

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Objectives

The Money and Pensions Service



Money &
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Contents

Foreword: Why equality, diversity, and inclusion matter to the Money and Pensions Service 3

Our ambition..... 4

Priority areas and objectives..... 5

Foreword: Why equality, diversity, and inclusion matter to the Money and Pensions Service

Throughout 2020, we have embarked on a journey to develop strategic priorities and objectives for equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I), underpinned by our values: caring, connecting and transforming. Our strategic objectives set out our ambition and provide a roadmap for the next four years. Focusing our efforts on building an organisation that is diverse, fair and inclusive.

The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) must represent the diversity of our customers. Seeking a diverse range of views and experiences will enable us to understand the range of disproportionate impacts and associated needs, which in turn will help us to achieve our vision of everyone making the most of their money and pensions.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought the importance of financial wellbeing to the forefront. We want to understand and use findings about material causes of financial inequalities, barriers and challenges that specific groups have to achieving financial wellbeing. This will help us to shape our research, policy, service delivery and how we work with partners to improve the financial wellbeing for millions of people in the UK.

We have witnessed significant moments in 2020 that have reinforced the importance of ED&I. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the disproportionate impact that Black and Asian people face, whilst the Black Lives Matter movement has amplified systemic and structural inequalities.

The colleague and stakeholder engagement combined with the data collection and analysis in 2020, have informed our objectives that lay the foundations for sustainable progress in 2021. We encourage you to read our strategic objectives to understand our future direction, and how we can all play a role in achieving our ambition.

Thank you.



Hector Sants
Chairman



Caroline Siarkiewicz
Chief Executive Officer

Our ambition

Our ambition is so much greater than compliance with our legal framework. We want MaPS to be fully inclusive, attracting and retaining diverse talent where colleagues thrive and deliver their best performance. We need to reflect our customers and communities to truly understand their needs.

Of course, we can only achieve our ambition if we establish a firm foundation of compliance, knowledge and evidence-based actions. This includes complying with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that we do not discriminate against anyone because of their protected characteristics.¹ In addition to the nine protected characteristics, we collect and monitor an indicator of socioeconomic background and care responsibilities.

As an arm's length body providing public services, we need to respond to the Public Sector Equality Duty and take steps to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We have carried out extensive field work in 2020, but we know that this is just the start. There is more to do if we are to achieve our ambition. We need good quality data, with high levels of disclosure so that we can make evidenced based decisions. Following the implementation of our self-service HR system we launched a campaign to collect colleague diversity data, followed by an analysis to understand the make-up of our workforce. We need to monitor our recruitment process and employee lifecycle to ensure that colleagues do not have an unequal experience. We know that there are some colleagues who feel a sense of belonging, but we want this to be true for everyone.

The Board and Executive Leadership Team have a shared responsibility for ensuring that our ambition becomes a reality. Leaders' behaviours shape the culture of an organisation. We want our leaders to actively champion ED&I in a consistent and meaningful way. Our inclusive leadership development programme will enable leaders to deliver our ED&I strategy with confidence.

¹ Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Priority areas and objectives

Our priority areas and objectives have been developed through engagement with colleagues and stakeholders, combined with data analysis and benchmarking. We have sought views and suggestions through interviews with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), Board members and colleagues who have a responsibility for ED&I. We ran a workshop with our Colleague Consultative Group (CCG) and all colleagues across MaPS were invited to a series of six focus groups. This included an open group for all and affinity groups for gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability. We also collated views from colleague surveys and disaggregated these results by protected characteristics.

The data analysis enabled us to understand our workforce profile and identify areas of under-representation. However, this is based on the known data and our priority now is to increase disclosure. Benchmarking showed how well we reflect the working population in the UK, along with how we compare with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Civil Service. This work enabled us to identify our strengths and areas for improvement.

Diversity at MaPS

We have a balanced gender profile at all levels of the organisation. Our known data indicates that there is social mobility at leadership level, and we have representation of lesbian, gay and bi-sexual colleagues at all levels. However, it has been challenging to find robust benchmarks for some areas and it is clear from our data that we need to focus on improving disclosure. We have good ethnic diversity below leadership level when compared with the UK working population, but this is not represented at the most senior levels of MaPS. We remain focused on all protected characteristics, but our insights have enabled us to identify ethnicity, disability and Neurodiversity, and early careers as priority areas. Further details are contained in the Equality Information Report.

Our objectives

We value the diversity that we have at MaPS and see this as key to achieving our mission. Our objectives will enable us to address specific priority areas, in conjunction with improving and celebrating all areas of ED&I and meeting the needs of our customers.

- Build a comprehensive evidence base through collecting and analysing colleague diversity data, to inform actions and report progress.
- Address areas of under-representation including ethnicity at leadership level, disability & neurodiversity at all levels and explore opportunities to support early careers.
- Create a culture where all colleagues feel included and engaged.
- Design and deliver high quality services to our customers that take full account of their current and potential vulnerability and their protected characteristics.

Action Plan

We have developed a plan with practical actions for each of our people objectives that we believe will have the most impact, alongside measures and success indicators. We will review progress against objectives and report to the People and Remuneration Committee every six months and the Board annually. We will share progress with our CCG every six months.

Summary

Having brought together three organisations into one in 2019, followed by significant fieldwork in 2020 we are in a strong position to achieve our ambition and objectives. This foundation is the starting point for us to continue to develop ED&I at MaPS. The diversity of our people is a strength that we embrace and wish to build upon. Our ambition and strategic objectives will enable our people to deliver their best performance, which ultimately leads to better outcomes for our both our people and our customers.