

PROJECT LAUNCHED TO IMPROVE DIVERSITY OF BOARDS IN WALES

Five housing associations from across the Cardiff and surrounding areas have joined together to create a programme aimed at Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals, that will support them to be Board ready. The project partnership will address the lack of ethnic diversity on Boards in and outside the housing sector.

Representatives from Taff, CCHA, Linc Cymru, Cadwyn and Hafod housing associations, recognised that their Boards were not diverse enough, and that when they took positive action to address the issue, the interest was overwhelming.

Hayley Selway, Chief Executive of CCHA said: “As an association with 30% ethnically diverse tenants, we recognised that our Board needed to reflect the community it served. We tasked Acorn Executive Search to attract potential Board members with the requisite skills, whilst focusing on taking positive action to target experienced Black and Asian individuals.

“The results were staggering with over 80% of candidates brought forward for interview meeting all the skills and knowledge requirements, whilst also being from an ethnically diverse background. The five best candidates appointed exceeded the person specification requirements and were all from ethnically diverse backgrounds.”

Observations from the recruitment process identified two things; firstly, that people underrepresented in terms of their ethnicity do want to be part of Board structures and some of the candidates had little or no Board experience and would need a little support to be Board ready.

The Pathway to Board project is a continuous professional development opportunity designed to better equip individuals from minority ethnic communities who want to contribute to the leadership of an organisation, particularly the housing sector. The aim of the project is to provide both practical and theoretical perspective through training in the classroom and observation of board meetings. It will provide individuals with the opportunity to influence and change how organisations make decisions that affect our Welsh communities and will hopefully be part of a movement to change the face of leadership across Wales.

The project, which is being funded by the founding partners, is also being supported by partner organisations including Tai Pawb and Race Council Cymru. Organisations including Mazars, Centrus, Acorn, Darwin Gray, Goodson Thomas, and Welsh Refugee Council, have also committed their time and expertise to making the project a success.

Pathway to Board Project Manager, Abdi Segulle said: “I’m looking forward to welcoming the first cohort and working with them to secure Board positions. Their contribution will influence the way decisions are made in the Board room across the housing sector and beyond.”

If you are an individual who would like to take part in this project, or a representative of an organisation that would like to be involved, please get in touch with the Project Leader, Abdi Segulle on 07976 983 931 or by emailing abdis@taffhousing.co.uk

ENDS

Notes to the editors:

For more information on this project, please get in touch with Pathway to Board Project Manager, Abdi Segulle. Contact abdis@taffhousing.co.uk

More information on the project will be published on social media accounts of the housing associations in the coming days. There will also be a dedicated space on Taff Housing Association's website www.taffhousing.co.uk