrimination Act, the Welsh Assembly Government must also comply with its public sector equality duties. Of particular relevance to the BSL Futures Project is the requirement under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005) to comply with the general duty on public authorities in relation to disability. s.49A details the duties public authorities must have due regard to when carrying out their public functions. These are the need to:

- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- eliminate the harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons; and
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.

In compliance with this duty, the Welsh Assembly Government produced a Disability Equality Scheme in December 2006.

2.2.4 Single Equality Scheme

In March 2008 the Welsh Assembly Government published its proposed Single Equality Scheme Consultation Document. The deadline for responses was 11 June 2008, with implementation effective from July 2008 to July 2011. The 2007-2008 Progress Report sees the development of the Single Equality Scheme as instrumental in helping *"the Assembly address equality and human rights on a multi and cross strand basis".* The Scheme aims to promote equality of opportunity and human rights and address the six equality strands (gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age). In particular, it refers to the Assembly's commitment to *"achieving the aspirations set out in One Wales"* In the Foreword to the consultation document, the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government refers to the need to ensure equality is at the heart of the Welsh Assembly Government's policies. It is therefore an ambitious plan, which aims to exceed statutory compliance.

This Single Equality Scheme is mainly a result of the need for a more holistic approach to equalities but also partly reflects the cessation of the separate equality commissions (the Commission for Racial Equality, Disability Rights Commission and Equal Opportunities Commission) and the creation of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights[14] in October 2007. The UK Government has also been developing a new Single Equality Act which appears due for implementation in spring 2009[15]. This Act will represent a major revamp of the UK's discrimination law, with a stated intention of harmonising and consolidating the existing separate equality strands.

Also relevant, is the promotion of the Welsh language. Within the proposed Single Equality Scheme, the Welsh language has been made a cross-cutting theme (along with Human Rights). The proposed

[14] Now known as the EHRC or Equalities and Human Rights Commission
[15] Equality Challenge Unit website

Scheme refers to the Assembly's *"commitment to creating a bi-lingual Wales"*. This means that both Welsh and English are to be treated on a basis of equality when *"delivering services and planning and developing new policies, services and initiatives"* (para 1.9). The issue of the extent to which the BSL Futures Project has embraced the Welsh language in its implementation is therefore pertinent to this evaluation.

In March 2008, a discussion paper, *"Facilitating Cross Strand Working"* on the cross strand modelling project was published jointly by the Assembly Government and CEHR. The paper examined how best to *"facilitate the promotion of equality and human rights, cross strand"*, with a guide to how to conduct an evidence-based mainstreaming process which exceeded minimum legal compliance. The report's authors conclude that a multi-strand as opposed to a cross strand approach is the most effective model as this enabled all equality strands to be afforded equal weight and to retain their own *"distinctive integrity"*. As a consequence, policy could be approached *"from all angles of inequality"* thereby allowing prioritisation from the evidence base and recommendations which benefited all strands.

The un-dated document *"Mainstreaming Equality: A Strategy by the Welsh Assembly Government"* refers to the Assembly's progress towards mainstreaming equality and diversity and its intentions regarding *"better public service delivery"* and sets out a framework for their approach. A commitment to *"embrace all equality and diversity dimensions"* is a key message within the Strategy, with an emphasis on the need to *"integrate equality of opportunity principles, strategies and actions into everyday work of government"*.

3.0 PROJECT RATIONALE AND IMPLEMENTATION

In this section we discuss the rationale behind the project (section 3.1) and how the project has been managed and delivered (section 3.2).

3.1 Project Rationale

BSL Futures originated from a concern with the lack of BSL interpreters in Wales following the decision of the Welsh Assembly Government in 2004 to recognise BSL as a language in its own right, following the lead of the UK Government. Groups representing the deaf community had highlighted a range of cases where individuals had been disadvantaged by not being provided with access to independent interpretation.

As a result of this concern, the then Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration Edwina Hart AM decided to establish a Task and Finish Group on BSL Interpreter Services. The Group was chaired by Karen Sinclair, AM, then the Assembly Business Minister, but also the founder of the Assembly's All Party Group on Deaf Issues. The Task and Finish Group published its report in December 2004 and this contained five recommendations:

I. That the Assembly Government should form a broad based project partnership to develop an ESF funded project which would deliver a BSL Interpreter Apprenticeship and Employment Scheme for Wales, which would provide salaried placements for trainee interpreters while undertaking training to Level 4 standard in BSL language and interpreting in Wales. The project should also include developing improved national provision of NVQ level 3 BSL as a basis for individuals to progress towards interpretation; developing undergraduate and postgraduate BSL training courses (which did not then exist in Wales); and creating a monitoring system of usage of BSL interpreters to ensure better knowledge of demand for interpretation services.

II. That the Assembly Government should promote good practice in the provision by public bodies and the voluntary sector of BSL interpretation, and should impose a requirement on organisations receiving Assembly funding that they provided such interpretation as required.

III. That the Assembly Government should seek to become an exemplar organisation in terms of the provision of BSL Interpreter Services, ensuring that all BSL users were guaranteed Interpreter Services arranged by the Assembly at no cost.

IV. That the Assembly Government should explore ways of raising the levels of registration of BSL interpreters with the recognised body.

V. That the Business Minister write to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning urging the incorporation of finger spelling and introductory BSL into the National Curriculum.

The Group recommended that the overall target for the project referred to in the first recommendation should be to increase the level of BSL interpreters in Wales to the European median, which was thought to imply an increase from 12 (the estimate of the number active in Wales at the time of the report) to 64.

The Assembly Government endorsed the report and adopted the recommendations as its own. This subsequently led to the development of the project by a partnership administered by RNID. In February 2006, Jane Hutt, AM, the then Minister for Equalities announced the launch of the project, which was to receive £1.1 million from Objective 1 European Social Fund resources (in the shape of a large expansion of the grant earmarked for a pre-existing RNID led project, Cymru Communications Phase 3, which had involved a much smaller scale effort to train up BSL interpreters[16]) and £1.6 million from

[16] A significant change was requested by the RNID and approved by WEFO on the 8 December 2004 for two parallel projects covering Objective 1 and Objective 2 areas enabling the Cymru

the Welsh Assembly Government (funded via a contribution from Assembly Government departments which was used to supplement the Promoting Equalities Fund). The project would run to June 2008 and aimed to:

- Provide at least 30 two year apprenticeships enabling people to train and qualify as professional freelance interpreters. The project would pay a trainee salary to apprentices and cover the direct costs of training. It also intended to provide support through the development of a Personal Development Plan for each apprentice and make available a team of mentors (to be recruited by the Association of Sign Language Interpreters) and training supervisors. A range of organisations were expected to be recruited to provide placements through which the apprentices would gain experience by shadowing existing BSL interpreters and acting as *"communicators"* for the organisations (undertaking tasks where a full interpretation service was not required);
- Provide at least four two year training posts enabling BSL tutors to gain teaching practice and qualifications (PGCE) to teach the language at the highest levels (this element of the project was to be led by the Deaf Association Wales);
- Support at least five colleges in Wales to develop their BSL provision (building on existing expertise within Llandrillo and Barry Colleges);
- Develop a postgraduate course in BSL/Spoken Language Interpreting;
- Support public service providers to develop their understanding of BSL and their capacity to deliver services in BSL;
- Organise a series of regional conferences to promote best practice in service provision to BSL users.

In addition, and related directly to the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, the Assembly Government has developed – on the basis of widespread consultation – and disseminated a Guidance document "*Delivering Services in British Sign Language: Advice for Public Services*" and has also taken steps to improve access to interpretation services by awarding a contract for the provision of interpreters when required.

The project thus aimed both to produce a direct medium term boost to the availability of BSL interpretation in Wales by directly training more interpreters and to build capacity for longer-term change by increasing

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Communications Phase 3 project to be extended from around £100,000 to £1.246 million [see *http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk/default.asp?action=projectdetail&ID=86&ProjectID=55973*]

the provision of BSL learning opportunities in Wales at all levels and by bringing about attitudinal (and hence practical) change on the part of public and voluntary sector organisations in terms of the provision of services to BSL users in Wales. Perhaps also in part reflecting the demands of Objective 1 funding, the project was also explicitly linked to the need to enable deaf people greater access to employment opportunities.

There appear to have been few changes of substance to the project as it has been rolled out, although discussion between project partners led to a decision to focus on the development of an undergraduate academic course, rather than a postgraduate one.

Overall, the project appears to be highly coherent in terms of the relationship between its various activities and its higher level aims and objectives. Although dealing with the very specific needs of a quite small part of the population (only around 3,000 individuals were thought to use BSL), the project fits well with the overarching aim of the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to equality by ensuring that BSL users are not disadvantaged in their use of public services in Wales by the lack of access to independent professional interpretation. It also fits well with the overall aim of the equalities policy and the Promoting Equalities Fund of mainstreaming, through its intention of inculcating a longer term culture change which would see public bodies taking on responsibility for providing BSL interpretation as a core responsibility of service provision, while providing a one-off boost to the supply of interpreters to make this practical. At the same time, it is less clear that the project fits into the more recent concern of Equalities policy, highlighted in the draft Single Equalities Scheme as well as the formation of the EHRC with *"increasingly chang[ing] the perspective from addressing each strand [of the equalities agenda] in isolation towards a wider cross strand approach"*[17], although we presume that

[17] Review of the Promoting Equalities Fund, para. 3.17

the intention is not to exclude interventions which are attuned to meet the specific needs of severely disadvantaged groups.

3.2 Management and Operation

3.2.1 Partners and Management Groups

BSL Futures was set up by a partnership board that was formed in response to the recommendation in the Report of the Task and Finish Group on British Sign Language Interpreter Services in Wales. Members of that partnership board were responsible for overseeing the delivery of the project as the BSL Futures Management Board.

The Board, which appointed Karen Sinclair AM as its chair, included representation from Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Llandrillo College, Deaf Association Wales (DAW), Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP), Association of Sign Language Interpreters (ASLII), Wales Council for Deaf People (WCDP), RNID Cymru, Welsh Assembly Government and Wales European Funding Office. Under its Terms of Reference, the BSL Futures Management Board met quarterly over three years to review the progress made by the project.

In addition, individual partners took on various delivery responsibilities and these included:

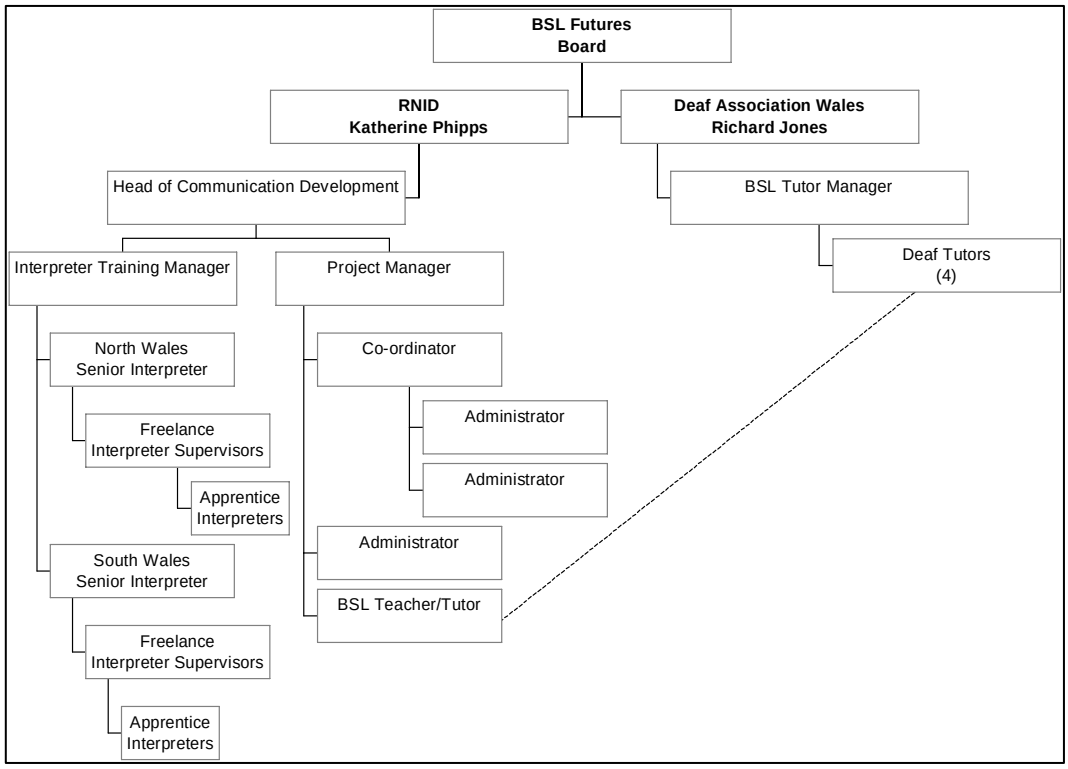
- The Association of Sign Language Interpreters: co-ordinating mentors and their training;
- Deaf Association Wales/British Deaf Association: managing BSL Tutors and their training; and
- RNID Cymru: managing Apprentice Interpreters and their training as well as managing supervisors.

The Board also appointed RNID Cymru as the partner to lead on funding issues and undertake the administrative duties of the project (payroll, accounts, etc). In reality, this decision was inevitable given the

decision to access European funding through expanding a pre-existing ESF-funded project which was managed by the RNID.

The BSL Futures employed staff structure presented below, (Fig 1.), illustrates the staffing structure in place for the bulk of the programme which developed during the lifetime rather than having been an envisaged structure at the outset. It includes the roles of Project Manager, Interpreter Training Manager and Tutor Manager.

Fig 1.: BSL Futures Staff Structure



A project management team was also established with its members drawn from these delivery partners as well as representatives from the staff employed by the project. This project management team met on a quarterly basis, one month before the Management Board meetings. In addition the apprentices also formed their own group and met on a regular basis with formalised agendas and structures.

4.0 EVALUATION FINDINGS

In this section we discuss the feedback obtained from stakeholders – including apprentices, supervisors, mentors, tutors, colleges, delivery partners and their respective management staff as well other key external representatives.

4.1 Project Aims and Objectives

Stakeholders were generally in agreement about the overall aims and objectives of the project. The majority cited both the objective of increasing the number of interpreters in Wales as well as developing the BSL learning infrastructure that could be maintained post project funding as the two key objectives. Some gave greater prominence to the objective of increasing the number of interpreters in Wales and considered the infrastructural development to be a *"by-product"*. Others, mainly the colleges, focused upon the infrastructural developments as the main objective of the project, and tended to interpret the 'project' as what had happened within their own establishment.

The majority of stakeholders believed the core aims and objectives had remained consistent over the duration of the project and that these had in the main been appropriate. However a few stakeholders raised concerns about the scope and nature of the project.

The most significant of these concerns related to the balance sought within the project between generating supply and demand. A number of stakeholders believed that the project had over-focused upon generating the supply of interpreters in Wales and that not enough focus and resources had been allocated to generating demand for BSL services amongst the deaf community:

"Funding should have been directed to deaf people rather than hearing people".

As a result a few felt that there was still some way to go in terms of convincing the BSL community to feel confident in using interpreters. One stakeholder stressed the small size

of the community and that interpreters were not always trusted to respect confidentiality. Furthermore given the ageing profile of BSL users the same stakeholder believed that it would be a big challenge to get people who *"have managed well, or perhaps not well, but managed, for 30 years without using interpreters"* to start using them, particularly if they were not totally convinced of issues such as confidentiality and privacy.

Against these views, other stakeholders argued that the issue had been discussed in detail at the project's inception and the decision taken not to over focus on generating demand (amongst the deaf community) for fear of raising expectations too soon.

Some stakeholders were particularly concerned that the lack of focus on generating demand for interpreters by the project would jeopardise the work opportunities for existing interpreters, particularly those based in north and rural Wales. A few supervisors and mentors cited their concerns that there was not be enough work in Wales for apprentices to make a living and that the project had created an *"influx"* of supply who would have to obtain work outside of Wales. Others were apprehensive that the project had funded new competitors in the marketplace which put existing interpreters as risk – the project had *"cut [our] own throats".* Several of the apprentices voiced similar concerns and were worried about not being able to secure enough work in Wales to make a living.

Related to this was an issue raised by stakeholders around the evidence base used by the project to justify its need. The original research presented to the Task and Finish group had shown that Wales lagged behind other European countries in terms of the ratio between the number of interpreters and number of deaf people. However one stakeholder said that his organisation had recently become aware that the figures for other countries had included not just trained interpreters but also what in the UK were called *"Communication support workers"* who worked in schools and hospitals to provide support to deaf people. If these were included, alongside accredited interpreters, the ratio in Wales would have compared more favourably with other European countries which might have raised doubts about the focus on increasing the supply of trained interpreters.

Tied in with this issue was another matter raised by stakeholders - particularly those from the deaf community - that the project had not been as effective as it could have been in engaging with the deaf community:

"The downfall is that the deaf community weren't really involved or engaged in it – whereas they should have been leading it. The project should have liaised more at the start – but to be fair there was insufficient time to do that. It was like – do you want the funding now – or it goes. As a result the deaf community don't really know about the project".

One stakeholder was concerned that the project was perceived to have been focused exclusively on a relatively small part of the deaf and hard of hearing spectrum i.e. those who use BSL who tend to be predominantly older people. Whilst there were no firm figures for how many people use BSL in Wales (estimates were between 3,000 and 5,000 according to one stakeholder) it was felt by this stakeholder that the needs of a broader community should have been supported and the use of innovative technology explored in greater depth. Suggestions made included increasing the number of palantype/speech to text transcription operations in the country or Sign Supported English (SSE) interpreters.

Some of the concerns about the aims and objectives of BSL Futures do, of course, need to be put into the broader context of the politics within the deaf community, with some historic tension between organisations such as the RNID which, in the view of some, are "*hearing led"* and exist *for* deaf and hard of hearing people and organisations such as the BDA/Deaf Association Wales which are organisations *of* deaf people. This is also reflected in differing views of BSL itself, with many within the deaf community seeing it as representing a distinct culture, rather than a tool of communication.

4.2 Progress made in developing infrastructure

4.2.1 Support for Colleges

According to stakeholders the aim of providing funding resources to five Further Education Institutions in Wales was to increase the availability of BSL language courses in Wales, particularly higher-level courses, in order to develop more sustainable routes into interpretation in the future. Prior to the delivery of the project colleges had different levels of experience in delivering NVQs BSL Language and Interpreting Units – for example one college (Barry College) had previous experience of delivering NVQ Level 4 BSL courses and another (Llandrillo College) had previous experience of delivering NVQ Level 3 BSL courses. The other three colleges (Pembrokeshire College, Ceredigion College and Swansea College) had previous experience only of delivering BSL courses at NVQ Level 1 and NVQ Level 2.

The BSL Futures project made available relatively modest sums of money to the five colleges to enable them to:

- Actively promote and market BSL course provision to new learners so as to maintain or increase the existing level of learners as well as to promote a clear progression route onto advanced courses;
- Develop their BSL curriculum to the next level;
- Develop their capacity to deliver BSL provision by enhancing tutors' role, skills and experience;
- Fund tutors to deliver BSL courses at the next level (where it would not have been commercially viable for the college to have done so).

Furthermore two of the colleges benefited from having a BSL Futures Advanced Tutor based at their campuses (Swansea College and Llandrillo College) whilst another Advanced Tutor was based at Ystrad Mynach College. All Advanced Tutors provided some teaching support at the colleges but had varied experiences – two reported having negative experiences at their colleges whilst the third was very positive about the experience.

Three of the colleges noted that they had been approached directly by the project to become involved whilst in the case of Barry College and Llandrillo College their involvement had stemmed from their original association with the predecessor project, Cymru Communications. The colleges felt that their involvement was fundamental in creating a sustainable BSL provision as evidence suggested that people generally stay where they are trained and thus the skills set is maintained locally.

Each college was contracted by BSL Futures to deliver agreed targets and these, together with their achievements, are summarised below:

	Target	Achievement
Llandrillo College	Build capacity to deliver NVQ Level 4 BSL Language and Interpreting Units	By June 2008 Llandrillo College had developed a Foundation Degree in Deaf Studies but is yet to apply to CACDP for registration to deliver NVQ Level 4 BSL and Interpreting Units alongside this qualification
Barry College	Build capacity to deliver NVQ Level 4 BSL	By June 2008 Barry College had delivered one NVQ Level 4

	Language and Interpreting Units[18]	Language Units course but is yet to develop and delivery NVQ Level 4 Interpreting Units.
Swansea College	Build capacity to deliver Pre-Level 3 courses and full NVQ BSL Level 3 courses	By June 2008 Swansea College had delivered some NVQ Level 3 courses
Pembrokeshire College	Build capacity to deliver a sustainable BSL Level 2 programme	A BSL Level 2 course was delivered during 2007 but due to the relocation of the tutor the course is no longer being offered.
Ceredigion College	Build capacity to deliver a sustainable BSL Level 2 programme	A BSL Level 2 course was delivered during 2007 but due to the relocation of the tutor the course is no longer being offered.

Several of the colleges had not been involved in any other aspect of the BSL Futures project and consequentially felt quite removed and isolated from the wider objectives:

"I felt quite detached from the project as a whole".

One commented that their relationship with partners in the previous project had been much closer and that communication with the RNID could have been better. They felt the lack of contact between the colleges (apart from the close relationship between Barry and Llandrillo College) had restricted the sharing of good and bad practice and had not helped develop a team approach across Wales.

It was felt by some stakeholders that this aspect of the project had been the most challenging:

"Work with the Colleges has been the most difficult part of the project".

This was put down to several factors:

- The only tutor employed by both Pembrokeshire College and Ceredigion College left the area and could not be replaced despite attempts to recruit another tutor – as a result BSL courses could no longer be made available and provision in West Wales has taken a step backwards, rather than improved;

[18] This is a non-objective 1 funded target which has a December 2008 deadline

- A few colleges found it difficult to generate demand for courses and minimum class sizes could not be reached;
- Some colleges experienced cultural resistance from the deaf community to the concept of the project and thus questions were raised about the likely demand for the interpreters being trained.

The project was to a large extent dependent on the colleges taking ownership of the project and driving change forward - it was not considered appropriate for BSL Futures to implant resources into the colleges directly as such an initiative would not have been owned by the colleges:

"Getting buy-in and embedding in the colleges has worked really well".

Several of the colleges identified real increases in the number of learners on their BSL courses over the project's lifetime and were of the view that the increases were attributable to the additional funding made available to them. For example one college saw the numbers increase as a result of the additional recruitment activity undertaken: 22 learners enrolled on the Level 1 course in comparison with 15 learners in the previous year to receiving the funding and similarly the number of learners on their Level 2 course doubled from nine to 18 over the same two year period. In this case the college would not have continued with the Level 2 BSL course without project funding (as the low enrolment numbers for the previous year made it unviable for the college to deliver). It also followed that over time higher enrolment numbers on the lower level courses led to higher enrolment numbers on advanced courses where such courses were available. However, as we have seen, two of the colleges have not been able to benefit from this throughput of learners as they were unable to offer any BSL provision to learners since the tutor left his post.

The other main change noted by the colleges was around the 'type' of learner enrolling on the BSL courses – as the colleges were in a better position to offer clear progression routes to learners they were finding that a greater proportion of learners coming forward were employed individuals (often working within education and were being paid for by their employer to attend the course) and thus required BSL for professional work purposes rather than for social or family support reasons.

Several of the colleges noted that their involvement with the project had helped develop their profile within this field at a regional or national level.

Overall stakeholders felt that there had been an improvement in the offer of the FE sector in BSL with more NVQ Level 3 and Level 4 courses being made available – and that the BSL Futures funding had been pivotal to this change. It was also generally felt that the approach taken by the project had been appropriate although one stakeholder was critical

of the focus on the NVQ model, arguing that it should have developed a more organic approach to learning BSL such as the British Deaf Association qualification route accredited by OCN.

In terms of the long term impact of the project in developing BSL language provision across Wales questions were raised by consultees about the future demand for BSL courses – it was felt by one consultee for example that demand for the Level 4 course at one institution next year was insufficient but that this was possibly inevitable, but short-term, given the impact of BSL Futures:

"The project has been like a big wave, its gathered up those who were really interested and there's bound to be a suction effect with a little bit of a dip afterwards".

Three of the five colleges plan on continuing to make available the same BSL courses post project funding and were positive about the potential demand (for the other two colleges this will depend on being able to recruit an appropriate tutor). In one college it was now considered that BSL provision had been clearly embedded within the languages curriculum and as a direct result of the additional resources made available via the project they had started to offer courses for businesses at their place of work.

4.2.2 Development of Postgraduate Course

One of the original key objectives of the project was to develop and put in place a postgraduate course in BSL/Spoken Language Interpreting that would be accredited by the University of Wales for delivery by Welsh universities. Such provision was already available in England where a number of HEIs deliver a postgraduate course for BSL speakers with advanced skills (already at NVQ Level 4) and who want to gain the additional skills necessary to become interpreters. However a view emerged during the initial stages of the project that an undergraduate level course – offering an alternative to the NVQ route - would be more appropriate for Wales (and would provide an exemplar for the rest of the UK): such a course would be modelled on undergraduate courses in other professions such as nursing and teaching and would be suitable for those with less advanced BSL language skills. It would involve advanced language skills, linguistics and interpretation methods and practice and would bring students up to the Register standard.

The project thus set about developing a three year undergraduate programme package that offered learners a *"straight-forward and practical route"* to become qualified and registered with MRSLI. This route would offer learners an alternative option to the current (often lengthy) vocational route which would be sustainable because it would be funded through normal HE funding arrangements.

The project commissioned a consultant to undertake a scoping study on what elements such a course might involve and using additional monies made available from the project

(resulting from the strong euro) develop these to a stage where a pilot course could be run. A course outline was prepared and is currently awaiting accreditation by the University of Wales before universities will be able to deliver it. Swansea University has been involved as a partner within this development but it is not certain whether the pilot course will be delivered at this institution or when it will be made available.

In reality, progress on the development of an undergraduate course appears to have been less than might have been expected but is still promising. One stakeholder commented:

"My personal view is that we are not fully there. If we do develop an undergraduate course it would be a huge coup but we are just at the start. After the project, RNID, DAW and others will just have to work with this as core business".

There was a general consensus amongst stakeholders that the undergraduate course will be a strong legacy for the project to leave and an instrumental aspect of the BSL infrastructure in Wales. Some stakeholders believed that the undergraduate course should have been developed sooner in the project's lifetime as the pilot course could have been an invaluable tool for the apprentices to study.

4.2.3 Advanced BSL Tutor Training

From the outset stakeholders recognised that the BSL Futures project needed to build BSL tutoring capacity and expertise in Wales if it was to meet its goal of putting in place a more robust infrastructure to enable interpreters to train in Wales.. To achieve this objective the project set out to offer;

"Four part-time training placements for BSL Tutors to improve their skills and gain the teaching practice they need to qualify to 7407 or PGCE level"[19].

The intention was to employ BSL Tutors on a part time basis with their time split between dedicated learning time and exposure to teaching experience opportunities within the project. Such teaching experience opportunities included one-to-one BSL and linguistic development support for apprentice interpreters, small group teaching for apprentice interpreters and teaching opportunities in further education colleges. The intended outcome was having *"more BSL Tutors in Wales qualified to teach BSL at the highest levels"*[20].

A key aspect of this work was also to recruit individuals who were themselves *"culturally deaf"* so as to form a bridge with the deaf community and obtain a buy in from partner organisations BDA and DAW.

[19] BSL Futures Summary: Advanced BSL Tutor Training
[20] BSL Futures Summary: Advanced BSL Tutor Training

There was general consensus amongst stakeholders that whilst this main objective had been achieved, in principle it was one of the elements of the project that had worked least well and had experienced the greatest problems.

Four deaf tutors were recruited by the project and employed by the RNID. They were initially line managed by a (part-time) Project Manager based with the Deaf Association Wales but line management responsibilities were later transferred directly to the RNID following disagreements and tensions between the project manager and the trainee Advanced Tutors. The revised management model was more effective in the view of stakeholders with the RNID responsible for management and the BDA responsible for the provision of training.

Each tutor was allocated time to pursue their own teaching studies as well as being given opportunities to teach apprentices on a one to one basis and group basis. They were also allocated teaching and development time as FEIs (including Swansea College, Llandrillo College and Ystrad Mynach college).

Each tutor was at a different stage of obtaining a teaching qualification when they came into contact with the project. One stakeholder commented:

"One [tutor] had a PGCE but lacked confidence and experience to teach - she had only been teaching at Level 1 so she has been able to teach at higher levels".

Another tutor was part way through his PGCE and another completed her PGCE as the project came to its end. The final tutor was:

"Somebody with very limited experience – she always wanted to be a teacher but couldn't because of family commitments".

Consequently each tutor attained a different level of teaching ability by the end of the project – stakeholders believed that some were ready to deliver Level 3 and Level 4 BSL whilst others still had some way to go to develop their skills. One commented that this project was:

"As much about the sector understanding the journey that deaf BSL tutors go on to enhance those skills"

as it was training the apprentices.

Although it was felt by several stakeholders that this objective had been achieved, the majority of stakeholders believed that not enough focus and resources had been allocated to this aspect of the project (in comparison with the focus given on supporting the

apprentice interpreters for instance). The tutors themselves were very critical about the lack of personal development and training opportunities made available to them within the project although they did note that they had attended one or two training weekends. All tutors we interviewed would have welcomed the opportunity to undertake the linguistic training qualification made available to the apprentices, but were informed that no funding was available for this. As a result, tutors felt *"undervalued"* and believed that the apprentices had been given *"a higher priority than us"*.

Tutors were also very critical about the lack of any formal accreditation programme within the project as none of the training sessions undertaken by them had led to accreditation. A couple of tutors had also expressed an interest in becoming apprentice interpreter assessors but were informed that no funding was available for this either.

As a result, some of the tutors and other stakeholders believed that the hearing community had benefited more than the deaf community given that apprentices had greater training and learning opportunities in comparison with the tutors (though of course this view does need to be qualified by the recognition that the purpose of training interpreters is itself intended to provide a resource for the deaf community and that by definition, interpreters have to be hearing). Tied in with this was a feeling that the project had failed to grasp the intensive support to train deaf teachers that was required:

"The programme didn't understand as well the challenge that it faced with that cohort".

Others believed that the project should have been able to cater for a larger number of tutors, so to ensure a greater provision of BSL provision in Wales post project funding.

A few stakeholders also felt that the heavy workload and expectations of the tutors would have warranted full time tutoring positions (which would also have brought them in line with the full time employed apprentices) but felt that as the tutor's role had been an *"afterthought"* in the project design stages, full time positions could not have been funded. Coupled with this was the view by one stakeholder that higher paid, full time posts would have been more attractive to a wider pool of tutors.

The other main issue raised by stakeholders about the tutor training aspects of the project was that infrastructural developments (the tutor training in particular) should have been put in place prior to the recruitment of apprentices to give tutors an appropriate induction period to settle into their roles and plan their workload. This approach would have also created a better and more appropriate relationship in their view between tutors and apprentices:

"We would have preferred not to be on par with the apprentices".

However tutors spoke of their very positive experiences of working directly with the apprentices and of these tutoring sessions which covered BSL linguistics as well as deaf cultural experiences and implications for interpretation, although - as the deaf tutors were only working part time - they did feel that the demands upon them from the apprentices were often *"too much to meet".*

Tutors' experiences of working with the FE colleges were very mixed – some were positive and some negative. Those who had positive experiences at their FE College were given appropriate opportunities to teach, had adequate support and access to resources as well as being able to contribute towards the widening of BSL provision at that college. Others who had more negative experiences to feedback found that they were not being given appropriate opportunities to teach, could not integrate well into the establishment and thus became isolated and faced practical and logistical difficulties such as not being able to access e-mails. Consequentially two tutors interviewed within this evaluation moved their 'office' base from their college to RNID offices.

4.2.4 Regional Conferences

The project set itself the objective of organising a series of regional conferences to promote best practice in service provision. This objective was delivered via three regional Awareness Raising Events (Swansea, Llandudno and Newport) and two Celebration Conferences (including Cardiff). Between them they served the following purposes:

- to communicate to the deaf community what the project achieved and to encourage them to exercise their rights to use interpretation services when accessing services;
- to explain to public sector organisations (both host and non host organisations) what the project had achieving in terms of raising awareness about public sector duties to provide accessible services to deaf people;
- to celebrate the project's achievements as the project came to its close and bring together those who had made it happen to share their experiences.

Each event programme included presentations from those involved in the project such as an apprentice interpreter, a tutor, a host organisation, project staff and a member of the local deaf community. According to stakeholders and our observation at one such event all events were well attended (with some 186 people attending all three Awareness Raising events and some 100 people attending the Cardiff Celebration Conference[21]), with attendance weighted more to the deaf community than to external organisations.

Stakeholders who had been involved with the events or who had attended generally felt that they were well received. It was widely believed that the project would have benefited from having the Awareness Raising Events held earlier in the lifetime of the project in

[21] Data for the number of attendees at the second Conference was not available

order to boost the involvement and awareness amongst the deaf community. However this had proved impractical due to a number of reasons including other project pressures and limited staff capacity due to ill-health.

A representative from a host organisation who attended the Cardiff Celebration Conference felt it had been a very positive and passionate experience:

"As it allowed those of us in isolation in the host organisations to see all the people actually affected…[and therefore to} appreciate we'd done something great".

Some suggestions were made by stakeholders on how the events could have been improved and these included better use of press and media to promote the project's achievements to a wider audience.

It was considered crucial by some stakeholders that the deaf community be made aware of the additional resources available for interpretation in Wales so that they could ramp up demand for their services – since previously it had been difficult to secure interpretation services, demand had been suppressed, and BSL users had been used to coping without interpreters, for example by using family members to interpret informally for them. The Awareness Raising Events were considered a key method of achieving this goal but a few stakeholders were of the opinion that it would have been more effective for the project to have engaged with the deaf community on a more local level via deaf clubs for example rather than large-scale regional events. This would have also complemented the approach taken by apprentices on a local level in raising awareness amongst deaf communities. As a result some felt that the project had failed to outreach into deaf communities:

"A lot of people in the deaf clubs who still only heard about BSL futures from the detractors".

Whilst stakeholders took this view we were informed by project deliverers that deaf outreach activities were being undertaken via the project as members of the Dead Community were engaging with public service providers. Furthermore a Deaf Community Officer has been seconded from the Assembly Government to RNID for six months, tasked to *"spread the word"* in the community.

4.3 Progress made in addressing BSL interpretation deficit

4.3.1 Apprenticeship Scheme

The Apprentice Interpreter Training Process was described as:

"Two-year training placements for which participants receive a training bursary. The scheme recruits participants with the basic skills and potential to become a BSL/Spoken Language interpreter and puts them through an intense programme of skill development in three principal areas: BSL and linguistic skills; Interpreting skills; and English/Welsh Language skills (written and spoken)"[22].

Apprentice interpreters development needs were initially assessed by qualified professionals and individual Professional Development Plans (PDP) drawn up for each one. These were then monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. Each apprentice was allocated an experienced Sign Language Interpreter Supervisor who provided support, management, supervision and development work in completing the PDP. The apprentice also received tuition from BSL tutors and support from practicing, qualified SLI mentors.

Each apprentice was also placed within a Host Organisation (public service providers) where they were given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with public service provision, observe professional interpreters at work, and access opportunities to act as a 'communicator' to develop their skills, and gather evidence of their competence.

Apprentices Recruitment and Selection

Apprentices were recruited via open advertisements and the majority of apprentices came to hear about it either through their links with colleges or other organisations working with deaf communities such as the RNID website.

Response was perceived to be very good and opportunities heavily oversubscribed. According to those stakeholders involved in the process the high response was of no surprise given:

- the huge latent demand for BSL training of all descriptions across the UK;
- that the project was unique to the UK and thus generated interest from outside Wales;
- that it offered a unique package of support, including being paid to learn, which contrasted hugely with the usual route into interpretation of struggling for many years to complete part-time courses.

Apprentices were recruited in three main cohorts with a final small group of apprentices (three individuals) recruited as late as October 2007 (a small number had left the project and it needed to meet the targets set) – thus not all received the full two year training and support. They were subject to a rigorous selection process which involved an initial short listing followed by an assessment day, designed specifically for the project, which set out to test:

"Linguistic ability, cultural awareness and potential aptitude to be an interpreter".

[22] BSL Futures Summary: Apprentice Scheme

Candidates were required to already be fluent in BSL but did not necessarily have to have any formal qualifications as it was recognised that many individuals would have developed their skills through social or family contact with deaf people. Welsh speaking candidates were given priority given the need for BSL interpretation to and from Welsh. However not many Welsh speakers applied:

"We were incredibly grateful for any Welsh speaking candidates who came forward".

Most stakeholders were very positive about the selection process and in particular the emphasis on aptitude rather than prior qualifications. Several made the point that the assessment day was now viewed as representing best practice in terms of testing aptitude for interpreting skills. However, one stakeholder cited concerns about the lack of testing of basic skills amongst the candidates which led to some problems later down the line – interpreters were often asked for help to complete forms and in one or two cases apprentices had found this difficult.

The feedback from apprentices reinforced the thoroughness of the application process - some found it daunting and intense but overall they believed it to be a positive experience (obviously influenced by the fact that they had been successful):

"The recruitment was really interesting but very intense".
"I was there from 9.30 in the morning to 7.30 in the evening".
"I think it was a good range of assessments, because some of us would be better in some things than another – you had five different skills they were assessing".

Several apprentice interpreters commented that there had been some inconsistency in the process, particularly in terms of the communication that they had received from the project and the differing expectations that they had for the assessment day process. Others suggested feedback on the selection process would have been useful.

In total 33 apprentice interpreters were recruited by the project and only three left during their training period due to personal reasons such as ill-health or moving away from Wales. Of these seven were men and three were Welsh speakers. Some stakeholders expressed their concerns that a few of the selected applicants were based outside of Wales and so a significant proportion of the capacity might leak back into England. However others were keen to stress that it was a condition of funding that apprentices moved to Wales to undertake the training.

When the project came to a close (June 2008) 17 of the beneficiaries were already registered with the Register of Sign Language Interpreters and the remaining 13 were planning on doing so over the coming months. These remaining apprentices have been

given additional grant funding (due to project under spend) until the autumn to enable them to become full registered interpreters.

Employment of Apprentices

A decision was taken early on in the project to take the unusual step of employing all apprentices as opposed to providing training bursaries. Apprentices were thus employed by RNID on behalf of BSL Futures but found that most of the employment policies adopted were based upon RNID policies. They received a salary (£14,000 per annum), had all expenses covered and had access to RNID offices and resources if required. Whilst nearly all apprentices believed that they could not have participated in the programme without the financial support offered a very small number would have done so anyway.

Apprentices Development and access to courses/training

Professional Development Plans (PDPs) were drawn up for each apprentice interpreter. Stakeholders had mixed views on the value of these PDPs - some regarded them as being a useful tool that was tailored to individual circumstances and reviewed regularly:

"It's about constantly being aware of where we're at and looking at where we can improve" and *"you get feedback constantly from all different angles and you know where you really are"*.

Others did not feel that they were a particularly useful tool:

"[I] haven't taken it on board fully".
"I've never been a list maker myself".

Indeed, some apprentices did not believe that they had had a formal written PDP.

Supervisors also conveyed similar mixed messages about the PDPs

"We didn't use them that rigidly".
"Just a paperwork exercise really"
"Usually there were more issues to do with the host organisation which were important to discuss in the meetings".

Apprentices were also expected to keep Learning Journals and whilst most of them had done so questions were raised over their usefulness and how they linked with their PDPs.

Apprentices acknowledged that they had been given a huge amount of free training and learning experiences by the project and were extremely grateful for such as an opportunity. These experiences had included training organised by the project in areas

such as the code of ethics for interpreters and support on practical issues such as becoming self-employed. Although a few felt that some training courses taken had not been appropriate, they did not want this to distract from what they believed to be very positive experiences. Apprentices were very complimentary of the project's attitudes towards the selection of training:

"If you need it, you can go on it, the money's there"
"Without the training, we wouldn't have got as far as we've got".

However, several apprentices cited it as a disadvantage that they had had to travel to England to undertake most of the higher level courses, perhaps reinforcing the concerns of those who felt it might have been better to have put in place measures to enhance provision (including the development of the BSL Tutors) in advance of recruiting the Apprentices.

At the same time, some apprentices felt very frustrated and disappointed with the guidance on training options given at the outset and were of the opinion that they had consequentially taken wrong routes in terms of course selection. By way of example one apprentice interpreter signed up to a level 4 course in Barry only to find later down the line that she could have taken other quicker route to become registered. Another felt extremely frustrated having completed an OCN course only to find that it would not help them towards becoming registered:

"I felt that this is the biggest waste of my year ever, I've got this paper now which isn't worth the paper it's written on".

Several apprentice interpreters felt that an information pack on the training options available to them at the outset would have been very useful and would have helped inform their PDPs:

"It's all very confusing. Everyone's at different levels so it would have been nice if they'd prepared an information pack".

Support via Supervisors

Supervisors, who were all qualified interpreters, were recruited by the project to provide supervisory line management to the apprentices. They operated on a free-lance basis, managed by the RNID and paid below the normal daily rate for interpreting assignments. Recruiting supervisors proved a challenge – an initial small pool of supervisors were identified from within Wales and were enthusiastic:

"There was a real enthusiasm to bring in some new blood".

However, it became difficult to recruit an adequate number of supervisors given the low number of qualified interpreters in Wales and some resistance to the project from a small number of interpreters who may have regarded the project as increasing the competition for work. As a result the project had to recruit some supervisors from England.

Several stakeholders commented upon the challenge of managing the supervisors which is discussed in detail in section 4.4.

Supervisors provided support to apprentices across two main areas:

- managing apprentices to ensure they were meeting their targets and objectives such as attending deaf clubs and undertaking training;
- development sessions to support and guide apprentices on linguistic and interpretation aspects.

Apprentices were allocated a supervisor for one meeting a month. They conveyed a variety of experiences about the support and contact they received. Some had very positive experiences:

"My supervisor was very supportive right from the very beginning, available 24/7... encouragement, confidence raising – everything was covered".

Others felt that their supervisors were learning about their own role and developing their abilities over time and so improved over the duration of the project:

"It was new to them as well".

As a result apprentices felt that they were receiving mixed messages from different supervisors and were conscious that some supervisors were restricted by the time they could allocate to the project. It was suggested by one that it would have been useful to rotate supervisors so that all apprentices could benefit from their wide range of expertise.

Support via Mentors

As part of the package of support they received through the project, each apprentice had access to an ASLI interpreter mentor for one hour a month. They were able to make their own selection from a team of mentors. At the outset apprentices were unclear about the need and role of these mentors:

"I couldn't see the need or value of it"

but were quick to realise the benefits:

"[They were] fantastic – couldn't have done without the mentors, they guided us through everything, through emotions, university work, personally, every aspect of becoming a freelances or going to work with an agency".

The mentors themselves believed the uptake of the support increased dramatically after the project facilitated training sessions to all apprentices on 'How to be a Mentee' and what mentoring involved:

"We found this had a great impact on the number of mentor sessions as the number dramatically increased after this training had been given".

The vast majority of apprentices had found the support of mentors of considerable value. Apprentices saw the benefit in being able to self-select their mentors and also to change mentors over time. It was perceived as a completely confidential support mechanism that was outside of *"formal supervision"*. However, some comments were made about the amount of travel that had to be made to meet with mentors, particularly having to travel from north to south Wales and vice versa.

Only a small handful of apprentices did not find the mentoring service of use and put this down to their selection of mentors:

"Maybe I never had the right mentor. If anything went wrong I phoned the supervisor and they played that role. The supervisor and mentor started to merge".

The confusion between the two roles is possibly of no surprise given the fact that it was mostly the same individuals that were contracted by the project to deliver mentoring and supervising support – although no apprentice received mentoring and supervising support from the same person.

From the perspective of the mentors, they were clear about what it was they should have covered with apprentices, and these areas included:

- dealing with apprentices dilemmas and issues;
- providing linguistic support;
- providing impartial and independent guidance;
- confidence building;
- interpretation in particular settings such as health or legal courts;
- time management.

Whilst these areas were discussed, mentors also found it difficult to keep within their remit:

"I found it difficult to separate the mentoring and supervising role".

Several mentors reported on the *"blurring of roles"* between mentoring, supervising and tutoring responsibilities (where relevant). Mentors also issued apprentices with homework and techniques to implement and were expected to follow up these issues at the following mentoring session.

A few of the mentors reported upon the good progress made by apprentices within their mentoring sessions in that apprentices were:

"Now coming with possible solutions not just problems".

One also reported that she had one apprentice who would have left had it not been for the mentoring sessions resolving the problems she was facing.

Mentors received training from the project and overall believed these sessions to be *"very good"*. The training sessions provided them with the tools to use for mentoring, and whilst they did not believe them to be appropriate at the time, many were able to put the techniques into practice. Several mentors believed the project had assisted them to be recognised as an ASLI mentor as they received an income to develop their mentoring portfolio to qualify for membership. Others had also realised the benefit of mentoring for themselves and had taken this route as mentees themselves.

Support via Tutors

Apprentices conveyed fairly positive experiences about the training received from the team of tutors through the project, particularly around the group tutorials and the visits to museums. The main issues raised by apprentices related to changes in personnel and thus the lack of consistency over time. Others felt it a disadvantage that the tutors were developing and learning at the same time as them:

"The tutors were also on a learning curve, just like we are learning as apprentices, they were learning to be tutors"

but felt that the problems associated with this were quickly resolved by the project. Those who joined the project in the later cohorts felt somewhat disadvantaged in comparison with the earlier cohorts as some tutors had left and tutorials were only being held on a bi-monthly basis:

"We started so late in the project it didn't flow very well, we could have done with seeing the tutor once a month".

4.3.2 Host Organisations

The majority of host organisations were Local Authorities, but other key players were the Welsh Assembly Government, various Local Health Boards and Health Trusts and the Ambulance Service. The recruitment of host organisations proved somewhat problematic according to stakeholders – the initial ones were fairly straightforward to target and obtain commitment but the project struggled to fill the quota required and had to work within the limitations of Objective 1 areas as well as the location of apprentices. Some of the apprentices took the view that the recruitment of host organisations was not rigorous enough as the selection did not assess what opportunities the host organisation could offer to the apprentice and whether it was suitable in meeting their requirements.

Apprentice interpreters were based at their host organisations for three days a week but the majority of them felt that less time should have been allocated to this aspect of the project (say one to two days per week). Apprentice interpreters had different experiences of being introduced and inducted at their host organisations – some had attended an initial meeting with the host organisations on a joint basis with their supervisor, others had not been privy to a meeting held between the supervisor and the host organisation whilst others had been left to their own devices.

Feedback from the majority of apprentices suggested that their experience with host organisations had been the least valuable aspect of the project. Several reasons were given:

- The vast majority had not been able to achieve their communication quota of some 20 hours per month at the host organisation – quite a few did not get any communication support experience;
- Some had not been able to shadow other interpreters at the host organisation for sensitivity or confidential reasons;

- Several did not feel that their host organisation or their line manager had understood their role and remit:

"I was seen as a temp"
"They made me sit in the reception area";

- Some felt that they had been *"used"* by the host organisation and perceived as a free service and felt that, had the organisation had to pay for it, their attitude might have been different and they would have been more likely to continue funding the service in the future;
- Several were confused about their role and had felt restricted by the project's remit as they had been unable to deliver any deaf awareness training within the host organisation.

Supervisors were very mindful of the fact that apprentices were not getting the experience and exposure that was necessary for them to develop within the host organisations but were also conscious that they could not take on any additional freelance work to aid their development:

"With the lack of opportunity to use skills in host organisations, deaf clubs were the only place some apprentices were getting the chance to practice. I think they should have been able to freelance at weekends or during free time to build up their experience".

However a handful of apprentices had more positive experiences to draw upon:

"My host was brilliant, and I was allocated a deaf person".

Another commented:

"I was in demand all the time"

and went on to suggest that there had been scope for more than one apprentice interpreter at that organisation. It would appear that where

an apprentice had been allocated to a deaf employee they generally had had a more positive experience.

Others felt that they had contributed more in raising awareness about deaf issues and needs amongst colleagues as opposed to aiding communication for deaf people (although this advocacy role had been restricted by the project's guidelines). The project had provided a clear protocol on this issue - apprentices could not function as advocates for the deaf community nor facilitate any deaf awareness raising activities. It was clear however that some apprentices had done so and had started to build links with the statutory bodies they worked for and as a result some felt that the project had sometimes *"gone beyond its boundaries"* by letting this happen. Whilst it was acknowledged by stakeholders that awareness raising and generating demand needed to be done there was no consensus as to whether it should have been carried out by the individual apprentice or the project.

A few examples cited by apprentices and stakeholders tended to suggest that the involvement of the apprentices as awareness raising advocates within the host organisations did not always prove effective – for example employees within one host organisation who had hosted an apprentice for a year were not aware that it had a Service Level Agreement in place to bring in interpreters to deal with deaf patients.

Feedback from host organisations

Of the six organisations interviewed as part of this evaluation five provided extremely positive feedback on their involvement with the project, with the sixth believing that they had not benefited from it to such a great deal mainly as their apprentice had left the organisation after some six months:

"It was a bit disappointing".

Those with positive experiences described the involvement of the apprentice at their organisation as *"tremendous"* and felt that they had added a *"different dimension"* to the services offered by the organisation. One even went to describe the offer as a *"brilliant deal"* for them.

Some of the activities undertaken by apprentices included:

- Developing of a SMS texting facility for the deaf community;
- Contributing towards strategic policies and procedures such as Single Equality Schemes and Marketing Strategies;
- Educating and training staff on deaf awareness issues;
- Supporting community based events such as open days and conferences;
- Advising on publications and materials in terms of accessibility issues;
- Producing a guidance booklet on areas such as booking an interpreter and how to work with one;
- Building rapport with the deaf community and encouraging some of them to become involved in advisory groups;
- Attending senior management or cabinet meetings to understand the organisational culture;
- Supporting deaf clients or customers with their enquiries and issues – particularly in areas such as housing and children's services;
- Supporting deaf employees and providing communication support for them in their work:

  "the apprentices at my organisation had a lot of opportunities to develop their skills as they provided me with full time communication support inside and outside of the office in work time".

The interpretation offered was greatly welcomed by such staff and one employee in a local authority had been *"chuffed to bits"* when the apprentice had been able to interpret a training session for them;

Some organisations were keen to stress the importance of locating the apprentice within the appropriate department – in one example the host

organisation had planned on locating the apprentice within their health, social care and wellbeing department but quickly realised by doing so they would reinforce the idea of deafness as a deaf issue within the social care setting. The apprentice was then located within the Corporate Strategy department of that local authority.

While overwhelmingly positive about the overall experience, host organisations made some comments about ways in which the project and the placement of an apprentice within the host organisation could have been improved:

- one host organisation felt that the apprentice placement should have been longer than two years (or one year in the case of a few) given the heavy workload and challenges that they faced and another called for a follow on project as the BSL Futures project had raised expectations amongst staff and clients;
- some host organisations believed that the project should have been better organised and greater consideration given to factors such as matching apprentices with their locality and ensuring that they could meet the travelling requirements of the post;
- a few drew attention to uncertainties they had about how to accommodate apprentices and were concerned about the added workload upon certain employees within the host organisation who were responsible for line managing the apprentice;
- others believed the expectations of the host organisation should have been explained better via proper briefing information packs;
- others believed that greater clarity at the outset regarding the apprentice's remit would have been helpful. For example some admitted that they had not understood at the outset that the apprentice was not allowed to train or interpret on their own and others did not realise that the apprentice could not represent the deaf community or facilitate deaf awareness sessions (although it was clear that some had done so).

In terms of the impact upon the host organisations several drew attention to the changing culture within their organisation:

"There was certainly a sea change in attitude"

particularly for those who were deaf:

"They had felt disempowered before".

Another had decided to continue to use her apprentices:

"As a result of the project I have decided to keep both of the apprentices as my full time communication support"

whilst others were looking to secure funding to continue offering interpretation services via an employed interpreter. Others could cite examples of how deaf people's requirements had been taken on board within organisational policies and procedures, as well as new public duty strategies such as their Single Equality Schemes.

A few of the representatives interviewed at the host organisations were conscious that there were still a number of their colleagues who were unaware of the interpreter role, even though the role of the apprentice had been promoted through various means including websites, internal newsletters and presentations. Some were also conscious that the impact upon the deaf community had not been as widespread as they had hoped for. For example in the case of one local authority, members of the deaf clubs were still reluctant to use the apprentice interpreter in their contact with the organisation regardless of the fact that the apprentice had established a relationship with them:

"They are used to doing things a certain way and doing things for each other".

4.3.3 Post apprenticeship plans

Data provided by the project team shows that of the 30 apprentice interpreters 27 will have registered on the IRP register (as at January 2009) and that there is potential for a further two or three additional apprentices to register with IRP at a later date in 2009. We have also been informed that 25 apprentice interpreters are working as freelance Interpreters, four are employed as interpreters and one is working both as a freelance and employed interpreter. Whilst employed interpreters have a guaranteed income it is not known whether freelance interpreters are able to generate an acceptable income from this area of work.

Feedback from apprentices via the focus groups revealed that the greatest concern was around the lack of demand for their services and thus employment or self-employment opportunities – very few of them had already obtained any work at the time of the fieldwork which was during the final stages of the project. Many of them were concerned that the project had generated *"too many interpreters"* who had or were about to register at the same time and that there would "*not be enough work for us out there"*.

Several voiced their concerns that the support was withdrawn too suddenly rather than being tailored off slowly:

"At the moment I don't feel there's anything for me after the 30th of June":

However project officers did highlight that apprentices who had not registered by the end of the project still had access to mentors and would receive a training bursary.

Others felt that the last cohorts of apprentices should have been entitled to access the same level of support and training until they became qualified:

"The aim should have been to support the individual until qualified – the project should have had the foresight to realise that it wouldn't be just one group. Most cohorts have had just one year".

4.4 Project Management and Delivery

It was generally felt that the BSL Futures Partnership Board had been an effective group which was very well chaired by Karen Sinclair AM and well attended by members. Representatives of the group displayed *"huge commitment"* to the project and always took a practical approach to moving forward and resolving problems:

"It was not a talking shop".

One or two commended the positive relationship between the Board and the Welsh Assembly Government although some stakeholders believed that it was only during the later stages of the project that Assembly Government officials were represented directly on the Board. (In reality the Welsh Assembly Government had been represented on the Board via a Project Manager who had been seconded from the RNID to the Assembly Government). A few stakeholders felt that the group had occasionally tried to overstep its remit but members realised that they did not have the authority to explore certain areas such as grant making.

Several stakeholders cited their concerns about the fact that BSL Futures was not established as an independent organisation which was 'owned' by the partnership but rather as an arms length organisation to the RNID, although it was recognised that this decision had been forced on the partnership and the Assembly Government as a result of the requirement to access ESF funding through the expansion of a pre-existing project which had the RNID as the project sponsor. As the option of channelling funding through the Partnership itself was not

practical, partners were keen to ensure that the RNID brand did not dominate the BSL Futures project but several stakeholders voiced their concerns that this had happened and had resulted in a backlash from some within the deaf community who did not regard the organisation in a positive light.

The biggest issue in terms of project management was deemed to be changes in project management personnel which mainly came about due to ill-health. Several stakeholders voiced their concerns over these changes, particularly as this resulted in the management of the project being temporarily transferred out of Wales. However whilst stakeholders felt that these changes had created tensions and stress for apprentices and staff it had not necessarily impacted upon the project's ability to deliver its outcomes.

On a related point some stakeholders believed that the intensity of support made available via supervisors, mentors and project staff had been much greater than expected:

"We've been running at a much higher specification than we imagined"

partly because of the logistics of supporting apprentices located across the whole of Wales. In retrospect, and despite the very generous funding, it was felt that the team had underestimated the amount of input required. This had been overcome by the willingness of all involved to contribute more than they were actually being paid for.

Several stakeholders were of the view that working in partnership with partners that did not have a prior good working relationship was a big challenge to the delivery of the project. As the project drew to a close there were still some tensions apparent between partners but stakeholders took the view that there was a much stronger relationship in place at the end of the project between key delivery partners (RNID, BDA/DAW and CACDP), colleges, deaf community and mainstream

public sector organisations than there was at the beginning. One stakeholder suggested that the positive experience in Wales had led to an unprecedented new collaboration in England on a very major new initiative.

According to a few stakeholders the building of relationships between partners was one of the fundamental successes of the project as it brought together policy makes, partners and the deaf community to work together on one ambitious project. It also demonstrated that the total outcome was greater than the sum of the partners. One stakeholder echoed the views of a few – that the project had been instrumental in building a better understanding between partners:

"It's a hugely better working relationship – there's a real respect for each other which is fantastic".

It was also deemed important that the project was owned and sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government as it *"stitched together"* the delivery partners in a way to deliver the outcomes. The fact that it was led by the Assembly Government also made it clear to the deaf community and delivery partners that they had to work together to make the project a success.

Many stakeholders were of the view that the project would have been better structured had it been set up differently and some options were suggested:

- Tutors, supervisors and mentors could have been recruited in the first instance to be inducted and trained prior to the recruitment of apprentices;
- The training of apprentices could have been phased over a longer period of time with a smaller number of apprentices (say ten) trained over a two year period and then during years three and four the next cohort of ten would be trained.

However stakeholders were conscious that the project had been confined by ESF funding criteria and timescales as it had been grafted on to a pre-existing ESF project (Cymru Communication Phase 3), rather than starting from scratch. Consequentially the project Board did not have the luxury of time to prepare and establish the infrastructural elements of the project in the first instance and recruitment of delivery tutors, supervisors and apprentices could only take place after ESF funding was confirmed.

Mentors were managed via ASLI and a Mentoring Working Group was established to train and oversee the work of all fifteen mentors and maintain contact between the project and ASLI. The role of the Mentoring Working Group included being responsible for the tendering process to procure training for mentors, inducting apprentice beneficiaries to the mentoring service and producing reports for both the BSL Futures management meetings and ASLI management and board meetings. The financial administration of the mentoring project was allocated to the national ASLI office and funded via the project. The management role was undertaken on a voluntary basis by the mentors themselves and as a result membership of the Working Group changed many times over the duration of the project as

"It took up vast amounts of time and energy to see the project through".

It was suggested by several members of the Working Group that their management and co-ordination time should have been funded via the project as opposed to being reliant on voluntary contributions:

"Admin time paid for too so not emailing and writing reports at 11pm".

Supervisors were managed via the RNID by two senior supervisors and also came together occasionally over the course of the project for supervisory team meetings. It was generally felt that more opportunities to share their experiences and ideas would have been

useful as supervisors acknowledged that whilst they were qualified interpreters not many had managed people before:

"It would have been really useful to have met a couple more times. When we did meet the most valuable time was when we were able to talk to each other at coffee time".

Some improvements were suggested by stakeholders regarding the management of supervisors and these included:

- Written contracts should have been prepared and made available to all supervisors to clarify their remit in writing;
- Meetings should have been more accessible particularly to those travelling from north Wales;

Supervisors received a management training session via the RNID which was considered useful and beneficial, particularly the opportunity to discuss issues with other supervisors.

4.5 Broader Outcomes and Impact

Overall stakeholders believed that the BSL Futures project was on course to meet its objectives and targets but recognised that not all objectives were realised over the duration of the project itself. The key objectives that were deemed to be incomplete were the registration of all 30 apprentices as well as the development of the BSL undergraduate course.

There was a general consensus that the project had dramatically increased the number of BSL interpreters in Wales and helped achieve:

"A step change which other parts of the UK have not done and they did it in a cohesive way".

It was believed that the outcome for the project also went well beyond Wales as it provided a case-study and role model for showing to other parts of the UK that it was possible to *"do it all at once"* in terms of making a lead forward in terms of the availability of interpreters.

Stakeholders genuinely believed that without the funding such a large scale project would never have got off the ground. All apprentices believed that the experience had been worth while:

"Without BSL Futures I wouldn't have level four – I'd never have done this"

"I think it's made a difference. We've created a snowball".

Other stakeholders reinforced this view:

"Without the project Wales would still only have six interpreters".

Funding has enabled the project to make a *"step change"* in the provision of BSL interpreters in Wales. There was a general consensus that the 30 individuals had also been extremely lucky to have had such an opportunity:

"Overall these 30 have been very fortunate indeed".

However several stakeholders stressed the importance of the apprentices obtaining further interpretation experience in order to develop further and qualifying as interpreters – only four of the 30 were actually fully qualified as interpreters when the project came to an end:

"At the level mine [apprentices] came in – they'd just passed their level 2. In two years, they are registered and able to take on some work. That's fantastic. But in order for them to be ready for the world of

interpreting – they need a lot more time. That's not to do with them – that's to do with the job".

"They're not ready yet. They need more experience. It's diluted in a way. They've gone through all the motions and yes they've passed, but they are lacking in experience".

Some believed it remained a challenge to ensure that sufficient work was available for the apprentices as they graduated form the scheme.

Several apprentices suggested that the project could have been improved had there been a greater involvement of deaf people. Several of the mentors and supervisors were of the same view*:*

"I do feel that the Deaf Community have not felt consulted (especially in North Wales) and so I might question the continued employment success of the apprentices within the locality. Deaf people were being 'told' about the scheme and not 'involved' with it, and ultimately they are the consumers of the interpreters' services".

Stakeholders were concerned that the links with the deaf communities have only been established at a *"surface level"* and that these relationships may not be maintained once the project comes to a close.

In reality, the question of the extent to which the boost to supply of BSL interpretation which has been secured by the project is met by an increase in demand which will sustain the employment of the former apprentices within Wales (and thus an enduring increase in the availability of BSL interpretation in Wales) is an absolutely critical issue. In many ways, it is too early to draw a firm conclusion as to whether this will happen, and there must be some concerns that at least some of the former apprentices will not secure sufficient work within Wales.

Most stakeholders agreed that the BSL Futures project was an expensive project to deliver but believed the investment was justifiable given the huge step change that took place. Several stakeholders pointed to the fact that there was no other alternative lead organisation to deliver the project in Wales and that ultimately the Assembly Government had no alternative option.

Some stakeholders questioned the value for money of the project as it was likely to benefit only a relatively small number of people and a relatively small proportion of the overall spectrum of the deaf and hard of hearing community. Other stakeholders believed the project could have been delivered in a more cost-effective way - apprentices could have been funded as trainees on bursaries as opposed to employees (which radically increased the on-costs). Several stakeholders were keen to point out that the project cost should not be calculated solely by the cost of registering one apprentice interpreter as the other long-term sustainable elements of the project also came into consideration. Furthermore some of the costs incurred by the project were contributed voluntarily by individuals and therefore the true cost of the project was in fact higher than suggested by the cash budget.

Other stakeholders recognised that it had been a costly route to take but that such an investment had been required in order to make such a step change. Furthermore stakeholders were keen to stress that the project had achieved much more than train a group of people as interpreters:

"There's now a NVQ route for people to take in Wales [to become qualified interpreters]… and there's a graduate programme which will provide a more academic route [for individuals]".

As we have seen, host organisations generally believed experience of the project had led to a significant change in terms of their awareness of deaf issues and of the need to provide BSL interpretation. According

to some stakeholders the project has also had an impact upon the work of the Welsh Assembly Government as it has bought about a greater understanding of the issues amongst policy makers. In terms of WAG becoming an exemplar organisation it is difficult to comment upon the changes taking place at departmental level although it is clear that guidance issued to front line staff includes making interpretation more readily available to employees and the general public. Some of the approaches and lessons learnt by the project partners in working towards shared outcomes have also been taken on board by the Assembly Government in their development of a Single Equality Scheme

In terms of mainstreaming good practice in public sector service delivery, the impact was believed to be primarily within the host organisations and assisting them to meet their public sector duties.

Finally, as far as increasing the integration and economic activity of deaf people is concerned we expect the impact of the project in this area to be experienced in the longer term. It has funded and facilitated a significant development to enable such a change to happen in the future.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

In our view the BSL Futures project appears to have been a very successful attempt to deliver a very challenging large scale programme of objectives within a very confined timescale. We believe that it has largely delivered upon its key objectives, albeit not all of them have been realised within the project timescales and those that have yet to be fully achieved still need to be championed by the partner organisations over the coming months if they are to be fulfilled.

The evaluation brief specifically requested the research to focus upon five key evaluation areas these are now discussed in turn.

5.1.1 The level of progress made against project objectives

We conclude that the project did provide apprentice interpreter opportunities to 30 people but not all of these interpreters received the full two years of training and support as was intended. Those recruited as late as the autumn of 2007 were only able to benefit from some nine months of support and in our view this was a disadvantage for those apprentices concerned. 27 of the 30 apprentices have already registered with the Register of Sign Language Interpreters and the remaining should have the relevant skills and qualifications to be able to do so in 2009. We recognise that the tight timescales within which the project had to be delivered was the main factor why not all apprentices were able to register as interpreters by the close of the project but feel that this should have been acknowledged and better planned for at the outset.

Feedback from stakeholders suggests that the training and support made available to the apprentices via the project was well thought through, appropriate, relevant and of good quality. It focused on

developing both the linguistic and interpretation abilities of the apprentices as well as other key aspects such as preparing them for self-employment. The support made available via the wide network of facilitators such as tutors, mentors and supervisors appears to have been appropriate and crucial to the progress made by apprentices. The only minor concern we would highlight related to the lack of clarity and confusion about the roles and remits of supervisors, tutors and mentors but this did not appear to have affected the quality of support made available to apprentices. We believe that the apprentices have been extremely fortunate in being given such a valuable opportunity to progress in an intensive and supportive environment.

We believe that the experiences gained from placements at host organisations were less useful for the apprentices in terms of their personal development. The concept of placements was sound and logical and this was reinforced by the host organisations themselves who viewed the contribution made by apprentices in a very positive light: from this perspective, it is to be hoped that the involvement of host organisations will play a role in boosting demand for BSL interpretation. This aspect of the project could, however, have been improved had the selection and briefing of host organisations been improved and undertaken in a more thorough manner. Whilst we appreciate the difficulties encountered by the project in securing placements and obtaining commitment from host organisations, the project perhaps might have adopted more stringent criteria in the selection processes, including whether and at what stage the apprentice would have the opportunity to provide communication support for employees or clients.

In principle the project did deliver upon its objective of providing at least four two-year training posts enabling BSL tutors to gain teaching practice and qualifications to teach the language at the highest levels, though some stakeholders believed that not all four were in fact now ready to undertake this role. We believe that the project could have

invested more resources and had a stronger focus upon this element in order to make a radical impact upon the BSL tutoring and teaching capacity across Wales. We feel that many of the suggestions made by stakeholders such as increasing the training opportunities for tutors, providing funding for more than four tutors or funding full time posts would have helped the project have a greater impact in this area.

The project did support and provide strategic guidance to five colleges in Wales to develop their BSL course provision and in all cases colleges were able to cite specific changes that had come about as a result of the funding. All colleges were able to provide additional BSL courses at a higher level but only three of the colleges were able to maintain these additional courses post project funding. In the other two cases who had both employed the same BSL tutor, this individual had left the colleges and could not be replaced. Despite this setback which was outside the control of the project, we feel that the development of higher level courses at the remaining colleges, with what were very modest sums of money to kick-start activities, represents a very positive strategic long term change in terms of infrastructural change as the provision is now mainstreamed within colleges who are committed to its delivery for the foreseeable future.

The original objective of developing a postgraduate course in BSL/Spoken Language interpreting was modified during the delivery stages and thus the project set about to develop an undergraduate level course in BSL. This objective has not been fully realised during the project's lifetime but the foundations have been laid and partners expressed their commitment to see it through post project funding. We agree with the view of a number of stakeholders that it was unfortunate that this was not progressed earlier in the lifetime of the project but appreciate that other elements of the project were given priority at the inception stages due to the project's time constraints.

We believe that the main way in which the project provided support to public service providers in Wales to develop the capacity to deliver services in BSL was via the placement of apprentices within host organisations. The feedback from host organisations suggested that this had been an effective way for them to explore their internal practices and policies, with several citing examples of procedural or policy changes as a result of the apprentice engagement. It is less clear however how the involvement of the apprentice led to an increase in the use of BSL across the organisations, particularly in terms of their interactions with the deaf community and it may be greater efforts are needed to raise awareness of *"Delivering Services in British Sign Language: Advice for Public Services"*.

The project did organise a series of events which included three Awareness Raising Events and two Celebration Conferences to promote best practice in service provision which were well attended and well received. Given that these events were focused on celebrating the project's successes we do not necessarily believe that they needed to be held earlier in the project but do concur with the view of some stakeholders that more local and ground-level promotion to engage and secure buy-in from the deaf community at the outset of the project would have been useful.

5.1.2 The effectiveness and value for money of the project

Given the circumstances under which it was established we believe that the BSL Futures project has been designed and managed effectively. In particular we feel that partners who did not have a history of working well together have joined forces and developed a strong working relationship that was focused on shared objectives and outcomes.

However we do feel its delivery could have been improved had the following issues been taken into consideration:

- A better balance sought within the project between generating supply and demand for BSL interpretation;

- A greater engagement of the deaf community as advisors to the project and a greater involvement of the deaf community as champions or advocates to public sector organisations.

Furthermore we believe that in terms of planning, the project could have been delivered more effectively had it been designed and established in two stages – with the infrastructural developments and the appointing and training of the support team (supervisors, mentors and tutors) taking place in the first instance and the recruitment and training of apprentices to follow. However we are mindful that the funding and timescale restrictions could not have allowed this to happen.

In reality, it is difficult to reach a clear judgement with regard to the value for money of the project, given the lack of any obvious comparators and the fact that we cannot yet be clear whether the enhanced capacity created by the project will be put to full use within Wales (which in turn depends on the response of the demand side). Certainly, the project has benefited from a very significant budget of £2.7 million but it is true that this large scale investment has not only trained 30 individual interpreters but also enabled – or at least made possible - a “step-change” to take place within the provision for BSL learning and BSL interpretation across Wales, as well as developing experience (for example, in assessing the aptitude of potential BSL interpreters and in developing the template for an academic route into interpreting) which may have much more long-term application in Wales and elsewhere. It does seem likely that the project could have been delivered more cheaply – for example, by providing lower-level training bursaries to apprentices as opposed to employing them (albeit at a modest wage) and incurring the additional on-costs of employment. It is possible, however, that this would have reduced the competition for the scheme and hence the quality of the apprentices as well as excluding some individuals who would have not been able to afford to participate in the project for personal financial reasons.

We are also aware of the argument that the investment has only benefited a narrow range of the deaf community i.e. those who use BSL. Arguably, however, for those who are profoundly deaf, this investment is essential if they are to have any chance of enjoying equality of access to public services and (potentially, at least) employment opportunities. Again, here, one critical issue will be the extent to which the deaf community is willing and confident enough to make use of qualified interpreters in future. Another issue will that of getting services providers and employers to pay for interpretation in line with the Guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government..

5.1.3 The contribution made to achieving Welsh Assembly Government statutory commitments

The BSL Futures project has enabled the Assembly Government to meet some of its statutory commitments as laid out under Equality and Discrimination Legislation. Of particular relevance is the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended but the main impact, and perhaps the driver for the project, has been the implementation of the public sector equality duties and thus the production of the Welsh Assembly Government's disability equality scheme.

The project also fitted well with the overall aim of the equalities policy and the Promoting Equalities Fund of mainstreaming, through its intention of inculcating a longer term culture change which would see public bodies taking on responsibility for providing BSL interpretation as a core responsibility of service provision, while providing a one-off boost to the supply of interpreters to make this practical. At the same time, it is less clear that the project fitted into the more recent concern of Equalities policy, highlighted in the draft Single Equalities Scheme as well as the formation of the ECHR with an increasing focus on cross strand rather than single strand approaches, although (as noted in Section 3.1) we presume that the intention is not to exclude

interventions which are attuned to meet the specific needs of severely disadvantaged groups..

5.1.4 Working within the cultural, institutional and policy contexts

From our policy review we believe that the BSL Futures project sat comfortably within the overall strategy and vision of the Welsh Assembly Government – both at the time when they were developed and at present. It was developed within the context of *"Wales: A Better Country"* which outlined a specific commitment by the Assembly Government to tackling discrimination on disability grounds as well as *"Making the Connections"* which reinforced the Assembly Government's commitment to equality and social justice. The BSL project continued to support the key objectives outlined within the One Wales Agreement around recognising the diversity of Wales and promoting equality as part of its programme of government.

Overall, the project appears to have been highly coherent in terms of the relationship between its various activities and its higher level aims and objectives. Although dealing with the very specific needs of a quite small part of the population the project fitted well with the overarching aim of the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to equality by ensuring that BSL users are not disadvantaged in their use of public services in Wales by the lack of access to independent professional interpretation.

The project appears to have been well attuned to the specific needs of BSL users in Wales, not least in terms of ensuring that a small number of interpreters able to interpret between BSL and Welsh have now been trained. At the same time, the issues of under-supply of fully qualified interpretation services are ones which are common to other parts of the UK, and it needs to be acknowledged that there is a risk of leakage of trained interpreters (some of whom were recruited from England) back across the border, if demand for the services of the former apprentices is insufficient.

5.1.5 Identification of lessons learnt from the project

Several lessons were learnt over the course of the project delivery and these included the realisation that greater focus and resources ought to have been allocated to developing the capacity of deaf tutors. From our perspective we feel it would be valuable in identifying some of the transferable lessons from the project, which included:

- When planning large scale projects such as BSL Futures, it is important to balance the advantages of accessing external funding with the downsides which may result from conditions and timescales imposed by the funding regime. In some circumstances it may be better to "bite the bullet" in terms of the Assembly Government itself fully funding a project, than to accept constraints from accessing funding which impede good planning and effective project delivery;
- It is essential to achieve full involvement, buy-in and commitment of the target community (in this case, the deaf community) as a vital component of delivering a successful project aimed at that community;
- In addressing any similar situations where (as with BSL Interpretation), historically, both supply and demand for a service which can improve the equal opportunities of a specific group have been constrained, careful attention needs to be given to obtaining a balance between, and a sequencing of, measures to improve supply and measures to boost demand;
- While the concept of using "host organisations" within the public sector to both assist in training individuals to fulfil specific functions relevant to equal opportunities and to raise awareness of the organisations of the issue is an interesting and valuable one, any future use of this model needs to ensure that both "host organisations" and trainees are clear from the start about the roles and responsibilities of both parties;
- A clear and visible commitment by the Assembly Government at senior level to funded projects (over and above simply providing

the funds) is important where partners with a sometimes uneasy relationship are being asked to work together.

5.2 Recommendations

In Section 5.1 above we have attempted to draw out some generic lessons from the BSL Futures project which may be relevant for future projects funded by the EHRD and we **recommend** that these are considered further by the Welsh Assembly Government in terms of taking forward the Promoting Equalities Fund or its successor.

We also, below, make a number of recommendations in respect of the BSL Futures project itself.

Recommendation 1

We recommend that the BSL Futures partners ensure that the remaining apprentices are able to register and become qualified interpreters so as to minimise any potential loss of expertise and capacity.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that the BSL Futures partners work with Interpretation Booking Services to monitor the trends in demand to ensure that apprentices are able to sustain an appropriate volume of work in Wales.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that the BSL Futures partners and/or the Welsh Assembly Government (possibly working through ASLI) undertake a survey in mid-2009 of the 30 former Apprentices to enable a clear view of the extent to which they have found employment or self-employment opportunities within Wales and should maintain regular contact with them in order to inform them of career opportunities and/or changes in terms of demand for BSL interpretation services.

Recommendation 4

We recommend that the BSL Futures partners continue to fulfil the objective of developing a BSL undergraduate course until such a course is piloted and rolled out across Welsh universities.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that the initial work underway to raise awareness and engage BSL users be continued and be given a high profile.

Recommendation 6

We recommend that the Assembly Government, working with the project partners and other relevant bodies such as the Welsh Local Government Association and the NHS Confederation considers ways of increasing awareness of its Guidance “Delivering Services in British Sign Language: Advice for Public Services”.

APPENDIX 1 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Evaluation Framework is based on a Programme Logic Model and provides a structure of input, process, output, outcome and impact measures. The aim of the Framework is simply to elucidate the *intended* processes (or activities), outputs, outcomes and impacts of the three projects, in order to ensure that as we take forward the evaluation we are looking for the *"right things"* and do not seek to judge the projects successes or failures on the basis of our own assumptions about what the projects were intended to involve in terms of activity or to achieve in terms of results. It is important to stress that the measures which we identify in the Evaluation Framework are ones which emerge from the key documentation related to the projects.

The proposed framework will provide the basis for the information to be sought from monitoring data and for the questions to be asked from the different stakeholders to be interviewed. It will also provide the basis for our assessment as to whether and to what extent the projects have been implemented and have delivered as originally intended. It is important to stress that during the evaluation we will seek to explore the reasons for departures and variations from the original objectives and targets rather than merely report on them, the extent to which such changes were deliberate (as a result of changing policy or circumstances) or arose because of problems with project design or delivery and the extent to which they were determined by issues beyond the control of those delivering the project. In this context, the framework also highlights our initial views of external factors which might have helped or hindered the achievement of projects' goals.

In the rest of the report we:

- discuss issues to be taken into account in developing the framework (Section 2);
- explain our proposed evaluation framework model (Section 3 and Figure 3.1);
- describe the measures contained within the framework in a little more detail, set out proposed sources of data and identify external factors to be considered (Section 3, Tables 3.1 – 3.5).

2.0 ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

In developing the framework, it has been necessary to take a number of issues into consideration and these are discussed below.

One Evaluation Framework or Several?

One key issue is that the three projects which are the subject of the evaluation are quite distinct and are dissimilar from one another, for example in terms of:

- Budget and scale, with BSL Futures having a budget of over £2.7 million, compared to Disability Equality in Action's funding of £150,000;
- Organisation and management structure, with BSL Futures delivered through a project partnership with different organisations taking responsibility for different elements (e.g. ASLI leading on mentoring activities, DAW leading on tutor training and RNID leading on the Apprenticeship Interpreters Programme), albeit managed by RNID, while Disablity Equality in Action and Croeso have been delivered more as integrated elements of the lead bodies activities;
- Focus, with BSL Futures being tightly focused on meeting the long-term needs of a specific group (users of BSL) and Disability Equality in Action being likewise fairly specific in terms of

promoting awareness and use of the Social Model of Disability at an organisational level within the public and voluntary sector, whereas Croeso has been much more broadly focussed in terms of promoting positive attitudes towards diversity in terms of race, religion and language.

Moreover, the evaluation will lead to three separate reports, one on each of the projects.

It might therefore be argued that we should construct a separate evaluation framework for each project.

However, all three projects have been funded from the Promoting Equalities Fund and are clearly intended to contribute to the Assembly Government's overall strategy with regard to the equalities agenda, while the projects are being evaluated in parallel by the same team. We have therefore attempted to construct a common evaluation framework for all three projects, recognising that some elements of the framework apply to all three projects (for example, the objective of mainstreaming good practice across the public sector, albeit in terms of the different foci of each project) while others are specific to each. We have done this through a system of "colour coding" as explained in Section 3.

Clarity of goals

A second issue is that, unlike some projects or programmes which we have evaluated, the activities and objectives for each of these three projects do not appear to be clearly spelled out in any one document. To some extent this relates to the relatively informal way in which the Promoting Equalities Fund has developed, with a lack of clear bidding or application processes, criteria and processes (as highlighted in the recent Review of the Fund). This does not, of course, mean that there has not been a clear understanding between WAG on the one hand and the project managers on the other about these issues, but rather

that this is not always explicit in the documentation. We have therefore had to draw out from a range of documents provided to us what seem to us to be the key measures. This makes it even more important in the case of this evaluation to be sure that our understanding is sound.

A related issue is that, inevitably given that this evaluation has been commissioned at the end of the projects' life, the aims and objectives, and, to an even greater extent, activities have been revisited and revised over time. For example, in the case of Disability Equality in Action, the Action Plan for the final year of the project, 2007/8 was extensively revised, including dropping a number of the original strategic objectives, in the light of experience to date, and broader contextual changes (such as the development of a Single Equalities Scheme). However, since a key element of the evaluation is to evaluate progress against the projects' aims and objectives, we believe it is essential to include the original objectives in our Framework, and subsequently in the evaluation reports to explain why aims and objectives have changed, even though we recognise that in pilot projects of this nature, it is inevitable that there may have been some "shifting of the goal posts" over the lifetime of the projects.

Definition of "measures"

Again, given the experimental nature of the projects, and that, at least in the case of Disability Equality in Action and Croeso, they are concerned largely with achieving attitudinal change (albeit that ultimately, such attitudinal change should be reflected also in altered behaviours), it is essential to recognise that some of the "measures" which we identify in the Framework are ones which cannot be quantified in a meaningful way. At the same time, the evaluation needs to explore whether there is qualitative or even anecdotal evidence of the projects achieving results which are core to the projects' existence but which cannot be assigned a specific quantitative value - such as individuals coming to see diversity as a positive rather than as a threat.

Inter-relationship with Core Activities of Lead Bodies and other Externalities

A key part of any Evaluation Framework is to consider externalities – in other words, factors which are extraneous to the interventions which are being evaluated but which can impinge fundamentally upon what they achieve. As we suggest within the Framework, this will be an issue also in this Evaluation – for example, the high profile of migration issues as a result of the 2004 enlargement of the European Union will inevitably have played a major role in the context of Croeso. However, a particular issue for this evaluation is the extent to which the projects can be distinguished from the other "core activity" of the lead body. This is particularly the case with Disability Equality in Action - where it seems clear that the postholder funded by the project represented Disability Wales in a range of activities which were arguably not directly related to the project itself – but is likely to be the case in at least some parts of the other projects also. It is important to recognise that it may be difficult, if not impossible, to disentangle the activities which directly resulted from the project funding, from those which might have occurred even in the absence of the projects – thus making it more difficult to reach conclusions as to the value for money and effectiveness of the projects.

3.0 THE FRAMEWORK MODEL

The proposed framework model is shown at Figure 3.1, whilst more detailed descriptions of the measures proposed are given at Tables 3.1 to 3.5. Tables 3.1 to 3.5 also set out what information sources we will use to clarify the extent to which the different measures have been achieved and the external factors which should be taken into account when considering individual measures. In essence, the framework is a Programme Logic based hierarchy of measures.

Impact measures are intended to be 'long-wave' indicators which show trends over the longer term. These measures will not be wholly or even largely attributable to activities supported by the projects but nevertheless represent the high-level goals of the Welsh Assembly Government which the projects are explicitly intended to contribute towards. Some of the external factors which should be taken into account in reviewing changes over time are set out in Table 3.1.

Outcome measures are intended to highlight the intermediate effects of activities and should relate logically to the achievement of longer term impacts. The outcome measures proposed are rather more easily attributed to activities supported under the projects, but again, account needs to be taken of external factors such as those identified in Table 3.2.

Output measures seek to capture the immediate results of interventions and are less likely than impact or outcome measures to be subject to the effects of external factors. However, here too – particularly given the overlap between core activities of the lead bodies and project-based activities highlighted in Section 2 above - externalities clearly may be a consideration, as is made clear in Table 3.3

The purpose of process measures and input measures (Tables 3.4 and 3.5) are to assess whether the projects have been delivered as intended. In essence, these elements of an evaluation framework are intended to be formative and to help highlight issues which may need to be addressed during the lifetime of the projects, so will be of less relevance to this final, summative evaluation.

The Framework is intended as a model to aid the understanding of causal relationships between the investment in specific interventions and the effects which those interventions have. Whilst it organises indicators into input, process, output, outcome and impact categorises, this categorisation cannot be regarded as something too absolute. The key to using the model effectively is to understand that its purpose is to articulate expected cause and effect relationships in a logical fashion and not to tie users up in knots about the categorisation of particular indicators. This is particularly true of Frameworks such as this one, which is designed to provide a common model for assessing several projects.

In view of the differences between the three projects, we have shown – both in the Figure and in the Tables – measures and elements of measures which are common to all three projects in black, while using a colour coding for measures which are unique to one of the projects viz:

- Red for BSL Futures
- Green for Disability Equality in Action
- Blue for Croeso

Annex 1

WAG Equalities Projects
Evaluation Framework

IMPACTS

- WAG meets statutory and policy requirements
- Integrated approach to equality
- Equality of access to services for diverse groups
- Increased integration and economic activity of deaf people

OUTCOMES

- Increased awareness/capacity to address equality issues
- Networks Developed
- M'streaming good practice in public sector service design & delivery
- Enhanced understanding of SMD across public & voluntary sectors
- Ongoing discussion of race equality issues at community level
- Acceptance and celebration of diversity/willingness to challenge prejudice
- WAG an exemplar
- More BSL interpreters available in Wales
- More BSL training places and clearer progression routes

OUTPUTS

- Guidance/good practice materials disseminated and in use
- Websites providing advice/good practice
- Individuals using advice/guidance on SMD
- DES/critical friends network in place
- Individuals involved in discussing issues
- Individual pupils benefiting from PLE activities
- Individuals complete learning
- Additional BSL courses run
- Use of interpretation in host organisations
- Individuals register as Interpreters

PROCESSES

- Steering groups oversee projects
- Desk research and guidance/good practice/publicity materials prepared
- Monitoring and progress reporting to WAG
- Advice provided on DES/Impact Assessment
- Awareness Raising/Training on SMD provided to WAG staff/other agencies
- PLE activities in schools
- Visits to exhibitions
- Community discussions held
- Partnership Facilitation
- AIs act as "communicators" for host organisations and others
- Materials for HE courses developed
- Interpreters trained as mentors
- Additional BSL provision supported
- AIs recruited, receive training, mentoring and placement

INPUTS

- PEF Funding
- Management inputs from managing orgs.
- Prior experience/complem-entary activities from partners
- Match funding in kind from FEIs
- Resource from placement providers
- ESF Funding

NB Text in black applies to all project
Text in red applies to BSL Futures only
Text in green applies to Disability Equality in Action only
Text in blue applies to Croeso only

Table 3.1: IMPACT MEASURES

MEASURE	DETAIL/DESCRIPTOR	DATA SOURCES	EXTERNALITY CONSIDERATIONS
WAG meets statutory and policy requirements on equality	o Extent to which WAG is perceived as meeting statutory requirements and policy goal of *"fostering cohesive plural and just communities where people regardless of physical ability, gender, sexual orientation, race, creed or language can feel valued"* (One Wales) o Direction of travel over recent years in respect of meeting these goals	o Desk research – e.g. Annual Reviews of Equalities Schemes o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of broader legislative and policy changes e.g. DDA/DES, GOWA 2006 o Impact of change of Welsh Assembly Government in 2007 o Mainstream activities of CEHR and other statutory and voluntary bodies in raising awareness and lobbying for change
Promotion of a more integrated approach to equality issues	o Extent to which projects have contributed to a more integrated approach to equality issues, recognising overlapping of different types of disadvantage	o Desk research – e.g. Annual Reviews of Equalities Schemes o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of broader legislative and policy changes e.g. DDA/DES, GOWA 2006 o Impact of change of Welsh Assembly Government in 2007 o Impact of changing views of equalities agenda e.g. through development of Single Equalities Scheme o Mainstream activities of CEHR and other statutory and voluntary bodies in raising awareness and lobbying for change

Equality of access to services for disadvantaged groups	o Perception of improvement or otherwise in access to public services for groups supported through the projects (e.g. Deaf people, disabled people)	o Desk research – e.g. Annual Reviews of Equalities Schemes o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of broader legislative and policy changes e.g. DDA/DES, GOWA 2006 o Impact of change of Welsh Assembly Government in 2007 o Mainstream activities of CEHR and other statutory and voluntary bodies in raising awareness and lobbying for change
Increased integration and economic activity on part of Deaf people	o Employment rate for Deaf people o Extent to which Interpreters are used to support Deaf people gain and retain iemployment	o Any repeat of RNID Deaf People Employment Study o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o A wide range of economic and general labour market conditions o Employers attitudes o Impact of legislative changes (e.g. DDA)

Table 3.2 – OUTCOME MEASURES

MEASURE	DETAIL/DESCRIPTOR	DATA SOURCES	EXTERNALITY CONSIDERATIONS
Increased awareness/capacity to address equality issues	o No. /proportion of partners and beneficiaries believing project has had positive impact on understanding and of relevant equality issues (e.g. awareness of Deaf community's needs and BSL; awareness of SMD) and capacity to respond to them (e.g. by promoting race equality) and providing practical examples to back this up	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of other policy and legislative changes e.g. DDA/DES and RES, and now Single Equalities Scheme. o Impact of national/international developments on attitudes e.g. migration, terrorism o Impact of other mainstream activities of CRE/CEHR and partners

Mainstreaming of good practice in public sector service design and delivery	o No./proportion of partners and beneficiaries believing project has led to mainstreaming of good practice in public sector service design and providing practical examples to back this up	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of other policy and legislative changes e.g. DDA/DES and RES, and now Single Equalities Scheme. o Impact of national/international developments on attitudes e.g. migration, terrorism o Impact of other mainstream activities of CRE/CEHR and partners
Networks developed	o Extent to which project partnerships have led to "more permanent relationships between organisations and individuals" o Added value of networks established	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of other mainstream activities of CRE/CEHR and partners o Significant institutional change as a result of creation of CEHR
More BSL interpreters available in Wales	o Progress towards target of Wales comparing favourably with median European level of interpreters o No./proportion of trainees intending to go on to work as interpreters/tutors in Wales	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Other legislative/policy changes e.g. DDA/DES
More BSL training places and clearer progression routes	o No./proportion of training courses likely to be sustained after the project o Progress on introducing graduate/postgraduate route in Swansea University o Views as to adequacy or otherwise of training infrastructure post-project	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of FE/HE funding regimes and changes
WAG an exemplar	o Progress to making WAG an exemplar – e.g. ensuring interpretation available at all offices at no cost	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Other legislative/policy changes e.g. DDA/DES and GOWA, 2006 o Changing priorities after formation of new Welsh Assembly Government

Enhanced understanding of SMD across public and voluntary sector	o No./proportion of partners and beneficiaries believing project has led to application of SMD in practice in organisations coming in contact with the project and providing practical examples to back this up o Extent to which impact assessment is employed prior to new policies being implemented	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of other activities by DW and other organisation o Other legislative changes e.g. DDA/DES and GOWA 2006
Ongoing discussion of race equality issues at community level	o Extent to which activities have led to sustained discussions of race equality and diversity issues	o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of national/international developments on attitudes e.g. migration, terrorism o Impact of other mainstream activities of CRE/CEHR and partners
Acceptance and celebration of diversity/willingness to challenge prejudice	o No./proportion of those engaged reporting changed attitudes as a result of participation o No./proportion of those engaged believing they have practical routes to get to know each other better across boundaries of background, faith and language o Willingness to challenge “divisive and violent ideas” o Evidence of reduction in community tensions between different ethnic groups	o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of national/international developments on attitudes e.g. migration, terrorism o Impact of other mainstream activities of CRE/CEHR and partners

Table 3.3 – OUTPUT MEASURES

MEASURE	DETAIL/DESCRIPTOR	DATA SOURCES	EXTERNALITY CONSIDERATIONS
Guidance/good practice materials disseminated and used	o No. of guidance/good practice materials available o Awareness and use made of guidance/good practice materials o Quality of guidance/good practice materials o Awareness and use of Policy Development Tool	o Project Management Data o Desk review of materials o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Risk of confusion with information materials produced by delivery organisations from other resources
Websites providing advice/good practice available and used	o Relevant websites "live" o No. of "hits" on websites o Awareness and use made of websites o SMD good practice database accessible o Good practice examples of school PLE on Croeso website	o Project Management Data o Desk review of materials o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o
Individuals complete learning and qualify	o No./ proportion of AIs completing learning and qualifying o No./proportion of Trainee Tutors completing learning and qualifying o No./proportion of other supported students completing training	o Project Management Data o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o
Individuals register as interpreters	o No. of new registrations with IRP	o Project Management Data o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Other factors impacting UK wide on registrations (e.g. marketing efforts/changes to procurement practice)
Use of BSL interpretation in host organisations	o Change in usage/availability of BSL interpretation in host organisations	o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Other factors impacting on service provision e.g. increased awareness, impact of DDA/DES.
Additional BSL Courses run	o No. of additional courses run as a result of the project o No. of additional learners on new courses o Graduate and postgraduate provision developed	o Project Management Data o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Impact of funding arrangements for FE and HE o Other factors impacting on increased demand for courses e.g. changing public awareness of BSL

Individuals/organisations using advice on SMD	o No./proportion of individuals/organisations assisted applying new knowledge of SMD	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o Other factors impacting on service provision e.g. impact of DDA/DES o Management/resource pressures and constraints within organisations receiving advice
DES/Critical friends network in place	o DES in place o Critical friends network in place	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews	o Changes in legislation changing requirements e.g. move to Single Equality Scheme
Individual pupils benefiting from PLE activities	o No. pupils completing PLE activities o Extent to which PLE activities led to meaningful reflection on diversity	o Project Monitoring Data o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o
Individuals involved in discussing diversity issues	o Extent to which participation in forums led to meaningful discussions on diversity	o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o

Table 3.4: PROCESS MEASURES

MEASURE	DETAIL/DESCRIPTOR	DATA SOURCES	EXTERNALITY CONSIDERATIONS
Steering Groups established and oversee projects	o No., range and appropriateness of partners engaged o No. of Steering Group meetings held o Participation in WLGA Equal Opportunities Network	o Project Management Data o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews	o
Desk research and guidance/good practice/publicity materials prepared	o No. of materials developed o "Delivering Services in BSL" published o No. briefings/case-studies on SMD developed o Policy development tool produced o Range of publicity materials developed	o Project Management Data o Strategy Interviews o Project staff interviews	o
Monitoring and progress reporting to WAG	o No. and accuracy of monitoring reports produced	o Project Management Data o Strategy Interviews o Project staff interviews	o

Apprentice Interpreters recruited and receive training, mentoring and placements	o No. of AIs recruited o No. of BSL Tutor Trainers recruited o No. of AIs provided with placements o No. of AIs receiving mentoring support o Training delivered complies with CiLT standards	o Project Management Data o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o
Apprentice Interpreters act as "Communicators"	o Use within host organisation of AIs o Use of coordination service to use AIs in other organisations	o Project management data o Project staff interviews o Beneficiary interviews	o
Interpreters recruited and trained as mentors (ASLI)	o No. of interpreters recruited and trained as mentors	o Project Management Data o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews	o
Additional BSL provision supported	o No. of grants made to courses/individuals other than AIs/Tutors	o Project Management Data o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews	o
Materials for HE courses developed	o Course materials developed for undergraduate courses o Course materials developed for postgraduate courses	o Project Management Data o Strategy Interviews o Project staff interviews	o
Awareness raising and training on SMD provided to WAG staff/other organisations	o No. of training sessions and briefings with WAG departments/other organisations o No. of individuals provided with advice	o Project Management monitoring Data o Project staff interviews	o

Advice provided to WAG on DES/Impact Assessment	o Critical friends network established o Input to DES o Input to WAG Equalities Impact Assessment	o Strategy interviews o Project staff interviews	o
Community Discussions held	o No. of Community Discussions held o No. of participants in community discussions o No. of other workshops/presentations facilitated	o Project Monitoring Data o Interviews with project staff	o
PLE Activities in Schools	o No. of primary/secondary schools hosting Peer Led Education activities o No. of primary/secondary school pupils participating in PLE activities o No. of schools marking UN Elimination of Racial Discrimination Day	o Project Monitoring Data o Interviews with project staff	o
Individuals visit Exhibitions	o No. of venues hosting Paul Robeson Exhibition o No. of visitors to Paul Robeson Exhibition (school visits/individual visits)	o Project montoring data o Interviews with project staff	o
Partnership Facilitation	o No. of new partnerships/working relationships (national/local) initiated through collaboration in Croeso	o Project staff interviews o Partner interviews	o

Table 3.5: INPUT MEASURES

MEASURE	DETAIL/DESCRIPTOR	DATA SOURCES	EXTERNALITY CONSIDERATIONS
PEF Funding	o Total funding provided by the Welsh Assembly Government to carry out the projects	o Project management data	o
Management inputs from managing organisations	o Non funded management resource provided by o RNID o Disability Wales o CRE/CEHR	o Strategy interviews o Interviews with project staff	o

Prior experience/ complementary activities from project partners	o Time committed by steering group members o Experience of key partners (ASLI, DAW, RNID) including Communities First interpretation pilot o Existing provision of BSL training in Barry and Llandrillo College o Resources of partners undertaking related projects with own core funding	o Strategy interviews o Interviews with project staff o Interviews with partners	o
ESF funding	o Total funding provided by ESF Objective 1	o Project management data	o
Match funding in kind from FEIs	o Match funding in kind provided by partner Colleges	o Project Management data o Interviews with project staff o Interviews with partners	o
Resources from Placement providers	o Provision of office space and facilities to AI	o Interviews with project staff o Interviews with partners	o

APPENDIX 2 CONSULTEE LIST

Partners	
Katherine Phipps	RNID
Adrienne Jones	RNID
Helen Arber	RNID
Lynne Delfosse	RNID
Jim Edwards	CADCP (former Director of RNID for Wales)
Paul Parsons	formerly RNID and WAG secondee
Richard Jones	Deaf Action Wales / British Deaf Association
Heulwen Blackmore	Welsh Assembly Government
Stephen Chamberlain	Welsh Assembly Government
Kate Bennett	Equality and Human Rights Commission Wales
Gareth Foulkes	Equality and Human Rights Commission Wales

Mentors / Supervisors / Tutors	
Linda Bruce	BSL Futures (Supervisors Manager)
Sarah Smith	Mentor and Advanced Tutor
Tracey Pycroft	Supervisor, Mentor and member of the ASLI Mentor Working Group
Hannah Wilson	Mentor, Supervisor and member of the ASLI Mentor Working Group
Rachel Young	Mentor, Supervisor and member of the ASLI Mentor Working Group
Clive Ellis	Mentor and Supervisor
Jackie Griffiths	Mentor and member of the ASLI Mentor Working Group
Julie Roberts	Supervisor
Julie Watkins	Mentor, Supervisor and member of the ASLI Mentor Working Group
Anita Campbell	Mentor, Supervisor and member of the ASLI Mentor Working Group
Barbara Honeyford	Supervisor
Deborah Cassey	Advanced Tutor
Helen Faulkes	Advanced Tutor
Jeff Bretton Wilson	Advanced Tutor

Colleges	
Karen Every-Clayton	Barry College
Theresa Jones	Coleg Ceredigion College
Sheila Jones & Paula Jones	Llandrillo College
Nick Brazil	Swansea College
Sally Elliot	Pembrokeshire College

Host Organisations	
Barrie Ledbury	Cwm Taf NHS Trust
Heather Jones	Gwent Police
Kim Tester	Welsh Assembly Government
Linda Smith	Bridgend County Council
Susan Dalloe	Denbighshire County Council
Karen Jones	Disability Wales

Apprentices
16 were interviewed via two focus groups