

# HIE Board Gender Representation Report April 2021

Reporting Period 29 May 2020 to 30 April 2021



Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

## Introduction

The Gender Representation on Public Boards (2018) Act is intended to help address the historic and persistent under representation of women in public life and requires public bodies to report on meeting the requirements of the Act by the 30 April 2021.

The Act and the associated guidance and regulations which came into force on 29th May 2020 is welcomed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).

Under the Act public authorities are required to publish a report on the carrying out of their functions under Sections 5 and 6 of the Act. The Act also sets a gender representation objective for Boards to have 50% of non-executive members who are women by 31 December 2022.

### **Section 5 - Reporting on the steps taken to encourage applications by women**

No appointments were made to the HIE Board during the reporting period 29 May 2020 to 30 April 2021, so no steps were taken in relation to Section 5.

HIE will be progressing recruitment for new Board Members this year through the Public Appointments process. HIE will work proactively with Scottish Government to encourage applications from women and to ensure we have a diverse Board.

### **Section 6 - Reporting on other steps as considered appropriate with a view to achieving the gender representation objective by 31 December 2022.**

In this section "other steps" means any steps in addition to those taken to encourage applications by women.

The HIE Board is comprised of 12 members, 11 non-executive members and 1 executive member (the HIE Chief Executive who is female). For the purposes of the Act and this report, the numbers relate to non-executive members only.

- As at 29 May 2020, the Board had 6 male and 4 female members with 1 vacancy.
- As at 30 April 2021 following the resignation of 1 female Board member in March 2021, the Board is made up of 6 male and 3 female members with 2 vacancies.

HIE will be initiating recruitment for new Board members this year and will look to achieve balanced diversity for our Board.

With previous Board member recruitment, HIE used Changing the Chemistry and tried different approaches to get a wider pool of candidates. Using lessons learned from this, the following action will be taken during the next round of recruitment:

- Design and agree a recruitment strategy with Scottish Government, recognising that potential barriers to achieving diversity could exist at any point in the recruitment process.
- Create a skills matrix to reflect the desired composition of the Board as a whole.

- Challenge traditional advertising channels, along with the language and visual design of adverts to highlight and eradicate any unconscious bias.
- Feature our wish to attract a more diverse pool of applicants in news releases to promote the vacancies and use various social media channels to extend the reach of our recruitment advertising.
- Work with networking organisations, particularly Changing the Chemistry and Women on Board, who can provide advice and access to their members.
- Organise information events to promote Board diversity and encourage a broader range of applications. These events can be done in conjunction with Changing the Chemistry and Women on Board as well as Scottish Government and partner agencies.
- Look to recruit a shadow board member to help grow the pool of talent who might wish to apply for a Board member position at future recruitment rounds.

HIE Executive Support Team  
April 2021

