EDI Health check for boards

Boards play a crucial role in setting and driving organisational approach to equality, diversity and inclusion through their leadership and strategy role and through focus on performance and assurance.

Tai Pawb's work often involves supporting, advising and training boards and governance professionals on Equality Diversity and Inclusion issues. Below is a series of questions which boards might find helpful in considering their approach to EDI issues. These can serve as the basis for discussion at board or committee meetings or governance EDI reviews.

Not sure of the difference between equality, diversity and inclusion? You may find this graph helpful.

If you would like to explore this area further, our tailored Equality, Diversity and Inclusion course for boards can provide your board with a platform and tools to start the conversation.

Equality

- How much do we know about EDI issues and how they translate to housing and the experiences of our tenants and staff?
- To what extent are we aware of the legal and regulatory obligations in the context of EDI?
- How proactive is our organisation in advancing and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into our culture, practices and policies and to what extent do we assure ourselves of this?
- Do we have a baseline for organisational strategy and performance on EDI – to what extent have we assessed where the organisation is now and where it wants to be? (do we have specific plans and targets for what we want to achieve?)
- To what extent do the reports submitted to board consider EDI impacts of our plans or EDI aspects of our performance? To what extent do we ask the right questions to assure ourselves of fair impact of our decisions?

Diversity

- What is the value we place on diversity of our board members and wider diversity in leadership and teams? How is that reflected in our recruitment policies and practices?
- To what extent does our board reflect the diversity of our communities?
- Our board is skills based. How is diversity considered when recruiting for specific board skills?
- To what extent do we value EDI expertise and/or experience as a skill? How do they feature in our board role descriptions/profiles?
- To what extent do we invest time and/or resources into targeted recruitment practices? Is our targetting limited to sending adverts to minority community organisations?
- Do we make the best use of succession planning to widen and diversify our networks or upskill potential board members? Can we explore board traineeship positions for potential board members who are not quite board ready?

- To what extent do we explore and build relationships with diverse professional networks or community organisations to ensure widest possible reach?

Inclusion and culture

- How do we model inclusive EDI behaviours in our board meetings and communications? To what extent do we demonstrate that EDI issues are important?
- To what extent do we know what it feels like for diverse people to work for our organisation? Do all people feel like they belong and have influence? To what extent does the board set, monitor and assure itself of the inclusivity of our organisational culture?
- How aware are we of our implicit bias and how it can affect discussions, behaviours and views?
- Is EDI seen as area worth discussing at our board meetings? How much attention is it given and how does this compare to other areas? How comfortable are we to raise questions related to EDI?
- Are we comfortable talking about racism, mental health, sexual orientation, gender identity and other EDI issues or does it generate discomfort? If so – how do we address it in ourselves and others? How is this reflected in wider organisational culture?
- Are we comfortable to constructively challenge behaviours or practices that are or could be discriminatory or offensive? Do we have the right tools to do it?
- Are we a culturally competent organisation?
- How accessible are the board meetings and membership to different groups?