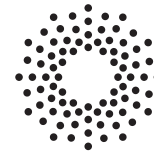Prifysgol
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Unpacking Diversity:

Barriers and incentives to standing for election to the National Assembly for Wales

A Report Commissioned by the
Remuneration Board of the National Assembly for Wales

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ABOUT US

The Wales Governance Centre is a research centre that forms part of Cardiff University's School of Law and Politics undertaking innovative research into all aspects of the law, politics, government and political economy of Wales, as well the wider UK and European contexts of territorial governance. A key objective of the Centre is to facilitate and encourage informed public debate of key developments in Welsh governance not only through its research, but also through events and postgraduate teaching.

London Metropolitan University aims at transforming lives through excellent education. The School of Social Professions holds expertise in areas of devolution and good governance.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was commissioned by the Remuneration Board of the National Assembly for Wales to look at barriers and incentives for people who have been deterred from standing to the National Assembly and to address the question of whether 'a diverse range of persons with the appropriate skills and interest are in practice deterred from standing for election to the National Assembly by any aspect of the remuneration package (salary, pension, child care, and office and staffing allowances) and what may provide the incentives to do so'.

The research was conducted in two stages; through a review of evidence that explored academic and practical aspects of diversity and political recruitment, and a field study that used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods to discover the lived experiences and perceptions of prospective candidates. This was done through survey, focus groups, one-to-one interviews, and an online engagement platform.

The review of evidence drew on the supply and demand model of political recruitment and focused on identifying 1) explanations for lack of diversity and the barriers faced by individuals to accede to political office, and 2) solutions to improving diversity in legislatures, including incentives for people to stand. This allowed the consideration of individual, structural, political, institutional, and cultural factors that may affect political recruitment. The review also contained details of remuneration arrangements in legislatures of comparable sizes across the world.

The field study explored the experiences and perceptions of prospective candidates during their journey from eligibility and aspiration for being a candidate, standing as a candidate, to being an elected Assembly Member. This allowed us to identify different barriers, or perceived barriers, at different stages, and possible incentives to overcome those.

The report sets out different forms of socialisation into politics from three different groups of people; those who are party politically active, local councillors, and newcomers to formal politics. Barriers for moving from being eligible to an aspirant candidate partly depended on the pathway, with those on a party-political pathway at a distinct advantage in terms of support, information, and knowledge of processes.

The research, however, identifies structural, institutional, individual, political, and cultural barriers for candidates in all three pathways. It highlights structural barriers in terms of the cost, time, and accessibility to standing, which are particular deterrents for underrepresented groups. Cultural, structural, and political factors, in terms of candidate selection and the electoral system and process were also seen as barriers to diverse representation. Wider contemporary political and cultural factors including a climate of toxicity in politics and the lack of understanding of the value of diversity, were raised as societal barriers.

We considered aspects of the job itself, such as access to information about the role, salary and other benefits, travel and accommodation arrangements, working arrangements, childcare, work-life balance, and job security. We found participants resonate well with features of the *21st century workplace* - remote and flexible working and use of technology - to tackle institutional and individual barriers such as travel and being away from family.

The report makes recommendations that are directly relevant to the Board and its strategic objectives. It also makes broader recommendations where the Board can influence and inform others, or bring diversity matters on the agenda. The report suggests a theory of change through which the Board can achieve its strategic objectives by focusing on: improving information for potential candidates; improving the engagement strategy; providing for flexible working arrangements; and, potential of job share arrangements.

The report also makes recommendations where the Board can participate in a broader conversation on: a non-politically affiliated 'one-stop shop' advice website for candidates; exploring diversity quotas and monitoring.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Within the context of our findings, and the further context of the Board's own strategic objectives, we set out our recommendations:

To engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we understand their needs and views [SO1] and Produce a Determination for the Sixth Assembly to inform all potential candidates one year before the Welsh general election [SO3]

R1: The Board should review / design a clear public engagement and outreach strategy.

R2: As part of the strategy, the Board should review its provision of information and use of external communication channels. This would entail a redesign of the Remuneration Board website and use of other platforms in line with principles of:

    A. **Interactivity:** moving away from static to more dynamic content. For instance the Board could create short videos about the range of expenses AMs can claim, and the rules for claiming expenses, but also about the support AMs receive in their roles.

    B. **Accessibility:** create and publish easy read versions for all major reports and disseminate via multiple channels and formats;

    C. **Two-way communication:** move away from the 'push' of information to establishing dialogue with stakeholders i.e. interactive webinars.

R3: As part of the new strategy the Board should consider liaising with relevant internal stakeholders (i.e. the Assembly Education Services) to review what type of content and material they can feed into Assembly's outreach, education and engagement initiatives.

R4: As part of the new strategy the Board should liaise with relevant internal stakeholders (i.e. the Assembly Commission) to review how to improve the visibility of the National Assembly and the Remuneration Board across Wales: holding more meetings across Wales; participate in an 'Open Senedd Week', or candidate 'roadshows', to bring information about standing as an AM into communities.

R5: As part of the strategy, the Board should consider regular engagement with external stakeholders (i.e. political parties, campaign groups, non political leadership and mentoring programmes, prospective candidates not affiliated to political parties). The Board should provide early information and guidance regarding the determination and support available.

R6: The Board should consider ways it could provide shadowing opportunities or open some of its meetings to the public to better publicise its own work.

In order to ensure that the support for AMs is fit for purpose [SO2] and to ensure that the system of financial support for Members should represent value for money for the taxpayer and that the Board operates effectively [SO4], the Board should:

R7: Consider aligning its provisions on childcare support (expenses and facilities) with:

    A. the sitting of the Assembly, and

    B. the schedule of AMs to include commuting time (early morning and late evening)

R8: The Board should raise with the Assembly Commission for consideration:

    A. Reviewing the appropriateness of provisions around flexible working (including remote voting) and explore other ways in which technology could facilitate the work of Assembly Members.

    B. The merits of job shares, or second jobs, for Assembly Members.

R9: Consider reviewing the 'exceptional expenses' rules, clarify in what situations these apply, and better publicise the more specific support offered (i.e. specific support available for people with a disability).

R10: The Board should consider whether it is possible to give allowances to AMs to support shadowing opportunities and work experiences for people from their constituencies and regions. For example, an allowance to support constituents to travel to the National Assembly for a shadowing opportunity could be provided for AMs through their remuneration package. The Board should consider what type of rules should be in place to support this.

R11: The Board should explore with organisations like the Electoral Commission, the National Assembly, and the Welsh Government, how an Access to Politics fund could be established for candidates. Such a fund should be used to support disabled candidates and candidates from other underrepresented groups.

In addition, there are a series of areas where a much broader conversation is necessary. We recognise that the Board may not have immediate scope to act on these, but it is important to have this conversation with the Board's stakeholders. Further research and consultation is required in order to address some of the critical barriers to diversity addressed in this report:

- A non-politically affiliated 'one stop shop' advice website for candidates would address some of the information deficit, limitations and barriers encountered by some candidates along the journey from being interested in politics to actually standing for elections. This should contain Remuneration Board approved content on the remuneration package, the job itself, additional support offered to AMs and rules for claiming expenses.

- The Board should contribute to the debate, with other relevant actors (EHRC, Electoral Commission, political parties etc), on the implementation of diversity quotas and diversity monitoring and reporting at all stages in the candidates' journey.

- The extent to which the nature of electoral campaigning is limiting diversity requires further research. The Electoral Commission and the Electoral Reform Society are perhaps the most relevant actors, together with the Assembly Commission, in starting a conversation along these lines.

- Tackling issues of abuse and harassment of candidates and elected politicians would require a cross party dialogue and consultation involving political parties, the Standards Commissioner, and other civil society organisations and public bodies.

PART 1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1. Our terms of reference

The Remuneration Board [the Board] of the National Assembly for Wales [National Assembly] commissioned the Wales Governance Centre to conduct academic research addressing the question of *"whether a diverse range of persons with the appropriate skills and interest" is in practice deterred from standing for election to the National Assembly by any aspect of the remuneration package (salary, pension, child care and office and staffing allowances) and what may provide the incentives to do so.*

More specifically, the Board was interested in expanding its understanding of incentives and barriers, within its remit, facing those who have been deterred from standing for the Assembly. The target group broadly identified by the Board included, but was not limited to,

- those who are active in civic society
- those who are generally politically interested and/ or
- any individuals who have left after only one term in the Assembly.

The Board outlined clearly that it was interested both in a rigorous review of the existing evidence and in a field study investigating the current factors that encourage or deter individuals from standing for the National Assembly, including:

- the aspects of the job that make it attractive;
- the aspects of the job that deter some people or groups of people from standing;
- if the current remuneration package is considered to be a deterrent to standing and how it should be changed to encourage people to stand;
- to what extent, if any, the work/life balance and job security of an Assembly Member is a factor and what measures could be taken to make the role more appealing.

Our initial proposal sought to closely and tightly address these aspects and our proposed methodology focused initially almost exclusively on the Board's remit and how aspects within its remit might prevent or deter people from standing.

However, it became clear that the Board was interested in understanding the barriers and incentives to standing more widely, emphasising that it wanted us to focus on engaging with a wider group of people so that we can capture the views of a wider range of occupational and socio-economic backgrounds. The Board hoped to capture the views of those that have been specifically deterred or feel that there are barriers to their participation in the election process. This, naturally, expands the research outside the remit of the Board to an extent whilst allowing for a more holistic understanding.

1.2. Background

This research is set against recent Welsh constitutional developments, namely provisions in the Wales Act 2017, particularly in respect to altering the size of the Assembly and the electoral system.[1] In February 2017, the Presiding Officer of the National Assembly appointed an *Expert Panel on Assembly Electoral Reform* to look at the size, electoral arrangements and the electoral franchise for the National Assembly elections. This work, conducted concomitantly with our research to an extent, is extremely relevant, as it addresses the nature, structure and operation of the Assembly post-2021. The Expert Panel reported in December 2017 recommending 1) increasing the size of the Assembly, 2) changing the electoral system to proportional representation, 3) introduction of gender quotas and 4) lowering the voting age to 16 - all relevant in terms of changing electoral opportunity from a diversity perspective.[2]

The National Assembly has generally had an excellent record on gender representation (the percentage of women AMs has never dropped under 40%), being one of the first legislative assemblies in the world to reach 50-50 in 2003. Yet, other dimensions of diversity are still far behind the overall makeup of Welsh society, in particular in terms of disability, ethnicity and socio-economic background, to name just a few. To illustrate this, it was only in 2007 that the first BME Assembly Member was elected, whilst at present there are just three known ethnic minority members. In the 2016 elections, slightly more than a third of the Assembly Members elected were new to the Assembly, yet, in terms of professional backgrounds, around eight had already worked in politics in some capacity (a former MP, former AM, former MEP, former assistant to elected politician, former political researcher etc), while most others came either from what we would call 'politics facilitating professions' (law, journalism, education) or from traditional pathways into politics in Wales - trade unions, local government and voluntary sector;[3] thus, hardly improving the diversity in the Assembly in terms of socio-professional composition.

Our research also follows up on previous research examining barriers and incentives to entering the National Assembly for Wales.[4] The 2014 - *Evaluating Barriers to Entering the Assembly: What Prevents us from Standing?* - report focused very specifically on barriers encountered by existing AMs and made a series of recommendations concerning support for members around accommodation, resettlements, childcare and clarity of the expenses procedures.

The additional background for this research is the climate of chronic disengagement, dissatisfaction with and mistrust in politics in general. The latest Audit of Political Engagement conducted by the Hansard Society in 2017 puts Wales at the bottom in terms of knowledge of politics (39%) and below the national average in terms of satisfaction with the political system (on 17% - joint with Scotland) and interest in politics (47%)[5]. The electoral turnout in Assembly elections has never passed the 50% mark and is significantly lower than UK general elections

1 Wales Act 2017, Part 1, Section 9 (2).
2 EPAER (2017) A parliament that Works for Wales, URL: https://goo.gl/zDdkNb
3 BBC Wales (2016). Who are the new AMs? URL: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-36312542
4 Bangor University (2014) *Evaluating Barriers to Entering the Assembly: What Prevents us from Standing?*
5 Hansard Society (2017) Audit of Political Engagement 14, URL https://goo.gl/rewoYL

(45% in 2016 Assembly Elections compared to 66% in the UK general elections in 2015 and 68.6% in the 2017).

It is therefore fitting and timely to engage in this conversation about enhancing diversity in the National Assembly and understanding what prevents people from a wider range of backgrounds to stand in the Assembly Election and what would make the job of an Assembly Member more attractive.

1.3. Our approach and methodology

Our approach aimed to closely address the terms of reference set by the Board, whilst widening engagement and expanding our understanding more widely regarding barriers and incentives to diversity in standing to election for the National Assembly. In designing our research we have sought to abide to the following principles to ensure the terms of reference are met and that we provide the Board with timely and relevant analysis:

- *Widening engagement and effective targeting* - whilst our research design sought to widen participation by using a careful sequencing of methods and distribution channels to reach out to individuals, we also made sure that we targeted the groups the Board was interested in.

- *Holistic approach* - acknowledging the complex nature and links between political recruitment and diversity required an exploration of the 'potential' candidate's experience of the full journey into politics (becoming politically active, nomination, standing, being an Assembly Member and ceasing to be an Assembly Member);

- *Focused analysis* - we aimed to provide useful and meaningful recommendations where the Board can either act, influence, inform or bring up onto the agenda.

We recognised very early in the process that 1) the target group of the research would be hard to reach through traditional methods, and that 2) expanding our understanding of barriers and incentive to diversity would take us on a territory that is not directly within the remit of the Remuneration Board, but where the Board still has a role to inform, influence or brings matters on the agenda. This remains consistent with the Board's guiding principles and strategic objectives.[6]

- To engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we understand their needs and views;

- To ensure that the Determination for the Fifth Assembly remains fit for purpose;

- Produce a Determination for the Sixth Assembly to inform all potential candidates one year before the Welsh general election which reflects the Assembly's evolving constitutional responsibilities and their wider Welsh context; and,

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6 Remuneration Board of the National Assembly for Wales, *The Remuneration Board's Strategy for 2016-2021* (January 2017) [2.1].

- Ensure that the system of financial support for Members should represent value for money for the tax payer and that the Board operates effectively.

Our research design, in line with the terms of reference set, consisted of 1) a rigorous review of evidence that explored both academic and practical aspects of diversity and political recruitment and 2) a field study that used a rigorous mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods to elicit the views and explore the lived experiences as well as the perceptions of people who have thought about standing in the elections to the National Assembly but for some reason did not.

1.3.1. The review of evidence

We designed the review of evidence as a focused literature review that first explored the links between diversity and political recruitment and then looked at what institutional measures exist in Wales, the UK and beyond to enhance diversity within political recruitment and to increase the attractiveness of the job.

We drew on important theoretical frameworks on *demand and supply in political recruitment*[7] to understand the role of personal circumstance, motivation, aspiration of potential candidates to elected office, as well as the role of the 'gatekeepers' - political parties - as well as of other political institutions in removing barriers and enhancing electoral opportunity for people from underrepresented groups. The issue of under-representation has been critical for our review, and we particularly focused on highlighting structural, institutional and cultural determinants of under-representation. We also explored the role of socialisation into politics and of the pathways people follow to accede to political office or to manifest their political interest. Our basic assumption was that the lived experience of the journey into politics determines to an extent whether or not people will eventually stand for elected office.

The review of evidence was completed by a review of existing practice in other legislatures with regards to institutional measures that affect the various aspects of the job that the Board was interested in: remuneration package, work life balance, job security etc. We looked at:

- legislatures within the UK (Westminster Parliament, Northern Ireland Assembly, Scottish Parliament);
- the parliament of New Zealand;
- legislatures in Sweden and Norway;
- other comparable size legislatures (i.e. Slovenia, Cyprus)
- the legislatures of the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia);
- two sub-state legislative assemblies in Germany (North Rhine Westphalia and Berlin);
- and other examples from around the world where we found interesting practices.

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7 Norris, P., & Lovenduski, J. (1995). *Political recruitment: Gender, race and class in the British Parliament*. Cambridge University Press.

1.3.2. The Field study - methodology

Our research design consisted of a rigorous mix that combined quantitative and qualitative data collection methods supporting an ambitious engagement exercise. We designed a four stage process that targeted individuals, first, more broadly, via a *survey*, and then through a series of *focus groups* and in depth one to one *interviews*, whilst also offering the opportunity to contribute to an *online discussion forum*. Each of these methods sought to complement each other and address the potential gaps in engagement left by the others. Further promotion of the research was done through a blog piece on diversity published on the *Click on Wales* portal in September 2017.

The research was conducted over a period of five months - August to December - having secured ethical approval from Cardiff University. Throughout the study we have ensured the highest methodological and ethical standards were respected.

The sequence of the stages (see Annex 1) was deliberately designed to help us first cast the net as wide as possible; and then narrow it down to get an in-depth level of detail and texture of our analysis and ensure richness of understanding. By carefully sequencing of the data collection, we also sought to address the shortcomings within each method that became evident (i.e geographical spread of the survey, demographics of the focus groups).

The Survey

We designed and conducted a targeted survey using the Bristol Online Survey tool, which we then distributed through a series of channels that we were confident will help us to efficiently target individuals who are interested in politics, are active in their communities and have thought about standing for elections. As such, the sample is not representative of the general population of Wales.

We disseminated the survey via a network of more than 50 professional membership based organisations, political parties, voluntary sector and community based organisations, unions, as well as through local government councillors. The survey was implemented both in Welsh and in English.

196 Survey Responses

- 13.26% fluent Welsh speakers

- 23.2% non-fluent Welsh speakers

- 16.76% self identifying as having a physical disability

- 12.29% self identifying as having a mental disability

- 24% vocational training, secondary education, post secondary education

- 29% undergraduate degree

- 45% postgraduate degree

Public Affairs · Nursing · Public Service · Self-employed · Fitter · Academic · Communication · Housing · Clown · Retail · Church · FT Carer · Dentist · Long term sick · Civil Service · Retired · Research · IT · Legal · Health · Administration · Agriculture · Sp · Collections · Business · Charity · Student · Education · won't say · Consultancy · Policy · AM support staff · Social Care · Unemployed · Architecture · Engineering · Statistics · Childcare worker · Office manager for politician · Funding management · Professional Body manager

Responses %

54 — Male
44 — Female
1 — Other

Whilst we had a good distribution in terms of gender, age and disability, we acknowledged that the survey did not reach out sufficiently to individuals from ethnic minorities and that most of our respondents had higher education degrees. We sought to address the limitations of the survey reach via the focus groups and the interviews conducted subsequently.

The survey was organised in five parts and included 49 questions covering aspects ranging from interest and knowledge in politics, satisfaction with the political system, and an audit of the individual's political activity, to investigating individual and structural barriers people face in standing for elections to the National Assembly, and exploring a wide range of possible incentives. We paid special attention to diversity monitoring and included a special section in the survey that helped us keep track of gender, age, disability, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, level of education and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Using the highly recognised quantitative research skills set within the Wales Governance Centre, the data was analysed using the powerful statistical software package Stata. Our analysis sought to identify key patterns in the the considerations respondents might make when thinking about running to be an Assembly Member. The data was stratified into socio-demographic categories of interest to examine whether these considerations were related to any of the individuals' socioeconomic determinants. This stratification allowed us to identify specific barriers or incentives facing historically underrepresented groups in the Assembly (for example, do respondents with a lower salary perceive the cost of running an election campaign a more important barrier than those who earn a higher salary?), in addition to observing general trends that exist within the data.

Focus Groups

We designed focus groups with the aim of exploring the individual and shared understandings of the process of standing for elections to the National Assembly. We reached out to a wide range of people and across six locations in Wales: Aberystwyth, Caernarfon, Wrexham, Llanelli, Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff.

We used careful online targeting (Twitter and Facebook) to promote the call for participants and tapped into local networks (especially local councils) to invite them to our events.

In social science research, focus groups are often seen as inhabiting the space at the intersection of pedagogy, activism and interpretative inquiry.[8] As researchers and moderators of the discussions, we were aware of this and in our analysis of focus group data we paid specific attention to distinguish between the lived experiences and the perceptions and attitudes voiced. We ensured that the moderation of the discussions was in no way leading participants. The focus as a method ensured that we added a rich and multi-layered level of understanding to our inquiry, nuanced with often contradictory accounts.

In total, we conducted seven focus groups: one in each location mentioned above, with the exception that we held two events in Cardiff. This was due to high demand as we had a long waiting list for the first focus group organised in Cardiff. However, given the low turnout we decided to hold an additional group in the capital. Each focus group discussion lasted 60 to 65 minutes. A skilled moderator facilitated the discussion and one or two researchers in some cases took notes, whilst the conversation was audio recorded. For each focus group we presented participants with the opportunity to contribute in both Welsh and English.

7 Focus Groups

- used Twitter and Facebook to reach out to individuals
- 42 participants in all focus groups
- 20 men and 22 women
- 3 self identifying as having a disability
- good distribution in terms of socio economic backgrounds, age, disability and education

- Aberystwyth
- Caernarfon
- Cardiff 1
- Cardiff 2
- Llanelli
- Merthyr
- Wrexham
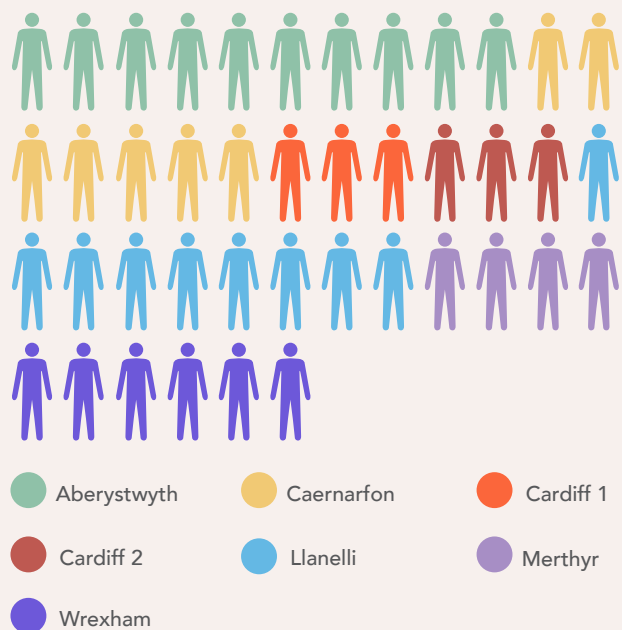
8 Kamberelis, G., & Dimitriadis, G. (2013). *Focus groups.* Routledge.

The focus groups attracted individuals from very diverse backgrounds, the notable exception being BME. On all other dimensions of diversity (age, socio-economic background, disability, education and gender), the focus groups were generally well balanced. Of the 42 participants, we heard from inter alia local councillors, academics, writers, managers, solicitors, self-employed, care workers, carers, doctors, voluntary sector workers, students.

Semi-structured Interviews

The interview stage was aimed at gaining a more in-depth understanding of the personal experiences of standing for elections. Semi-structured interviews, as a research method, play an important role in multi method approaches, as they provide the 'fine graining' within the qualitative analysis.[9] This stage also aimed at addressing the gap in representation, especially in terms of race and ethnicity.

The flexible nature of semi-structured interviews allowed us to explore the unique personal experiences of our participants in depth. It also allowed us to follow a thematic template that included interest and pathways into politics, barriers and incentives experienced during campaigning, and perceptions of barriers and incentives around the job of being an AM.

In total we conducted 25 semi-structured interviews with individuals that had previous experience of standing for election in the National Assembly or are seriously considering standing in the near future. We heard from 14 women and 11 men, 13 from south Wales, and 4 each from north, mid, and south west Wales. Five of these were former candidates at National Assembly elections and most of the others had an interest in standing in the future. In particular, we heard from a number of BME individuals as well as from individuals within the four main political parties, thus gaining specific insight into the barriers people face in the process of nomination, selection and during the electoral campaign. We also gained useful insight into the different types of support that exists within political parties to help potential candidates, as well as insight into parties' candidate selection processes.

The interviews were conducted face to face, via Skype, or over the phone and lasted between 30 to 60 minutes. We tried to make the process as accessible as possible for the participants. The interviews were conducted with informed consent and under anonymity, ensuring that participants felt free to share their experiences, attitude to and perceptions of the barriers and incentives to exceeding political office in the National Assembly.

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9 Galletta, A. (2013). *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond: From research design to analysis and publication.* NYU Press.

Loomio - online discussion group

We also established an online discussion platform (on Loomio) in order to facilitate discussion amongst individuals and remove important time and space barriers that would have otherwise hindered the contributions of some individuals. Online political discussion has been labelled as "one of the oldest manifestations of digital democracy"[10].

Although clearly not a panacea for effective political deliberation, political institutions, legislatures in particular, have been keen on using online discussion forums as a form of democratic engagement, and in some cases as forms of evidence gathering. The National Assembly has used online discussion platforms in a number of committee engagement initiatives.[11] As a research methodology, we viewed this as a complementary method, meant to widen engagement and to foster an in-depth discussion of topics at the core of our inquiry.

In total, we had 24 participants and we kept the platform open for three months. The research moderators created threads of discussion and the participants contributed in their own time. Participants were allowed to pen new topics of discussion, which they did so on one occasion. We also sought to stimulate the discussion by setting Quick Polls, for instance, allowing participants to rank various options for tackling barriers to diversity. Throughout this report we have made sure that we protected the identity of our participants.

1.4. Limitations

We are aware of some of the limitations of our approach.

- Given our targeting strategy - using various dissemination networks to reach out to the individuals we were interested in - we had little control over the response rates to the survey. We relied on the invited organisations to share the survey with their memberships, whilst we promoted it via mainstream channels (the Cardiff University website, Twitter, Facebook, and a piece published on *Click on Wales*);

- The survey reached few individuals from ethnic minority and LGBT backgrounds, making it impossible to have a useful breakdown analysis on these two dimensions. We have tried to overcome this weakness by ensuring that we compensated for this in the interviews and focus groups;

- In the focus groups, we did not manage to get any individuals from ethnic minorities, despite several registering for the first and second focus groups in Cardiff. We did follow this up in the interviewing stage to close the gap in the representation of individuals from ethnic minority groups;

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10 Freelon, D. G. (2010). Analyzing online political discussion using three models of democratic communication. *New Media & Society*, 12(7), 1172-1190.

11 Stirbu, D. (2017). 'Public Engagement in National Assembly for Wales: Developments, Narratives and Consequences'. Paper presented at the 13th Workshop for Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians, Wroxton College, July 2017

- Given the nature of the Loomio platform - based on anonymity of participants - it was difficult to gauge the diversity of the participants;

- Despite our intention to interview political parties officially, we did not manage to organise interviews with party officials. Instead, we have heard extensive accounts from candidates that have been active within political parties. Although we did not get the official stance of parties on enhancing diversity, we did hear extremely honest and illuminating stories of personal experiences of the candidates' selection processes within those political parties. Therefore, we are not in a position to generalise our findings when it comes to barriers within the internal candidate selection process, nor can we generalise our assessment on party support to candidates.

PART 2. REVIEW OF EVIDENCE

This review of evidence aims at contextualising the current research within the main academic debates on diversity and political recruitment and within existing practice in supporting candidates and elected representatives in the process of doing their job.

The issue of under-representation of certain social groups is an incontestable fact. In searching for the root cause of the lack of diversity (not only gender diversity) in legislatures, scholarship has questioned whether "the narrow social composition of legislatures suggests either that certain groups within society are less capable of representing others, or that something has gone awry in the recruitment process."[12]

2.1. Review of existing literature

In conceptualising the research question pursued by the Board 'whether *"a diverse range of persons with the appropriate skills and interest" is in practice deterred from standing for election to the National Assembly by any aspect of the remuneration package (salary, pension, child care and office and staffing allowances) and what may provide the incentives to do so'*, we started by anchoring this debate within the broad field of political recruitment.

In the following sections, we review the main debates around 1) explanations around lack of diversity in political recruitment and 2) normative suggestions to redress the imbalance in political representation.

2.1.1 Explanations

To date, one of the most useful models developed to frame political recruitment and diversity has been the Supply and Demand model pioneered by the work of Norris and Lovenduski in the context of gender, race and class in the British Parliament.[13] The main contention is that explanations of under-representation can be found by looking both at the supply and demand factors underpinning political recruitment. Supply factors (such as personal political ambition, motivation, as well as availability to resources, such as time and money) influence who comes forward as a candidate, whilst the demand factors (such as political parties and their selectorate, the electoral system and socio-cultural norms dominating in the society) affect who is desirable as a candidate.[14]

The demand and supply model, drawn on by many subsequent empirical studies within the UK and beyond, has informed and advanced our understanding of individual, structural, political, institutional and socio-cultural factors affecting political recruitment.

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12 Murray, R. (2014). Quotas for Men: Reframing Gender Quotas as a Means of Improving Representation for All. *American Political Science Review* 108 (3): 520-532, 520.
13 Norris, P., & Lovenduski, J. (1995). *Political recruitment: Gender, race and class in the British Parliament.* Cambridge University Press.
14 Idem Norris and Lovenduski (1995)

Individual factors

On the supply side of political recruitment, scholarship has tried to go beyond the simplistic 'if only more [women, ethnic minority, LGBT, disabled etc] candidates would come forward' rhetoric and explore the role of personal circumstance (time and money to run a campaign, for instance), experience and skills, as well as political ambition and the motivation of individuals from certain under-represented groups to seek elected office.

Some studies have identified that indeed women, for instance, are simply less politically ambitious than men in seeking elected office. Lawless & Fox (2010) links this with long standing patterns of different type of socialisation into politics that men and women experience.[15] Interestingly, it seems to be election aversion that holds women back (so the process), where cost and truthfulness of campaigning are important factors.[16] A 2011 Inter Parliamentary Union [IPU] study on gender sensitive parliaments,[17] found that women's political ambition, confidence and motivation to stand in elections are hindered by political and electoral systems, cultural challenges and socio-economic challenges, such as public perceptions, media treatment, but more significantly, by women's more limited access to financial and time resources[18] to support their nomination and election campaigns. The cost of campaigning is likely to deter a wide range of individuals that experience deeply-rooted structural inequalities - race and ethnicity also being notable dimensions. Within the British context, research by Allen & Cutts provides useful insight into the complex interplay of factors that affect political ambition beyond gender. Education level, income and geography are also strong indicators. The study reveals, for instance, that political ambition in Wales is lower than in Scotland, London, East of England, South West and South East of England.[19]

Other empirical studies have tried to dispel the myth that the absence of working class people in state legislatures in the U.S., for instance, is down to their lesser qualifications, but have more to do with potential candidates being discouraged by external factors on the demand side - political parties' candidate-selection procedures for instance.[20] In Britain, scholarship highlights that despite greater social mobility, electoral pathways have, in fact, become narrower due recent trends in the professionalisation of politics, where individuals from politics facilitating professions (education, law, journalism) or with an already existing background in politics (political researcher, working for political party etc) tend to dominate the makeup of elected institutions.[21] Supporting these assertions is the 2011 study of the Equality and Human Rights Commission examining pathways to politics, which claims that the traditional (long-standing involvement with a political party) and new (work experience in politics, university education)

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15 Lawless, J. L., & Fox, R. L. (2010). *It still takes a candidate: Why women don't run for office.* Cambridge University Press.

16 Kanthak, K., & Woon, J. (2015). Women don't run? Election aversion and candidate entry. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59(3), 595-612.

17 Palmieri, S. (2011) Gender-Sensitive Parliaments. Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union., URL: http://archive.ipu.org/pdf/publications/gsp11-e.pdf

18 Norris, P., & Lovenduski, J. (1993). 'If only more candidates came forward': Supply-side explanations of candidate selection in Britain. *British Journal of Political Science*, 23(3), 373-408.

19 Allen, P., & Cutts, D. (2018). An Analysis of Political Ambition in Britain. *The Political Quarterly*, 89(1), 73-81.

20 Carnes, N. (2016). Why are there so few working-class people in political office? Evidence from state legislatures. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 4(1), 84-109.

21 House of Commons Library (2016). Research Briefing: Social background of MPs 1979-2015. URL: http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7483/CBP-7483.pdf

pathways into politics, due to their prominence, disadvantage candidates following alternatives routes, thus narrowing their chances of getting nominated and eventually elected.[22] Although Wales' National Assembly has been characterised as more diverse than its Westminster counterpart, we do notice the high number of AMs elected in 2016 with backgrounds in the loosely framed 'politics facilitating professions' (legal profession, education and higher education, public affairs and advocacy, as well as political research or assistant backgrounds).[23]

Whilst some individual factors may affect the motivation of individuals with protected characteristics to put themselves forward, political ambition can also be negatively affected by the perception people hold of politics and political institutions - such as political institutions being a 'gentleman's club', where inaccessible and written rules prevail and dominate conduct of elected representatives, generating for others a sense of not belonging.[24]

Structural factors

Structural factors affecting political recruitment may include anti-discriminatory legislation, party funding, electoral system etc. The electoral system, for instance can be very good predictor of gender, ethnic minority and age diversity in parliament, especially in Western democracies. Comparative studies reveal that forms of proportional representation [PR] mitigate some of the adverse effect that majoritarian systems have on women and ethnic minorities[25] [26], as well as on young candidates[27], whilst majoritarian electoral systems constitute a systemic, structural barrier to getting into elected office for these groups. Single member district electoral competition further adds the incumbency factor to the problem.[28] These restrict the electoral opportunity for a more diverse range of individuals to enter the nomination procedure within political parties. PR alone, however, is not a panacea for diverse parliaments, and its overall influence on shaping access to political power for ethnic minority individuals for instance is only limited if wider cultural aspects are not addressed.[29]

Political factors

Political parties have been described as the 'gatekeepers' in the political recruitment process and their failings in ensuring diversity within the pool of candidate they put forward for election has been debated extensively in the literature. Scholarship highlights parties' opaque and at

22 Equality and Human Rights Commission (2011). *Pathways to politics,* London, URL: https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-65-pathways-to-politics.pdf
23 http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/politics/assembly-election-2016-full-list-11292401
24 Idem Palmieri (2011)
25 Ruedin, D. (2009). 'Ethnic Group Representation: A Cross-National Comparison.' *The Journal of Legislative Studies* 15(4): 335–54.
26 Bird, K. (2003). The political representation of women and ethnic minorities in established democracies: A framework for comparative research. *Documento presentado ante la Academia de estudios de migración de Dinamarca, Universidad de Aalborg, 11.*
27 Stokemer, D. and Sundstrom, A. (2016). Can Institutions pave the way for the young? - Electoral systems and age participation in parliament, Quality of Government Institutite, University of Gotheburg, URL: https://qog.pol.gu.se/digitalAssets/1563/1563019_2016_2_stockemer_sundstro--m.pdf
28 Idem Bird, K. (2003).
29 Idem Ruedin (2009)

times discriminatory candidate selection procedures[30], the direct or imputed discrimination[31] and the prejudice[32] of their selectorate, and parties' epistemic inability of fully grasping the concept of under-representation and diversity. The issue of 'unconscious bias' in the process of candidate selection has also been raised by the Equality and Human Rights Commission Report in 2011.[33]

One structural factor which enables political parties to maintain control over the political recruitment process is the absence, in most democracies, of criteria for candidate selection which is enshrined in national law, rather than subject to the internal political parties' processes. Some notable exceptions do exist in Finland, Germany, New Zealand and the United States.[34]

Another body of scholarship focuses on the merits of some political parties' initiatives in promoting positive action. In Britain, much of the progress in gender representation has been attributed to the Labour Party's adoption of All Women Shortlists in the 1997 General elections, with arguably no electoral 'penalty' for the party.[35] Structural factors, such as the absence of institutional legacies and the presence of windows of opportunity for constitutional change, have been instrumental in facilitating the contagion effect at subnational level in the first devolved elections in Wales, when Plaid Cymru also adopted positive action, thus marking significant progress in gender representation.[36] Notwithstanding this, there is need for caution in overly praising the gender representation progress in Scotland and Wales, as some of its continued success is more down to luck rather than the result of careful and sustainable design.[37]

Candidate selection processes are particularly seen as a major obstacle to ethnic minority individuals' selection[38] because parties tend to hold the perception that ethnic minority candidates lose votes among white voters.[39] Scholarship points out that the significance of an 'ethnic penalty' might be overstated, as the negative effect of minority candidate selection is too small to present a significant risk in safe 'white' constituencies.[40]

Institutional factors

Our review of evidence points to some important institutional factors that make the prospect of becoming an elected representative less attractive for some individuals. For instance, the working hours and patterns within parliamentary institutions are seen especially problematic for women.[41] The timings of sitting in parliaments, combined with limited childcare facilities (like a creche) collide with childcare and family commitments, affecting women and single parents

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30 Niven, D. (1998). Party elites and women candidates: The shape of bias. *Women & Politics,* 19(2), 57-80.
31 Norris, P., & Lovenduski, J. (1995). *Political recruitment: Gender, race and class in the British Parliament.* Cambridge University Press.
32 Idem Bird (2003).
33 Idem Equality and Human Rights Commission (2011)
34 Hazan, R. Y., & Rahat, G. (2010). *Democracy within parties: Candidate selection methods and their political consequences.* Oxford University Press.
35 Allen, P., Cutts, D., & Campbell, R. (2016). Measuring the Quality of Politicians elected by gender quotas–are they any different?. *Political Studies*, 64(1), 143-163.
36 McAllister, L., & Stirbu, D. S. (2007). Opportunities for gender innovations in a new political space. *International Journal of the Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, 1(1), 1-11.
37 Mackay, F., & McAllister, L. (2012). Feminising British politics: Six lessons from devolution in Scotland and Wales. *The Political Quarterly*, 83(4), 730-734.
38 Heath, O. (2015). Policy Representation, Social Representation and Class Voting in Britain. *British Journal of Political Science*, 45(1), 173-193.
39 Idem Norris & Lovenduski (1995)
40 Curtice, J., & Clery, E. (2010). *British Social Attitudes: The 27th Report*. SAGE Publications.
41 Ballington, J. (2008) Equality in Politics. Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union.

disproportionately.[42] Accessibility of parliamentary estates and provisions for childcare, family-friendly working hours, and parental leave are aspects that have been taken into consideration only recently.[43]

The often antiquated and formalised language and the opaque procedures and codes of conduct in legislatures are off-putting to young people, women, ethnic minorities and people from less affluent backgrounds.[44] The tone of debates in some chambers, often disparaging or condescending,[45] does little to attract a wider pool of talent into our democratic legislatures.

Other institutional factors affecting political recruitment include the lack of visibility of elected individuals from underrepresented groups within leadership positions in parliaments themselves (i.e committee chairs, whips, speakers). Until greater institutionalized equality measures are introduced within parliaments' operations, it is doubtful whether they can create a positive and attractive image for political aspirants from a wider range of backgrounds.[46]

Sociocultural factors

Deeply rooted class, race and gender inequalities sit at the heart of under-representation and are perpetuated by the process of political recruitment. The 2011 Equality and Human Rights Commission report highlights the fact that some groups with protected characteristics (such as people with disability) may endure significant barriers in regard to a lack of understanding of the specific issues and challenges faced by these groups.[47]

The double barrier and the reinforcement of structural inequalities is further highlighted in the report, 'For candidates from under-represented groups who do put themselves forward, the barriers to their success are high, the pathways available are narrow, and the support they receive from institutions is limited. [...] However, the prevent factors can have the effect of 'disproportionately disenfranchising specific groups' [...]. These groups can often face double barriers by not having push factors present in their socialisation and not being sought out, encouraged or 'pulled in' by political parties or political institutions."[48]

This is further emphasised in the otherwise rare accounts of electoral politics and disability. The issue salience of social welfare for disabled people in electoral politics has been raised in the context of UK's multi-tiered democracy. A 2013 study points to the 'failure of political parties to develop policy proposal fully consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons as well as EC [European Commission] exhortations to mainstream equality.'[49] In the context of severe underrepresentation of people with disabilities in our elected legislatures, it is

42 Idem Palmieri (2011).
43 Krook, M. L., & Norris, P. (2014). Beyond quotas: Strategies to promote gender equality in elected office. *Political Studies*, 62(1), 2-20.
44 Idem Palmieri (2011).
45 Idem Palmieri (2011)
46 Mackay, F., & McAllister, L. (2012). Feminising British politics: Six lessons from devolution in Scotland and Wales. *The Political Quarterly*, 83(4), 730-734.
47 Idem Equality and Human Rights Commission (2011).
48 Idem Equality and Human Rights Commission (2011), p. 17
49 Chaney, P. (2013). Electoral Competition, Issue Salience and Public Policy for Disabled People: Westminster and Regional UK Elections 1945–2011, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 66(2), 364–383.

hardly surprising these institutions fail in substantially representing the interests of people with disabilities.

Limitations of the literature

Whilst this review might be useful in understanding some of the stronger determinants of under-representation (individual, structural, political, institutional and socio-cultural), the one or two diversity strand approach (i.e. gender, or gender and ethnicity) does little to ensure deeper understanding of intersectionality. Some studies do take a multi-stranded approach look at the intersection between ethnicity, gender and class,[50] [51] but these are the exception rather than the norm.[52] This can lead not only to a fragmented understanding of the phenomenon of under-representation but also to a reification and essentialization of specific groups whilst failing to acknowledge or invite diversities within them.[53] There is also a danger that this segmentation leads to hierarchisation of diversity strands - gender, ethnicity and race, disability, sexual orientation, class etc.

2.1.2 Solutions

Most of the literature debates the different merits and shortcomings of various institutional and political measures to enhance diversity such as: democratising candidate selection procedures within political parties[54]; the introduction of gender[55] or youth[56] quotas; reserved seats for groups with protected characteristics[57]; positive action measures[58] and equality guarantees, different electoral systems or types of mentoring and support for individuals from underrepresented groups.

There is some agreement in the literature that lack of diversity in politics needs to be tackled on multiple fronts. Whilst more proportional representation systems do tend to enhance the chances of a more diverse range of individuals to get elected, this alone is not sufficient. There is also agreement that gender quotas are the most effective way of ensuring a fast-track solution to the gender imbalance in legislatures[59] [60]; however, there is less consensus with regards to the desirability of quotas[61] and whether or not quotas can address the issue of intersectionality.[62]

50 Idem Norris, P., & Lovenduski, J. (1995).
51 Evans, E. (2016). Diversity Matters: Intersectionality and Women's Representation in the USA and UK, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 69(3),569–585.
52 Mügge L. & De Jong S. (2013) 'Intersectionalizing European Politics: Bridging Gender and Ethnicity', *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 1, 380–389.
53 Bird, K. (2003). 'The political representation of women and ethnic minorities in established democracies: A framework for comparative research'. *Documento presentado ante la Academia de estudios de migración de Dinamarca, Universidad de Aalborg, 11.*
54 Bille, L. (2001). Democratizing a democratic procedure: Myth or reality? Candidate selection in Western European parties, 1960-1990. *Party politics*, 7(3), 363-380.
55 Dahlerup, D. (2012). *The impact of gender quotas.* Oxford University Press.
56 Idem Stockemer & Sundstrom (2016).
57 Zuber, C. I. (2015). Reserved Seats, Political Parties, and Minority Representation. *Ethnopolitics,* 14(4), 390-403.
58 Norris, P. (2001). Breaking the barriers: Positive discrimination policies for women. *Has liberalism failed women*, 89-110.
59 Mackay, F., & McAllister, L. (2012). Feminising British politics: Six lessons from devolution in Scotland and Wales. *The Political Quarterly,* 83(4), 730-734.
60 Dahlerup, D. (2012). *The impact of gender quotas.* Oxford University Press.
61 Krook, M. L. (2010). *Quotas for women in politics: Gender and candidate selection reform worldwide.* Oxford University Press.
62 Hughes, M. M. (2011). Intersectionality, quotas, and minority women's political representation worldwide. *American Political Science Review,* 105(3), 604-620.

Within the British context, the Equality and Human Right Commission report on Pathways to Politics contains important recommendations targeted at political party, state and institutional level. For the latter two, some of the recommendations include:

- reforming the electoral system to a proportional representation model;
- revising parliamentary procedure to ensure family-friendly hours;
- making provisions for childcare facilities to be offered on site or nearby the parliamentary estates;
- revising parliamentary procedures to allow job-sharing for elected members;
- creating support from institutions particularly for candidates from under-represented groups who put themselves forward in way of mentoring/informal peer networks;
- entrenching a system of diversity monitoring;
- creating an 'access to public life fund' – similar to a Work Fund which covers the cost of reasonable adjustments of employing a disabled person;
- widening the remit of this access fund beyond disabled candidates to candidates from lower income households and other under-represented groups.[63]

One of the most comprehensive and useful works to date is Prof. Sarah Child's *Diversity Sensitive Parliaments*[64] briefing, published in 2017, which follows the 2016 *Good Parliament Report*[65] and which develops the IPU's gender-sensitive parliaments framework[66] into a diversity-sensitive parliaments framework. This framework "acknowledges that women are not the only group underrepresented in politics and Parliament, and that these other exclusions should also be recognised and rectified."[67]

The Good Parliament Report made a series of 43 recommendations, grouped along three main dimensions *(Equality of participation in the House, Parliamentary infrastructure and Commons Culture)* and targeted at specific actors: the Speaker of the House; political and administrative structures within the House of Commons; political parties; as well as the Secretary of State for Education and the Minister for Women and Equalities. Amongst these diversity enhancing recommendations, of interest for our present research, we mention:

- Improving information about and promoting the role and work of elected representatives, thus contributing to raising public awareness about the range of characteristics, skills sets and experiences relevant to the job;
- Securing a cross-party agreement regarding candidate selection for the next election so that the overall representation of women does not drop below current levels;
- Introducing formal procedures for maternity, paternity, parental, adoption and caring leave;

63 Idem Equality and Human Rights Commission (2011).
64 Childs, S. (2017). Diversity Sensitive Parliament - Parliamentary Practice Comparison, URL: http://mlkrook.org/pdf/Childs_2017.pdf
65 Childs, S. (2016). The Good Parliament Report, URL: https://goo.gl/4sCsmW
66 Idem Palmieri (2011).
67 Idem Childs (2017). P. 2.

- Introducing gender quotas for the election of select committee chairs if gender balance in select committee leadership position does not improve by 2024;
- Ensuring representation of sexes / genders in select committees membership;
- Revising the pushed content on parliamentary website materials so that it enhances the view that elected representatives can be from diverse backgrounds;
- Ensuring diversity reporting and monitoring (including select committees witnesses);
- Clarifying the status and effectiveness of the Access to Elected Office Fund for supporting disabled people to stand for election as local councillors or MPs;
- Establishing a Women and Equalities permanent committee;
- Ensuring that rules, structures and institutional culture are diversity sensitive;
- Piloting new formats for Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs).

The Good Parliament Report recommendations reveal the same imperative for a holistic approach, and concerted efforts to tackle the lack of diversity in parliaments, that we find in the broader literature.[68]

The report of the Expert Panel on Assembly Electoral Reform (2017) is also significant for our debate. The report contains several recommendations that could potentially enhance diversity within the National Assembly, such as the increase in size itself, the change of the electoral system to a proportional representation model, and, most interestingly, the introduction of gender quotas.[69]

2.2. Review of existing practice in other legislatures

The second part of this review of evidence collates relevant information on existing practice in other legislatures. Naturally, this section focuses more on institutional determinants of what makes the job of an elected politician attractive or not. Where we could, we included some features of the political and electoral system as well.

In most parliamentary systems remuneration packages include 1) the basic salary, pension and additional office remuneration, 2) claims for accommodation and travel, 3) support for running a parliamentary office and staff costs, 4) other allowances and expenses that can be claimed and 5) provisions for end of mandate compensation. Differences exist especially in terms of level of support for MPs to run their offices, level of prescription with regards to expenses that can be claimed and more generally about additional benefits the elected representatives are entitled to whilst exercising their mandate.

2.2.1 Salary, Allowances and Pensions

We found some interesting variations in the way legislatures choose to regulate

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68 Idem Childs (2016)
69 EPAER (2017). A parliament that Works for Wales, URL: https://goo.gl/WpyYLd

parliamentarians' behaviour through the remuneration system. Some use a rewards system (i.e. Latvia, Greece, Romania)[70] - where MPs are paid an additional fee for each plenary session or committee meeting attended, whilst others use a penalty system whereby MPs are get salary deduction for each plenary session or committee meeting they miss (Berlin House of Representatives)[71] or for absence or suspension of more than three days (New Zealand).[72] In Germany, the salaries of MPs in the Berlin legislature adjusted according to changes in the average salary of full-time employees, measured by sectors such as construction, hospitality, real estate, health and social work, and public education.[73]

With regards to the amount and the type of allowances and expenses that can be claimed, some legislatures are more prescriptive than others. In Slovenia, expenses are generally freely available up to around €740 per month, but MPs can also claim representation expenses up to around €890 per month.[74] A small number of legislatures offer tax exemptions on salaries (or a bulk of the salary) and/or on certain allowances (i.e. Belgium,[75] Cyprus,[76] New Zealand[77]).

With regards to pensions, not all legislatures offer pension schemes automatically. Rules differ on qualifications for eligibility and full pension rights. For instance, in Sweden, old age pensions from parliament are just a supplement to the public pension system.[78] In the Landtag, North Rhine-Westphalia contributions of €1,000 pm to pension schemes and €500 pm to health insurance are compulsory.[79] In the UK legislatures, elected representatives are automatically enrolled in pensions schemes, as are the staff supporting their offices.[80] [81]

Life, injury and even luggage insurance provisions can be found in some legislatures. In Sweden, MPs are group covered by life insurance against occupational injury.[82] In Norway, the parliament has taken mutual luggage insurance covering loss of up to NOK 35,000.[83]

We also found that there is quite a variety in terms of how legislatures support MPs when they leave or lose their office. In majority of the cases, there is some form of compensation in place, ranging from a fixed lump sum paid to the respective MP (€10,000 in Lithuania)[84], to three months' salary in Estonia and New Zealand. In Scotland, there are winding up provisions that include reimbursement of salary costs for staff, National Insurance and pension contributions continue for a period of three months,[85] whereas in Westminster, this is for only two months and is capped to £57,150 for London area MPs and to £53,950 for non-London area MPs. MPs

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70 Van der Hulst, M. (2000). *The parliamentary mandate: a global comparative study.* Inter-Parliamentary Union.
71 House of Representatives of Berlin (2017). Law on the Legal Relations of Members of the House of Representatives of Berlin(Landesabgeordnetengesetz - LAbgG), URL: https://goo.gl/Ns9C1y
72 New Zealand Parliament (2013.) *Members of Parliament (Remuneration and Services) Act 2013* URL: https://goo.gl/de1Svq
73 Idem House of Representatives of Berlin (2017).
74 http://www.cityam.com/229115/how-does-europe-pay-its-politicians
75 http://www.cityam.com/229115/how-does-europe-pay-its-politicians
76 Van der Hulst, M. (2000). *The parliamentary mandate: a global comparative study.* IPU.
77 New Zealand Parliament Remuneration Authority (2016). *Parliamentary Salaries and Allowances Determination 2016*, URL: https://goo.gl/DyZ4FH
78 http://www.riksdagen.se/en/how-the-riksdag-works/the-work-of-the-riksdag/the-members/
79 Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger (2017) So much do MPs and ministers in NRW deserve (translation), URL: https://goo.gl/zHcCxM
80 IPSA (2017). The scheme of MPs' costs and expenses 2017-18, URL: https://goo.gl/w9K315
81 Scottish Parliament (2015). Guidance on the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme, URL: https://goo.gl/znoZsd
82 The Riksdag (2017). How the Riksdag Works - The Members URL: https://goo.gl/QL74uc
83 The Stortinget (2017). Financial Support for Mps, URL: https://goo.gl/QYr3i1
84 The Baltic Times (2011). MPs cling on to lavish perks. URL: https://goo.gl/QhH1vE
85 Idem Scottish Parliament (2015).

who do not get re-elected are entitled to twice the statutory redundancy entitlement.[86] In other countries there are some forms of financial redeployment or transition support when MPs leave their mandate. The Swedish Riksdag operates a guaranteed income scheme that applies to those who have been members of the Riksdag prior to and have been re-elected in 2014. The scheme aims to create some economic security for those that leave the Riksdag after serving for at least six years. After 12 years of service, MPs qualify for a guaranteed income equal to 66% of the basic MP salary.[87] For new MPs, elected post 2014, the system is rather different - MPs who have served at least one year will receive a redeployment support, commensurate with the length of service, which accounts for 85% of the MP's salary when they left office. This is only given when no other source of income is available and is available for a maximum of two years.[88] For Berlin's House of Representatives, a transitional allowance for a maximum of 18 months is given for those who served at least one year as elected representatives.[89]

2.2.2. Housing and travel expenses

In most of the countries we looked at, provisions for accommodation support depend on the distance MPs have to travel from their home to the parliamentary estates. A number of parliaments have their own housing stock which they make available to their MPs. In Sweden, for instance, those parliamentarians who live more than 50 km away from the parliament may stay free of charge in one of the 250 overnight apartments that the Riksdag owns or be reimbursed for hotel stay within a certain limit.[90] Similar arrangements exist in Norway. In Lithuania, MPs not from Vilnius are entitled to a refurbished parliamentary 'dormitory' and full coverage of the communal services costs.[91]

In some countries, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker as well as the MPs serving as ministers are entitled to official residences (New Zealand for instance[92]) with a wide range of associated costs covered. In Scotland and the UK, ordinary MPs receive assistance and financial support towards the cost of either overnight accommodation in hotels (usually within a certain spending limit) or towards the cost of renting a home. In Estonia, this compensation, inclusive of daily allowance and accommodation costs, must not exceed more than 20% of the MP's salary,[93] whereas in the UK, the annual accommodation cost for which MPs can claim reimbursement is capped differentially for those requiring accommodation in London or outside London. Westminster MPs can also claim for tenancy agreements and moving costs as well. Those who are claiming for associated costs for their own home have seen the cap downsized to a maximum £5,000 p.a. (since 1 April 2017), whilst those with childcare responsibilities can claim up to £5,435 for associated costs on their own home.[94]

86 Idem IPSA (2017).
87 Idem The Riksdag (2017).
88 Idem The Riksdag (2017).
89 Idem House of Representatives Berlin (2017).
90 BBC News (2009). How Swedish MPs handle expenses: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/8339465.stm
91 Idem Baltic Times (2011)
92 New Zealand Parliament (2014) Member of Parliament Determination (Accommodation and Travel) https://goo.gl/Dswa9M
93 Riigikogu (2017) Salaries of MPs, URL: https://goo.gl/kdPrU3
94 Idem ISPA (2017).

An interesting arrangement can be found in Scotland, where the Allowances Office facilitates much of the processes regarding accommodation and travel payments: it can make regular payments regarding office rental, accommodation, mortgages payments, and council tax; it has a contract with several hotels in Edinburgh that invoice the Scottish Parliament directly, and it has contracts with a local taxi firm as well.[95] This has the potential to help MSPs to navigate the complexities inherent to a very prescribed expenses system.

Travel expenses are also differently dealt with by the different legislatures we looked at. In some parliaments MPs are entitled to an annual season rail ticket, or season air ticket if it is economically justifiable (Sweden), but this must be used only for travel for parliamentary business[96]. Other parliaments, such as the Latvian Saeida,[97] offer free public transport for their MPs. Generally, we found that rules regarding taxi travel and compensation car rental are rather strict and MPs need solid justification for claiming expenses.

An interesting provision can be found in Norway, where MPs with children under 19 years old are eligible of reimbursement of two trips home per week.[98] Similarly, in New Zealand, family members may claim travel expenses if directly related to the Member's parliamentary business (this is capped to 20 trips in one year by spouse or partner, and to eight by children, unlimited for children under five or the spouse of the PM).[99] In the UK, Westminster MPs who have caring responsibilities may claim travel expenses for their dependants between their constituency and London and for journeys made by their spouse or partner as well as by an assisting carer other than the spouse[100]. In other countries, there is less consideration of the individual circumstance of each MPs and travel expenses are simply capped (i.e. Cyprus, Slovenia). In Northern Ireland, travel and subsistence expenses are based on at least 72 days per year spent in parliament buildings. These range from £850 pa for a Belfast constituency to £7,450 for Fermanagh and South Tyrone.[101]

2.2.3 Office Support

In most parliaments examined, the types of office support available to elected representatives range from supplying office space within parliamentary buildings, supporting MPs in opening and closing down their offices, hiring staff and developing them, to covering costs associated with the job (postage, staff, external office rentals, mobile phone etc). Variations exist between the degree of prescription, the support offered with regards to running of parliamentary office and the terms and conditions of the staff employed directly by MPs.

In most countries, office space within the parliamentary estates is provided and the costs of running the office is also covered. In some countries, MPs can open more than one office (i.e.

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95   Idem Scottish Parliament (2015).
96   Idem Riksdag (2017).
97   Saeima (2017) Rules of Procedure, URL: http://www.saeima.lv/en/legislation/rules-of-procedure
98   Idem The Stortinget (2017).
99   Idem New Zealand Parliament (2014)
100   Idem IPSA (2017)
101   IFRP (2016). Northern Ireland Assembly Members' Salaries, Allowances, Expenses and Pensions Report of the Independent Financial Review Panel, URL: https://goo.gl/BC27ip

one in the parliamentary estate and one in their constituency) provided they stay within the budget. Budgets toward running parliamentary offices are generally capped, and there are limits on the number of staff MPs can employ.

In Cyprus, there does not seem to be much prescription about running the office apart from a spending cap of €12,000 p.a. on secretarial services.[102] In contrast, in Northern Ireland, the office costs arrangements are more prescribed with caps under each headline of spending (i.e mobile telephony, office running costs, refurbishment etc).[103] In the North Rhine-Westphalia legislatures, Members may employ staff, but need to stay within a maximum budget of 4,146€/month for the year. Unused funds may be carried over the following year.[104]

In Norway, hiring personal assistants is prohibited, but MPs have access to parliamentary party secretariats and party groups larger than two MPs have additional funding at their disposal[105]. Other restrictions apply in North Rhine-Westphalia, where expenses incurred by family members are not eligible for reimbursement.[106]

Spending caps of office costs also exist in Scotland and Westminster. The Allowances Office in the Scottish Parliament facilitates monthly rental payments on behalf of the Members. MSPs also receive support in setting up their offices and hiring staff. Support staff for MSPs have access to training, travel expenses and overnight accommodation when traveling to attend relevant conferences and seminars. Staff are also enrolled in the GPPS pension scheme and are entitled to maternity, paternity and adoption leave as well as to flexible working arrangements. Additional support is offered to MSPs to facilitate communication and access to members of disabled people[107]. Some interesting features exist in Westminster, where MPs have access to a contingency fund to help with moving costs. New MPs benefit from a £6,000 supplement to start up their office. Their staff also benefit from similar terms as in Scotland regarding salaries, National Insurance and Pension contributions. Additionally, MPs can reward staff financially with recognition payments and a one-off reimbursement of health and welfare costs (i.e. eye tests).[108]

2.2.4 Job arrangements

Working arrangements vary across the spectrum of the countries we looked at. We found some interesting provisions:

- *Second jobs* - It is not uncommon that MPs be allowed to have second jobs under certain conditions. In Lithuania, for instance, there are special prescriptions around what types of second jobs MPs are allowed to have (creative activities)[109]. In the Berlin House of Representatives, Members may be granted part-time work or special leave without continuation of salary payments, whereas in North Rhine-Westphalia, MPs can have

102 http://cyprus-mail.com/2016/04/13/cypriot-mps-earn-almost-double-average-income-expenses/
103 Idem IFRP(2016).
104 https://recht.nrw.de/lmi/owa/br_text_anzeigen?v_id=2220040121112841302
105 Idem The Stortinget (2017).
106 Deputies Act of North Rhine-Westphalia (2018) - AbgG NRW - URL: https://goo.gl/h7eKHn
107 Idem Scottish Parliament(2015)
108 Idem IPSA (2017)
109 IBP (2015) *Lithuania Country Study Guide Volume 1 Strategic Information and Developments,* World Country Study Guide Library

second jobs but their salaries are reduced by around half.[110]

- *Parental leave* - detailed provisions for parental leave (including maternity, paternity and adoption) can be found in Norway, Sweden, Latvia. In Norway, MPs can take up to 24 months, the first 12 months being covered by payments from National Insurance.[111] In Slovenia, MPs are compensated with €140 per month if they are separated from their immediate family.[112]

- *Sick leave* - In Norway, MPs can take paid leave for health, social or other material reasons related to personal welfare, including the care of under 12 year old children.[113]

- *Use of Substitutes and Alternatives* - This is not quite job-sharing, but shares some resemblance. It is a practice common in Sweden, Norway and Germany. Substitutes (in Norway) are offered free accommodation on parliamentary estate for the time of exercising parliamentary duty (15 rooms available) and generally enjoy same privileges as a member whilst exercising their function.[114] In Sweden, alternates can take over from MPs who have been granted leave of absence.[115] In the Berlin House of Representatives, if a Members misses a plenary sitting or committee meeting they are at risk of receiving a fine of €25 to €50. To avoid this, they can send an alternate to attend, who will receive €25 for each session attended.[116]

- *Holiday provisions* - MPs' holidays are normally scheduled during the parliamentary recess, but the length of the holiday varies across the board, from 4 ½ months vacation in Lithuania, 35 days in Estonia, to only informal holiday arrangements being made in Norway.

- *Professional development opportunities* - Swedish MPs receive extensive training on parliamentary practice and procedure, as do their staff. They are also entitled to language and computer courses and can obtain grants for study abroad trips.[117] In Norway, MPs go through a process of induction and receive additional training. In Scotland and Westminster, staff supporting elected representatives can attend relevant training courses, attend conferences, as long as the costs stay within the annual office budgets. In Slovenia, members can get reimbursement of education costs.[118]

2.2.5 Extra perks

A commonality of most legislatures surveyed, is the existence of subsidised on-site Member's bars, cafes, and restaurants, as well as access to parliamentary libraries. Other 'perks of the job' identified include:

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110 Deputies Act of North Rhine-Westphalia (2018) - AbgG NRW - URL: https://goo.gl/h7eKHn
111 Idem The Stortinget (2017)
112 National Assembly of Slovenia (2017). URL: https://goo.gl/YaZ2fm
113 Idem The Stortinget (2017)
114 Idem the Stortinget (2017)
115 The Riksdag (2017). The Members, URL: https://goo.gl/QL74uc
116 Berlin House of Representatives (2017) Law of the legal Relations for Members, URL: https://goo.gl/Ns9C1y
117 Idem Van der Hulst, M. (2000).
118 Idem National Assembly of Slovenia (2017).

- *Parliamentary immunity:* There are different degrees of protection against the prosecution of MPs whilst exercising their mandate (i.e. Estonia, Lithuania, Cyprus). In Finland, immunity protects against arrest, detention and orders prohibiting travel.[119] However, parliamentary immunity does not apply abroad, unless the member is in possession of a diplomatic passport.

- *Diplomatic and official passports:* In some countries MPs can qualify for either diplomatic or official passports. Normally it is the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and members of the Foreign Affairs Committees (as in Sweden and Cyprus), but in other countries (such as Romania, Czech Republic, Hungary) all MPs are entitled to a diplomatic passport. In Finland, all MPs are issued with official passports.[120]

- *Health and Wellbeing:* Considerations for the health, wellbeing and the work life balance of MPs have increased in parliaments in the past ten years. There are some interesting and some peculiar 'extra' benefits that elected representative are entitled to. In Sweden, MPs have access to a gym, massages, a swimming pool and yoga spaces, whereas in Westminster this is taken up a notch, with MPs' and staff's gym also featuring personal trainers, physiotherapy, osteopathy and acupuncture treatments.[121] In Scotland, MSPs have access to on site occupational health, nurse and a doctor. A hairdresser is on site of the parliamentary building in Estonia.

- *Childcare:* In Norway and New Zealand, there are arrangements with private child care facilities in the vicinity of parliament buildings. In Scotland and Sweden, there are on site creches / nurseries whose opening hours reflect the sitting of the parliament.[122] In Scotland, MSPs can also apply for childcare vouchers.

- *Security:* In New Zealand, MPs can be reimbursed for security systems installed at their home or base: for installation of the system, the limit is $850 and for annual monitoring call outs and repairs, the limit is $600.[123]

2.2.6 Electoral incentives

Whilst gender quotas have been more widely discussed in the literature and the empirical evidence has shown a strong case to redress gender imbalances in national parliaments[124], other types of quotas have been less investigated and are less of a feature in electoral systems. Of interest for our research are the cases we encountered where quotas or reserved seats for young people, ethnic minorities or indigenous people are in place.

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119 Idem Van der Hulst, M. (2000).
120 Idem Van der Hulst, M. (2000).
121 http://www.jubileehalltrust.org/westminster/treatments/
122 Idem Childs (2017).
123 Idem New Zealand Parliament (2014)
124 Idem Dahlerup, D. (2012).

Reserved seats in Parliament for young people	Political parties' reservation schemes for young people	Some form of equality guarantees on basis of race / ethnicity, language, religion and geography
Kenya, Morocco, Rwanda, Uganda	Croatia, Germany, Netherlands[125]	Croatia, Romania, Cyprus, Belgium, New Zealand[126]

These equality guarantees are entrenched in the system in a number of ways: from allocation of reserved seats in parliaments for certain groups (New Zealand, Romania), to power sharing models (Cyprus), or via derogation from electoral rules on thresholds (Germany).

2.3. Analytical framework

From the outset of this project we have looked at political recruitment as a journey and we have attempted to expand the understanding of barriers and incentives at each stage in the process. Our assumption is that becoming an AM is a complex journey punctuated with many stumbling blocks but also with facilitating factors. This view helped us refocus attention on the individual and their lived experience of socialisation into politics, candidacy and being an elected representative.

The most useful framework we have found in the literature, derived from gender and political recruitment scholarship, draws on work by Krook and Norris[127]. The authors map out the journey in three stages: 1) from being merely an eligible individual to aspiring to political office, 2) from aspirant to candidate and 3) from candidate to an elected representative.

We adapted this framework slightly and organised our analysis in 1) the pathways into politics (eligible to aspirant) and the lived experience of political parties, candidacy and campaigning (aspirant to candidate) 2) perceptions around being an AM (elected) and 3) broader contextual factors.

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125 Idem Stokemer and Sundstom (2016)
126 Reynolds, A. (2005). Reserved seats in national legislatures: A research note. *Legislative Studies Quarterly, 30* (2), 301-310.
127 Krook, M. L., & Norris, P. (2014). Beyond quotas: Strategies to promote gender equality in elected office. *Political Studies*, 62(1), 2-20.

PART 3. FIELD STUDY

3.1. Becoming an AM - The journey: eligible to aspirant candidate

3.1.1 What we looked at

There are numerous factors that can potentially affect an individual's journey from eligibility to aspiring candidate and to standing for elections. Some of the barriers people encounter are clearly outside the direct remit of the Remuneration Board. However, we recognise that the Board may have the capacity to either influence or raise the issue with other actors.

We were interested in exploring both the lived experiences and the perceptions of past and prospective candidates and this section highlights some of the main barriers that participants perceive or have encountered at different stages. To that end, we have organised the following section so that it reflects the individual journey of prospective candidates from becoming interested in and socialised into politics to standing as candidates:

- Socialisation into Politics
- Experience of Political Parties
- Experiences and Perceptions of Standing
- Training and Mentoring

We explored the experiences of different groups of people in each stage and identified various institutional, cultural, individual and political factors affecting the decision to stand in elections, such as access to networks and support, candidate selection procedures within parties, the electoral system, and the cost of standing.

3.1.2 What we found

Socialisation into Politics

We broadly identified three pathways that brought people into politics and made them consider standing as an Assembly Member. The first group have been involved in politics and have been members and campaigners of a political party for a long time. The second group, who may be linked to the first but not necessarily, are coming through the local authority pathway. The third group have not traditionally been involved with party politics and may be relatively new to politics in general. They may have become politically engaged through involvement in public life or in international, national, or local campaigning or activism. Naturally, members of each group may overlap, and pathways may merge, but this establishes a general taxonomy to allow further insight into the path of different groups, or not, into politics and the National Assembly.

The Party Political Active Pathway

This group is characteristic of participants that have been involved in party politics for a significant amount of time. There is a general trend among this group to be deeply involved with a political party or parties from a relatively young age, putting them on definite political pathway through school, university, and potentially working for political parties or in politics following that.

Members of this group were likely to have been raised in a politically active household and have been politically active throughout school and university. This may range from assisting with election campaigns in their constituencies, to being elected as student union representatives at university and national levels. They may progress to work for political parties in a constituency or researcher roles, and then to standing for selection and election at National Assembly and Westminster elections.

On the one hand, individuals on this pathway highlight the importance of having inside knowledge on how the party structures and electoral campaigns work in breaking some of the barriers to standing. For instance, one interviewee felt that being part of a candidate's campaign team was vital experience before deciding to stand himself (Inv_01).

On the other hand, a major barrier for this group is the negative public perception around 'career politicians'. At one of the focus groups some participants felt this to be unjustified.

"That phrase 'career politician' which is so loaded isn't it...but some people, if you were a councillor and you had a career in a council and you wanted to stand for the Assembly, you'd get thrown this 'career politician', and obviously if you work for a politician you get the same thing, 'career politician, career politician, you're not worthy, you're just one of those politicians'. But, actually...there is quite a lot of validity in you gaining those skills because actually are you going to be more effective if you had experience representing people, as a councillor or in your union or wherever...quite often people are being dismissed as a careerist for having built their skills that way and that's not terribly helpful." (Cardiff 2)

This pathway clearly presents some advantages to potential candidates, as it removes a lot of barriers in relation to access to networks and political parties' support, but the dangers are that it perpetuates lack of diversity and that the negative public perceptions of career politicians would put people off.

The Local Authority Pathway

A similar, traditional pathway into politics is the local authority route, which was perceived

in some cases as almost an expected requirement for selection (Inv_20). However, this route carries with it the barriers inherent to access to elected office in local councils: the role of a local councillor being perceived as less appealing to young people, as participants in the Caernarfon focus groups mentioned; time constraints and limited financial incentives to the role, unless one gets into cabinet, also expressed by participants in Aberystwyth; barriers to women especially in the context of reducing the number of local councillors (Caernarfon).

Among this group there are a number of independent councillors and candidates. There was a definite feeling that there is a divide in the system, where it is possible to stand and win as an independent at local authority level but almost impossible at National Assembly level (Caernarfon). A debate on Loomio suggested that there was a link between these traditional pathways and a lack of diversity, so that a lack of diversity at the local level is 'carried along' into the national level by the lack of a diverse pool of candidates from which to select from traditional pathways.

The Newcomers' pathway

This group may have had a long-term interest in politics but not been a member or active in a political party until recently, if at all. They may have been motivated by different factors to get involved in politics, from international refugee aid or business interests to grassroots community activism. Getting more involved with politics may also have been motivated by their work with charities or civil society, or by undertaking voluntary positions such as on a boards of community housing associations. They are motivated to continue working in order to affect social change and several participants noted that the best way to do that was to take part in the formal decision-making process from 'the top down', or 'from the inside', and a realisation from their experience that *'if you want to make a big difference, then you make it from where decisions are being made'* (Cardiff).

The barriers they identified relate mostly to understanding how political structures work and how policies are made. One participant in a focus group notes that:

"I was concerned that my naïvity around politics, and if I went into a group, I found it a bit daunting because I had to learn so much more. I didn't just have to learn about the issues, I had to learn about the party, the protocol, the history, so that was way too much. I don't want to do all that, I just want to focus on the issue, the community, and how I represent that at local council. That's my focus, that's what's meant to matter." (Cardiff 2)

We found this message echoed in some of interviews as well. Additionally, members of this group are more uncertain about their political future, therefore issues around job security were more prevalent for them and the perceived risk attached to the job of being an Assembly

Member were higher. Notwithstanding this, individuals from this groups also talk about the wider realisation that you need to get people from this group, and from different backgrounds, involved because *'unless you get those people in you're going to end up with the same type of people'* (Inv_09).

Experience of Political Parties: Building Contacts and Networking

We were interested in gauging a range of views on how participants experience the support and encouragement received from political parties as well as the barriers they encountered when engaging in formal party politics.

Building support networks within the constituency and the political party networks is essential for any aspirant candidate. However, networking for instance is seen as a 'genuine barrier' by a mother with young children because of family commitments (Cardiff). Similarly, the need to get involved in local political party branches is also seen as difficult. In the same focus group participants discussed how parties can be seen to be 'hierarchical', 'cliquey', 'archaic', and 'exclusionary', but that once you were in they can be supportive (Cardiff).

An interviewee with a hearing impairment explained that things like branch meetings are 'horribly inaccessible'. They said that they had never been to a single meeting where they could follow and participate properly, which they worried would limit their opportunities to participate in a policy forum or other structures to build networks and gather support if they wanted to stand in the future. They explained that access to the informal networking and meetings were also challenging and very difficult if you have communication problems that meant that you could not immerse yourself in conversation (Inv_05).

"There were a lot of older members that don't go to the constituency meetings anymore because they can't follow the discussion and then people go 'oh that's a terrible shame' and I'm like, do you know what, I've been sitting here for 5 years and it's only when some well-respected older member says 'I can't hear and I'm not going to come anymore' that they start to think about access, whereas I'd been repeatedly asking for better facilities and consideration."(Inv_05)

A participant with neurodiverse differences explained how she would be comfortable in a formal and prepared setting, but that it was the networking that was required to get there that was the real challenge (Inv_04). She felt that no party would take on someone like them and they have tried being a member of several parties.

Overall, participants' experiences of building networks and support within political parties seem patchy, with barriers in terms of party organization and overall support standing out.

Experience of political parties: Candidate Selection

The perceptions and experience of candidate selection processes was a consistent talking point in all methods of research. Candidate selection processes were generally seen as a significant barrier for reasons such as: a perception of what parties are looking for; the process itself; the issue of unconscious bias; and the experience and perceptions of different groups of people in society. Nevertheless, we did hear of positive experiences as well.

One interviewee thought that parties were looking for someone who fits the stereotype of what a politician is as 'defined by Westminster' rather than having a 'model that works for Wales'. They felt that the people making the selection have a picture of what a politician looks like; mainly, a man or a woman who has raised a family and then gone on to politics:

"…and for them, if someone thinks of a politician the automatic picture that comes to the mind of very many people of an older generation is a man of a certain age, with a wife, with the perfect 2.4 children and is a great family man, and I feel that is still there, even though it is improving, I think there is still that idea within those selecting within internal elections. They expect someone more traditional." (Inv_09)

One interviewee felt that there had been improvements in what they were hearing from political parties over the last few years and was a bit more hopeful after newer MPs were elected in the 2017 general election, but was concerned that there is still an element of tokenism.

"The problem is that it often becomes so tokenistic, and that's a real issue, people are saying that we need diversity and that we need more people from different backgrounds in politics, but the reality of it is that there's this vision of who a politician should be and what they should look like and how they should behave and people who don't fit to that find it very hard to kind of progress and get the support that they need."(Inv_05)

A significant barrier was the perception that the decision of who is going to be selected had already been agreed within the party. This meant that they had to stand where the gaps were, not necessarily where they wanted. The perception that nomination procedures are not transparent and truthful is off putting to aspirant candidates, especially those newer to party politics.

"Now that I'm involved in a party I can see that. But what's the point of having an open ballot if you already know? It's going to ruin someone's aspirations if they go for it and then find that someone who's been in the party for longer than them gets selected." (Inv_20)

Similarly, in a focus group it was expressed that:

"So you know years in advance, so what is the point if you know that there is already a preferred candidate from the party? So are you there just to be a bit of dressing? So they can say it's a fair and open process of recruitment?" (Cardiff)

A BME participant said that they wanted to get rid of the 'who you know, not what you know' perception in politics, but in some instances, they thought it was still highly prevalent.

"Mentality of 'he fits that demographic, he fits that community, we think we're going to win because of him, because he fits in that community'… I've still got a perception in my head thinking they're just going to give it to another person who is, not a lot more experienced, but a more middle class person, and it's that kind of perception I think in the back of my head or would they think I'm not good enough…it's these little doubts that are at the back of your head or the little whispers that you think 'oh, they've probably got someone in mind."(Inv_20)

Age

Age was also seen as a factor in candidate selection with young people in particular identifying it as a barrier. This was clearly reflected in the survey results.

- 35.2% of all survey participants identified 'Age' as a barrier or significant barrier to standing - yet this perception varied considerably among age groups.
- 78% of those aged 18-24 and 55% of those aged over 65 perceived age to be a barrier.
- Only 13% of those aged 45-54 and 15% of those 35-44 considered their age a barrier.

An interviewee felt that young people are not taken seriously in democracy in Wales and the lack of young people in the Assembly is not encouraging others to stand (Inv_08). A young

person active in party politics felt that a barrier to young people is the culture of parties selecting more experienced campaigners because young people were not seen as 'MP material' in their experience (Inv_05). The perceived lack of experience of young people already putting them at a disadvantage' within party ranks (Inv_16), although for one participant in an interview, it is the self-perception of lack of experience and confidence that are holding her back.

> *"I feel now, I'm only in my early 30s…Personally, in myself, with my confidence I would probably need sort of 5/10 years maybe to feel that I can take on that sort of Assembly Member role and take on that challenge, just so that I can have a bit more time to develop my knowledge and experience, but it is something I would look at in the future, I wouldn't write it off at all."*

Moreover, the issue of time and cost comes out strongly for some - a couple of young female participants tended to view politics as 'something long term, maybe something when you are older' because they could possibly afford the time and money (Cardiff).

Gender

Women in the research often had different experiences to men. This has also come out in the survey results where we identified a series of differences regarding barriers and incentives.

- Women were considerably more likely than men to view barriers as more 'significant', and view incentives more positively.
- Women were considerably more favourable of diversity quotas for candidates than men, with 44% of women saying quotas would make them more likely to stand compared to 18% of men.
- Job sharing was also considerably more popular amongst women, with 68% of women saying it would make them more likely to stand compared to 45% of men.
- With regards to barriers, the biggest differences between men and women were 'Personal family and safety' and 'Too heavy a workload', with women seeing these as considerably larger barriers to standing than men.

One interviewee believed that it was a plus when going for selection if you were a family man but not if you were a woman with a family. In her experience, local party members worried about her and expressed their concern to her with comments such as, *'how are you going to raise a family if you're in Cardiff or Westminster?'* (Inv_09). After missing out on selection, she received

a comment saying that it was 'good thing that she had lost' because now she could spend more time with her child. She did not believe that people were intentionally being sexist but male colleagues with a young family did not receive the same comments.

Another interviewee expressed similar views after standing for a parliamentary seat and felt that there is an attitude of *'know your place, you have children now, your priority should be your children'* (Inv_17).

This type of behaviour and attitudes do little to encourage women to stand and a cultural shift within political parties as well as more widely in society has been perceived as much needed.

Disability

A woman with a hearing impairment explained that there was no financial support when she stood for selection. Nor was there a sufficient understanding of the barriers that she faced during the process. She was given a membership list of party members to contact but because she could not use the phone she had to spend time visiting people door to door relying on what turned to be a not wholly reliable list. She explained that it was really hard to go through selection with just a list, no communication support from the party, and no financial support or understanding of the barriers.

"I had people saying to me, I'd like to help you, but we don't want to give you an unfair advantage. And I was like, but I am at a massive disadvantage here, I'm not asking, you know, to get ahead of other people I'm asking just to be on the same level and people don't understand that. There's still very much a mindset that if you want to treat everybody equally you've got to treat them all exactly the same way and that doesn't bring equality." (Inv_05)

Another interviewee had received an application pack from a party to apply for selection to stand as a candidate for the National Assembly. When they read the pack, it said that the party would particularly welcome applications from ethnic minorities, those from the LGBT community and others, but disability was not mentioned. The interviewee did not feel they would be considered *'because they were not a priority category'*. This experience stopped them from putting their name forward (Inv_04).

An interviewee with a visual impairment explained that they required information in accessible formats. In the last general election, details of members were provided through an app which was much more accessible for her than paper formats (Inv_14) A potential candidate noted that if you were a candidate, you need the parties to be positive about disability and the skills that a disabled candidate can bring. She would not want to hide her disability as it is an important part of who she is and wanted the party to support that positive message (Inv_05).

(Unconscious) Bias and the 'selectorate' problem

There was an overwhelming consensus on Loomio, and in other methods, that parties should look at themselves and their membership critically to look at their bias towards white male candidates, look whether their membership reflects the society as a whole, and start addressing diversity from the grassroots level and bring a wider range of educational, professional and personal experiences into their pool of candidate selection.

A number of participants actively involved with political parties emphasised this point:

"A huge amount of this starts right at the grassroots. If you're looking for a diverse spread of candidates you need a diverse pool of members and activists from which to draw this. So it begins with ward or constituency-level internal party units ensuring a balance and diversity among their committees, and then national organisational units also having that diversity, paid staff within the parties, and anyone running e.g. selection processes. Once you have more diversity in these places, there are more people with wider experience and exposure within the party to stand as candidates."

In a focus group this idea was echoed by one participant.

"I have just been elected as the constituency Secretary and I see part of my role to get...more diverse. We had a meeting last Friday and…they weren't all in suits but practically they were all men and part of the discussions have been the discussions I have been to for the last two years. So I am thinking, now right, I am the secretary, I have an opportunity to make changes so that people would start coming to the meetings and get involved".

Most participants in focus groups said that diversity is something that the parties have to address. It was also noted that parties need to be positive about disability and the skills and experiences that disabled candidates bring. A disabled prospective candidate stated that she would not want to hide her disability as it is an important part of who she is and wanted the party to support that positive message (Inv_05).

However, others disagreed and notably one participant, who is disabled herself and has been a candidate at parliamentary elections in the past, said that it was for disabled people to put themselves forward and that the lack of diversity was not solely down to the selection process.

"But I absolutely believe that I haven't changed the essence of me and if there were certain things in place I would still stand, which is why I say it is more about how you actually get people to stand, the disabled people themselves to stand, rather than the parties. You can't blame the parties if the people aren't there who will put themselves forward to stand." (Aberystwyth)

A participant on the online discussion felt that it was time to impose positive action on political parties *'or they will never address the conscious or unconscious bias going on'* (Loomio).

Experiences and Perceptions of Standing in an Election

Effect on Current Career

A barrier for many interviewees was the effect of standing on their current career and their responses displayed a number of different factors. Some of those could apply across different careers but others were more specific and relied on personal and financial circumstances. These could include; time and commitment to seek selection and campaign; the ability to take time off work, through possibly unpaid leave, to seek selection and campaign; the potential requirement of giving up work; and the uncertain effect of becoming aligned with a political party.

Time was a big consideration for one interviewee who stood for the last Assembly election as her job was not a traditional 9:00-5:00. They felt lucky that their employers were supportive of their decision to stand and that they were flexible, but acknowledged the high demands of electoral campaigning in terms of time and energy (Inv_13). Another former Assembly candidate had managed her annual leave to campaign but felt that to campaign properly in a winnable seat required long-term engagement and commitment (Inv_24). This view was supported by another former candidate:

"To be able to stand and run a campaign properly I would have to give up my job for a period, and I still have a mortgage and things like that, and giving up work for 6 months, I wouldn't be able to afford to do that, and really someone who is in a winnable seat needs to be fighting for a year and give it their whole attention. Then that's why I think maybe people without the resources behind them find it difficult to fight for a seat and that is why there are many more people who are retired maybe, or older, that can go for it, because when you're in your 30s 40s there are very often a lot of expectations in terms of supporting a family and other costs people can't really take the gamble of standing in an election…fact that someone has to give up their job and campaign full time is a barrier for the majority of people." (Inv_09)

Interviewees that were self-employed said that they had more flexibility but that arrangements would still be required to be put in place. One interviewee felt that the impact on their business would be minimal and that they could make arrangements for their business during that period (Inv_06). Another interviewee said that this would be a conversation they would need to have with other partners at their firm. They could see that they may be open to giving her a sabbatical for about 8 weeks but that would not be guaranteed (Inv_19). However, for those with their own business there was a concern about the gamble of giving up your business for an opportunity that may only last 5 years:

You're there for 4, 5 years, and you know, you have to give up everything that you hold at the moment for that gamble that you might get it for 10 or 15 (Caernarfon).

We heard different accounts on how supportive or not employers would be in making arrangements for people to stand. An interviewee believed her employer would allow her the time off to campaign (about a month of unpaid leave). She believed that any sensible employer would see having someone in a high-level position is a good idea and they encouraged her at local election level (Inv_15). However, participants in one focus group felt that 'not many employers' would be happy to give candidates that time, especially if they do not support the candidate's political allegiance (Wrexham).

Campaigning

Traditional forms of campaigning, campaign tactics, and the size and geography of constituencies were seen as barriers for prospective candidates and those who had stood in the past. The concern about covering large constituencies and, especially regions, was common among focus groups and interviews, especially in north and mid Wales.

Traditional methods of campaigning were also seen as a barrier. The feeling of pressure to try to see as many voters as possible put one former candidate under a lot of stress and she became ill following her campaign (Aberystwyth). Other former candidates highlighted that people with mobility issues would not have a chance to cover such areas as they did (Inv_09). A focus group participant said that mobility issues would make conducting a campaign impossible for them.

"I would love to put my name down...But then, I have got to think about, how would I honestly manage to cover all [the constituency] in a bloody wheelchair? How would I manage to knock on all those doors? I could never do it." (Caernarfon)

The need to be flexible and to be constantly out was highlighted as an issue for parents and finding good quality childcare that could assist during that busy period unless you had a very supportive family (Inv_09), (Inv_13).

One focus group discussion questioned what voters expected from candidates and asked whether most voters genuinely expected candidates to visit every doorstep (Aberystwyth). Public hustings and events were discussed as a better and more accessible way of doing that (Aberystwyth). Also, social media was highlighted as the way to overcome several barriers; *"Social media is going to change many things. It's not going to be people sitting rooms and meetings anymore"* (Merthyr Tydfil). However, the mindset of traditional political campaigning remained as the starting point and that was an initial barrier for many.

Finance

A significant aspect for many people was the financial cost of standing as a candidate. This was the top barrier in campaigning highlighted in the survey.

- Over 65% of respondents said that this is a barrier they would need assistance to overcome;
- 20.7% answered that it is a significant barrier which meant that they would not stand.

A theme emerging out of the discussion on Loomio was the 'filtering' effect of the cost of standing as a candidate, effectively allowing only those who have either party support or other type of personal support around them to sustain the financial costs of standing. This was reflected in the focus groups as well:

"I know from my experience of standing for Westminster… it cost me a lot of my own money, because to have an effective campaign I had to travel a lot, I had to either eat a sandwich in the car or go to the pub, and if you want to meet people you go to the pub. It cost a lot of money. So straight away, it either puts someone in the position where they put their family second, or they have to be single, or they have lots of money, or they would not run an effective campaign at all." (Aberystwyth)

A woman who stood in a General Election, and also campaigned for an Assembly candidate found it difficult to compete financially with established parties. She argued that this was a barrier to standing and that *'in order to improve democracy, the amount that parties can spend on campaigns needs to be reduced'* (Inv_17). Those who had stood at general elections felt that National Assembly elections were better because of lower costs. (Aberystwyth)

Even though people were aware that the parties do provide support and funding it was still seen as a major barrier. In the experience of participants, this could vary from seat to seat and between parties depending on the party's financial position and likelihood of winning (Inv_08). An Assembly candidate standing in a difficult seat had to spend his own money on travelling and leafleting. (Inv_01) A former candidate stood at two elections and found herself in a lot of debt. However, at the time she did not have a mortgage or costs and could do it, but would not have the same level of freedom now (Inv_09).

The Electoral System

The electoral system was discussed mostly from the perspective of the barriers raised by the incumbency factor in the constituency vote, and the prohibiting nature of the system where independent candidates are concerned. The proportional element of the electoral system was not seen as a sufficiently big incentive to stand.

Incumbency is clearly seen as a barrier to standing, irrespective of what participants thought of their current AM. One interviewee explained that it would be difficult to stand against the current incumbent AM but what would be good for him is if there was a change in the voting system and if his party could pick up an extra seat in his constituency he felt he could take that position. This was one of the main incentives for him to stand (Inv_25). A change of the voting system to a more representative one would also encourage a focus group participant to put her name forward.

"I think if it was a system where you felt, actually it's going to be more representative, I might feel, actually, it might be worth me standing because of the system, even though I won't get in in that particular constituency there's maybe a chance I'll get in some other way or if they split constituencies or have more AMs for each constituency." (Wrexham)

There were doubts regarding the value of standing for a regional seat. Although clearly seen as an opportunity to select more diverse range of people on the lists, participants in the research also highlighted the shortcomings of the current system: the size of geographical areas covered by the list (especially in Mid Wales), the subsequent time and travelling demands on candidates as a result, the lack of direct accountability to constituents, but also the fact that newcomers will find it difficult to be on top of the lists and have a realistic chance of election.

One participant in a North Wales focus groups noted that she would not expect to be placed high on the list and that really brings into doubt the value of standing at all compared with the risks of giving up a well-paid job and a career she has built up over years.

"Plus you've got the old guard or the established people within political parties or 'don't worry, next time you'll be number one on our list' or 'next time you'll be number two on our list'. If you get to number four you're lucky if you're a newcomer…To me, I think to myself at best next time I would be number four on a regional list. I've got no chance of getting in so do I give up a well-paid job and a career that's taken me 17 years to build up? You're not going to do it, and it really annoys me because I want to do it." (Wrexham)

Independent Candidates

The barriers faced by independent candidates in standing for elections to the National Assembly was a common theme emerging from focus groups discussions. We heard from some participants that they do not necessarily see themselves as fitting within one political party, nor would they want to but they felt they needed to join a party in order to stand and have a realistic chance of getting elected. Generally, participants expressed the view that as independents, they would be at a big disadvantage in comparison to the '*election machines'* of political parties (Caernarfon). Issues around cost, accessibility and campaigning support (for someone with mobility issues) constituted important barriers to standing.

One interviewee who joined a party recently with a view of standing, made the decision on the basis of which party was most likely to have an opportunity in their area. The participant admitted that they may not support all of the party's policies however.

"I've recently joined our local...party, not that I agree with a lot of it but I have, partly because I have got an interest in becoming an elected representative in some way shape or form, and the only way to do it is to be affiliated to a political party because there is no way you're going to get in as an Assembly Member [as an independent]. (Inv_19)"

A participant in one of the focus groups said she joined a political party because this is the only way she thinks she could get elected. She felt that you have got to jump the right party in the right area because *'people don't vote for people they vote for parties'* (Wrexham). By having to compromise another participant thought that she had already 'sold out' from your values in some way and that's maybe why a certain type of person goes for it and perpetuates the current system (Wrexham)

Overall, it was felt that there was a need to level the playing field for independents and candidates from smaller parties or without personal financial means:

"The system needs to be adjusted to make it as easy to stand as an individual as it is for a political party to put up candidates. The current system is so heavily weighted in favour of parties, that it drives non-aligned people away...or interested people end up having to toe a line to stand a chance of being considered by a party."

Support for Standing

Mentoring and training

In all methods of research mentoring and training for potential candidates was seen as an important factor. It was the top incentive in the survey that would encourage people to stand for election. Although clearly not a panacea for diversity, mentoring and training, especially when it is independent from political parties, is seen as opening opportunities for individuals from a wider range of backgrounds to build up essential skills and knowledge for those who want to stand in elections at any level.

- 48% more likely to stand with advice from an Assembly Member mentor;
- 27.1% much more likely to stand with advice from an Assembly Member mentor;
- This was supported by 83% of women;
- Supported by 68% of people with a disability;
- 10.3% of respondents had received advice from a mentor from a political party.

Several people highlighted previous programmes, such as the *Women in Public Life* programme, run by Chwarae Teg, and the Welsh Government's *Diversity in Democracy* programme.

A former Assembly candidate highlighted the significance of such schemes:

"If I wouldn't have that mentoring, coaching, training from Chwarae Teg on that two year scheme, I don't think I would have ever felt that it would have been accessible for me. Not because I wouldn't have had the skills but I wouldn't have believed in myself almost to think I could have done that, so I think it did give me the foundations to, instead of thinking 'well, I couldn't possibly do this' to thinking 'of course you can do it' so it changed my perception of myself really and thinking 'yes, those opportunities should be available for everyone regardless of your class or gender or whatever' so it gave you the confidence. I think if it wouldn't have been for the course I don't think I would have done it." (Inv_13)

Within political parties there seems to be a patchy experience among the participants in our research. One participant on Loomio said that they have asked the party for a mentor, but this has not happened yet. As a result, they felt that this perpetuated *'the impression that politics is still very much a closed shop'.*

Another interviewee was frustrated that he had to ask for support for his local election campaign rather than it being available automatically:

"But what I would have loved is actually as a mentor or for someone maybe before the elections to sit down...and actually go through the processes and what is required. You always have to ask for it rather than them saying 'this is a new member, this is a new person into politics'. The emphasis is not coming from the top, it is always coming from the bottom and that's what I find is that I had to ask for things." (Inv_20)

For one interviewee, who has been receiving support from his AM and MP to follow them for a day or two, this has been a positive experience and he was looking forward to doing more of in 2018 so that he could understand the system better (Inv_25).

According to a former candidate, mentoring should also apply and continue when someone loses an election. She felt that there was a tendency for women not to stand for a second and third time, while men are readier to stand multiple times. She felt that it is important to keep women in particular active within parties rather than moving to the next woman (Inv_09). This point is echoed in discussions on Loomio as well. In one of the focus groups, a couple of

participants brought up the emotional investment made in a campaign and that the feeling of being forgotten after an unsuccessful campaign is demoralising (Cardiff).

It was also noted on Loomio that mentoring could be used to support candidates suffering from harassment or abuse by giving them someone to turn to.

"I was just reading today about the abuse and prejudice shown to candidates during the last election - which made me think that there clearly needs to be some sort of mentoring and support framework not just for those newly elected, but also for those who are standing".

A text response in the survey highlighted the need for support regarding safety as an incentive:

"I think support to build personal resilience to be able to deal with being in the public eye and potentially being the target of abuse would be really important. I feel I have the knowledge and passion to be able to make a difference in this sort of role, but I would find the safety aspect of it very difficult, especially while I have a young family."

Another source of political training which is underway is the establishment of Youth Parliaments. A member of a regional Youth Parliament felt that this gave him opportunities to gain training and insight into politics. This included residential courses with training on skills such as speech writing, campaigning, public speaking and debating. He will also have the opportunity of going to Westminster and to meet his MP and his AM to discuss which issues raised at the Youth Parliament could be taken on. This experience 'made him want it more' and help young people to see if they can do it at that level then they can do it 'for real' (Inv_12).

On the whole, participants concurred that there needs to be an impartial system of providing training and mentoring that does not disadvantage independent candidates and that it is open *'to everyone regardless of gender, sex, race disability or age'* (Loomio). The need for independent mentoring programmes was generally linked with; offering a level playfield for smaller parties as well as independent candidates; counteracting political parties' own failures in supporting their candidates; preparing candidates to anticipate and deal with abuse during campaigning; and, changing culture away from the politics to the role.

Information for Potential Candidates

As well as formal mentoring and training, having more information about the process of standing, nomination and candidate selection was felt to be an important initiative by many participants. As one interviewee put it, *'wanting to know how the machine operates before I*

decide which role I would like in it' (Inv_11). A former candidate said he was quite clued up on party politics but when he stood as an AM he had no idea what the process was. He said that this was partly down to parties as well as the information the Assembly provides for candidates (Inv_01).

A former local authority independent candidate referred to a booklet prepared by the Welsh Local Government Association *(Be a Councillor Make a Difference: Local Elections in Wales 2017 Candidates' Guide)*. It included things like why stand, what's it like, which was useful for them. They felt it would be useful to have something similar that would say what Assembly Members do and what sort of job it is (Caernarfon). Another interviewee had received something similar from her council office which she felt was very descriptive in telling you what a councillor does but not necessarily 'how' or information regarding processes and stages. She felt that she needed a 'step by step guide' about the stages and what happens next in detail (Inv_11). This was reflected in the focus groups as well, where one participant who wished to stand as an independent said that they needed an 'A to Z guide'(Caernarfon).

The interviewee also had concerns regarding the details on the National Assembly website on information for candidates. She found it framed in an 'almost negative' way, which was 'almost putting you off' and she felt *'that there seems to be a lot of barriers on that website already'* (Inv_11).

Another interviewee expressed similar sentiments and noted that social media would be a good way of opening up behind the scenes at both the National Assembly and Welsh Government. He went further to say that this should be done by someone who is impartial and can show a cross section of different Assembly Members from different parts of the country instead of being done by AMs themselves. He also saw this as a way of showing the different types of communities that exist across Wales as well.

"It might be good if there was some general advice given for people across parties and people who, again because I would like to see new people being brought in a lot more, for people that don't know that the process is that you join a party and you do all this sort of stuff. It would be good if that information was just out generally to everybody about how you stand, what the processes are, what the costs are, I've got no idea how much it costs to stand for the Welsh Assembly, how you go about it, cos I don't really know and I think I would be relying on the party to tell me if I was in that position anyway, but for people who are not at that stage now that information needs to be more generally out there I think. I believe quite a lot in just putting information out, but sometimes it's hard to reach people isn't it." (Inv_03)

Overall, participants identified lack of adequate and non-partisan information as a barrier to standing and expressed the desire to see more diversified information about how to become and AM.

3.1.3 Incentives to standing

As seen above, *a system of mentoring* was the most popular type of incentive to support potential candidates. An interviewee who had participated on mentoring scheme noted that there should be investment in such programmes and that they should be open to all underrepresented people and communities (Inv_13). An interviewee with a hearing impairment supported this as a way of helping to build networks which were quite difficult to otherwise build informally (Inv_14). It would also give people an opportunity to see what they could achieve and which level would be best for them to achieve that - whether at national or local level (Inv_09).

Participants largely agreed that any mentoring support should satisfy the following criteria in order to be effective:

- It should be impartial;
- It should include shadowing of AMs;
- It should support candidates after standing, especially if they were unsuccessful.

Participants questioned whether the National Assembly had a place to directly impact on party political issues such as selection and candidate support. A focus group participant summed up the feeling of many contributors by highlighting that the National Assembly does have a key role to provide impartial and open information.

"Within parties you have the same problems as outside parties, that there aren't a broad enough range of voices in senior levels, which then naturally means that progression is then often by people who fit that picture, which I think happens across every party. That is clearly a bit of a barrier. However, again, it's not within the Assembly's gift to change the culture of that. But, it comes back to actually if you're educating a broader base of people and you're giving a range of political opportunities, and information is being more widely dispersed to all sort of people actually even within parties you'll start to see the difference because people will have a voice and the confidence to maybe speak out about things that they weren't or put themselves forward for things that they aren't." (Cardiff)

A focus group participant mentioned that *'aftercare support'* was required for candidates that

stood in elections and did not win. (Cardiff).

An *access to politics fund* was supported by several participants. It was particularly debated in terms of supporting disabled candidates (Caernarfon) but participants on Loomio wanted to see a fund that could support those from other underrepresented groups as well.

A visually impaired interviewee explained this could be used to fund communication or personal assistance support that she would need to give them access to standing and would make her feel more confident to go out and fulfil her campaigning role. In particular, she highlighted that she would have difficulties in covering the cost of travel because of the need for a driver and somebody to help her (Inv_14).

Another participant felt that it was vital that such an incentive was well promoted (Inv_05). An important element of such a fund, according to one interviewee, is that it is properly explained to the public why arrangements are required to introduce a level playing field and why diversity is a positive factor (Inv_14).

An interviewee felt that *public awareness needed to be increased* as well so that people understood the level of commitment the candidate was putting in: *"The public don't understand that it's your petrol money."* (Inv_01) Following that, he believed that an incentive to standing would be for there to be a mechanism which funded travelling and campaigning expenses (Inv_01) which would have wider eligibility than an access to politics fund. This is supported in the survey as the second most popular incentive with:

- *73.3% of respondents saying that they would be more likely or much more likely to stand if an option of a loan or grant was possible;*
- *45.5% more likely;*
- *27.8% much more likely.*

But one participants in a focus group saw this as a dangerous path because taxpayers would not want to see their money being used to help parties they did not support (Cardiff).

One suggestion from a female interviewee on *tackling discrimination against female candidates was to introduce gender quotas*, but she believed that this needed to be done as part of changes to the voting system (Inv_22). One interviewee who stood for selection in her 20s for a constituency with an all-woman shortlist said that *'she would not have considered standing if it was not for that'* (Inv_05). This was supported by another participant on Loomio who thought the list could play to people with different strengths:

"All political parties should have all women shortlists in winnable seats e.g They should have women at the top of regional seats. They should also have targets for winnable seats for underrepresented groups eg, Women with childcare responsibilities, young women, ethnic minorities, LGBT and disabled people."

Form the survey, we identified that diversity monitoring and diversity quotas received substantially more support from women than men:

Table 1. What would make you more likely to stand? Categories with greatest difference between women and men (%)

	Female	Male	Difference
Diversity monitoring of candidates	44.15	17.71	26.44
Diversity quotas for elections	37.66	11.46	26.2
Personalised/tailored support networks (for people with disabilities)	55.7	31.96	23.74
Job/responsibility sharing (i.e. sharing to role of a committee chair)	68.35	45.36	22.99
More flexible working options (such as working from home)	77.22	55.67	21.55

A focus group participant suggested that ***diversity quotas*** for wider groups of people or a ***change to a proportional system*** should be used so that there is more opportunity to vote for diverse candidates (Aberystwyth). A discussion on Loomio touched on the use of language in the debate on shortlists. They felt that when the debate is couched as 'positive discrimination' it is perceived as negative and undemocratic. However, when it is articulated as 'positive action' it is seen as the only way to address diversity deficits. (Loomio). Nonetheless, one female interviewee, who could see that such initiatives were needed to balance politics, said they made her feel uncomfortable.

"I would really have a dilemma about it because I wouldn't want to be elected based on my gender, I would want to be elected based on the fact that I am the best person for the job. I would always have that sneaking worry that actually the only reason that I have been elected is because I'm standing in this gender quota constituency and actually that's the only reason I have been chosen because I'm a woman, I've not been chosen because I'm able and I'm the best person for the job and then that's why it makes me uncomfortable." (Inv_19)

The flexibility for careers of candidates was an issue raised by many and one focus group felt that 'not many employers' would be happy to give candidates that time. They then went on to discuss *ways to incentivise employers* such as putting a time limit on the position of an AM. (Wrexham). Time limits on representation was also seen as a way of keeping the system fresh and 'people might feel they're in with a chance'(Llanelli), (Wrexham).

3.1.4 Discussion

Overall, we found that people encounter many barriers on their journey from being an eligible individual to a candidate standing for election to the national Assembly. Some forms of socialisation into politics, naturally, remove some of these existing barriers (i.e. lack of knowledge of the structures and processes in party politics, lack of network and support systems and political capital), whilst others are more prohibitive (i.e. a new comer in politics, active in their community but who feels they do not belong to any party political ideology and would want to stand as an independent).

There are clearly important structural barriers, such as cost of standing, time, and limited accessibility that constitute important deterrents for some categories of people: young people, women, people with young families, people with disabilities. For some, the element of risk involved in standing for election is clearly too big. The nature of campaigning is also limiting for candidates with disabilities or with family and caring responsibilities.

Cultural factors are also significant on this journey. The (unconscious) bias of the party selectorate, the tendency to prefer the archetypal candidate (usually white, male, straight, middle class) to anything that diverges from that norm, and the lack of understanding around diversity are difficult to tackle. Ethnic minority candidates, women, as well as people with disabilities are especially affected by this.

Systemic and political factors, such as the electoral system, the electoral process, and candidate selection procedures in political parties are also contributing to lack of diversity. We found a lot of evidence suggesting the need for serious introspection on political parties' behalf with regards to diversity matters. These finding are very much in line with our review of literature.

Clearly, not all barriers identified here and not all suggestions for change that came from our participants are within the remit of the Remuneration Board. However, we believe there is scope for holistic action and wider debate on tackling some of the barriers highlighted above.

3.2 Being an Assembly Member

3.2.1 What we looked at

We were particularly interested to understand how the participants in this project saw the job of being an Assembly Member and explore attitudes and beliefs regarding different aspects of the role. In particular we wanted to know:

- how much people feel they actually know about the job;
- what aspects of the job were particularly appealing to them;
- what they perceived as possible unattractive aspects of the job;
- and ways in which they see the job of the Assembly Member changing into a more attractive prospect for a wider range of individuals.

We explored various themes, ranging from information available about the role, salary and other benefits, level of support AMs get once in office; travel and accommodation arrangements; working arrangements; childcare; work-life balance; and job security. We wanted to discern what aspects of the job itself might be considered a barrier to standing, with the aim of drawing up recommendations for possible incentives.

We will present an outline of the key themes emerging from the analysis as potential barriers, followed by ideas for change as discussed by participants in the research.

3.2.2 What we found

Overall, we have found that the prospect of being an AM both excites and puts people off. There is an underlying theme that the prospect of changing people's lives for the better is the main attraction of the job, but there could be greater clarity about the role itself and about the remuneration package.

The role of an AM

We have found some important differences in how much people felt they knew about the role of being an Assembly Member between survey respondents and the participants of the focus groups and interviews. The vast majority of the survey participants felt they had a good level of knowledge about the role.

- *There was a good level of knowledge about the role: 7 being the most common response on a scale of 0 to 10 (0 = nothing at all, 10 - a great deal);*
- *Most respondents answered 6 or above.*

In interviews and focus groups in particular we encountered a rather different picture. A participant in an interview expressed that:

"If you just google 'what does an AM do?' it would come up with the main stuff like 'they speak in the Senedd or whatever' but I think there needs to be more done to promote all the aspects that an Assembly Member does, not just speaking in the Senedd" (Inv_12)

In one of the focus groups, there was a feeling that people did not know enough about the job of an AM. One participant stated that people looking at standing needed to know what was available to them:

"I know the Assembly Member for [the constituency] and I know she's got an office, she's got staff and those staff have different roles and everything - so people need to know that that is available as well, that they will have the funding or whatever to be able to have an office of staff to support them. So you know, I don't think people really know what being an Assembly Member means."

The view that there is a need for more and better information about the role was also supported by participants who claimed to already have a good understanding of what the job entails. Participants said their knowledge of the role came from either own research (Inv_12), being an insider in politics (Inv_20) or working in the civil society (Inv_14). One young interviewee, with ambitions of becoming and AM, admitted that he was only aware of what the role entailed through his own research and interest (Inv_12). Another, with experience in working for an AM in the past drew attention to the advantage of having inside access and knowledge:

"unless you know someone or you've been quite fortunate like myself to go into the Welsh Government and actually be a researcher for an Assembly Member you're not going to know [about the roles of an AM]" (Inv_20).

One participant in Wrexham felt that she did not have enough understanding of the processes AMs have to go through in order to effect change. Issues around clarity, accessibility, language and portrayal of the day-to-day responsibilities of AMs were brought into discussion:

"One thing I'm not familiar with, and I think it might help people understand what goes on is what are the processes first and foremost, how do people make a change so if there's a change in legislation, what have they had to do, how much support have they had to get for that to get it to that point? I think a lot of these kind of sound bites come out for me, but I have no understanding of the process so I don't know how much work really, or how much effort or change someone has done because I don't know what you have to do in those stages to get to that point." (Wrexham)

The lack of knowledge about the role was not what concerned another participant, who felt that she understood the role of an AM, but saw it as being very stressful and felt it was slightly off-putting. She felt that part of the problem was the perception of AMs amongst the wider public. An incentive would be to know that she would feel supported and that there will be recognition from the general public of the amount of work AMs do (Inv_22).

Another interviewee held a particularly grim view of the role of an Assembly Member, suggesting that the nature of the job is not particularly attractive:

"What's really putting people off at the moment is the hassle you are going to get, and the accusation you're going to get, and the stress you're going to get when people threaten you, you know. If you're in any job at the moment with leadership and responsibility that's all you're going to get is backseat drivers trying to stab you in the back, and it's horrible out there, absolutely horrible out there now you know. If you put your head above the parapet these days you've got to expect it really and why should someone expect that if you're not going to be paid well for it?...it destroys people's lives." (In_25)

Overall, we found mixed evidence on how people perceive the role of the Assembly Member. The lack of information about the role may constitute a barrier not only to people standing, but also to people engaging with the Assembly. The role was perceived as being stressful, making becoming an AM slightly off-putting. Despite some negative views on the role of an Assembly Member, we found there was genuine desire for people to be AMs as they see this as an important position from which they can affect social change (see 3.1).

Salary

Overall, the salary does not stand out as either a massive barrier nor a great incentive for people

to stand, one reason potentially being the fact that not many people knew a lot about details of the remuneration package.

- *16% of respondents to the survey admitted they knew nothing at all about the remuneration package;*
- *Just over 50% of respondents gave a score of 0-5 (where 0 is nothing at all and 10 is a great deal in terms of knowledge of the remuneration package);*
- *52% of respondents said that the current salary is 'neither a barrier nor an incentive' to standing.*

Whilst there was agreement amongst participants in our research that the salary is not, or should not, be the deciding factor for standing - one young person claiming that *'you should be standing to make a difference for society, not for the gravy train'* (Inv_17), the views on whether the salary level is appropriate or not were more varied, ranging from being described as 'too much', 'appealing', 'fair', 'justified', to 'decent', 'about right' and 'not enough'.

At one end of the spectrum, in one of the focus groups, it was suggested that the salary is actually too much, appealing to career politicians, not to ordinary people. One participant offered the following suggestion:

"if you lowered it radically (in the lower 30k), would that appeal to the ordinary man in the street. Because the 65K appeals to the careerist and the political class, who are established.[...] But for the man on the street would that make it more than an achievable goal?" (Llanelli)

The view that a higher salary might actually put some individuals off is partly echoed by one of our interviewees, who could see that there are two perspectives to consider:

"If it's increased a lot of young people could say 'well I haven't got the experience or the knowledge' although they may have. They might think actually 'it's not really for me, I'm never going to have that opportunity'. But then I can see the positive side of this where it could actually be an incentive to say actually 'you are capable of doing it and you can earn that amount of money'." (Inv_20)

Some saw the level of remuneration as attractive and that they would be better off financially in the new job. A young person who was considering standing after leaving university thought the

salary was a huge step for him (Inv_12). He believed that a high salary is required to compensate for the risk of the job because you could only last for 5 years.

However, one female working in the public sector believed that the salary did not really compensate for someone who would need to give up their job for a substantial period, in her opinion and from experience:

"The main thing worrying me is the fact that there is an expectation if you're in the public sector...that you take unpaid leave from your job in order to stand. I think that is more of a barrier than the salary itself, but the salary is not high enough to compensate for that, that you have to give up your job for a period and hope that you get elected." (Inv_09)

In one of the focus groups, a participant thought that the salary needed to be put in context and compared it to salaries of chief executives in local councils. This was qualified by another member of the group who thought that is was more about reducing those salaries rather than raising AM salaries. Similar discussions took place on Loomio:

"I think that it is a very good salary, and with the additional allowances that can be claimed they are paid well. It is above a mid-range Headteacher, G.P. and Consultant"

However, another respondent wrote:

"when you compare AM salaries and those of their staff to council officers, senior academics, senior management roles, the disparity is clear. You don't do it for the money ... not that the public really understands that."

On the other end of the spectrum, one interviewee who is currently a partner in a firm said that the salary would make her worse off financially, but overall felt it was a decent salary and a lot more than the vast majority of people in Wales. The basic salary, once topped up with the expenses package, was about right. It would not be a barrier for her necessarily with the correct financial planning in advance (Inv_19).

A doctor, however, felt that the salary was too low for him. He felt that if he could be allowed to keep working in medicine to ensure that his income is balanced so that he is not worse off by being in the Senedd then that would be a good thing. He also wanted to keep his hand in medicine for professional reasons (Inv_25).

Overall, the salary is not necessarily a major factor for the people who took part in the research. Whilst for some individuals it was clearly not an attractive financial prospect, they would still consider standing, but this was largely dependent on the job of the respondent. Most respondents felt that the salary was not a barrier as it was more than adequate for the role - but it was not necessarily an incentive.

Attitude towards expenses

In relation to expenses, there was a general attitude that there was an unwarranted stigma around claiming expenses, and that the public were not supportive of expenses for politicians. However, there needed to be provision towards personal expenses such as childcare, travel and equipment for people with disabilities or who need extra provision.

The perceived stigma attached to politicians claiming expenses was seen as an unattractive aspect of the job for a few interviewees. One, who said that her biggest expenses would be travel and accommodation, felt uneasy as this was coupled with an 'ingrained hatred' of politicians claiming. She wanted to see more access to information on expenses and argued that if AMs' expenses claims are genuine then there should not be a stigma to it (Inv_19).

Expenses were vital for one interviewee with a hearing impairment. She said that she would not be happy with her communication support being 'lumped in' with her personal expenses. Providing communication support, such as live speech to text transcription, can help many more people and should not be assigned to one person's costs. She noted that currently, an access to work scheme pays for her communication support so her employer does not have to pay. She noted that she expected the Assembly to make physical adjustments for her to work.

"It's about leadership and it's about how we frame access and equality issues and inclusion and getting that message across that you're not talking about making things inclusive for one person, if it's inclusive for that one person it is inclusive for many more people and benefits many more people." (Inv_05)

Overall, participants were rather uneasy and cautious about how expenses are handled once they are in office due to the perceived stigma attached to them amongst the general public.

Office support

The issue of what specific support is offered to politicians in running their offices was only a prominent feature for two participants with visual and hearing impairment. The overall assumption for the rest of the participants was that once in office they will be well taken care of and that they will receive adequate support to setup their office. One interviewee who wanted more staff support so that he could concentrate on broader issues, rather than being caught up

in details and planning, was an exception (Inv_25).

For a visually impaired interviewee, however, the main barrier would be having access to materials in an accessible format so that she has time to prepare for a debate. This could be provided in larger print or electronically. She was aware of an MP who was visually impaired who was getting materials one or two days after they were released, and this affected her preparation. She would require specialist software for materials and somebody within the first few weeks to help her familiarise herself i.e. show her where to sit in the chamber, where different rooms are (Inv_14).

For an interviewee with a hearing impairment speech to text support would be essential because all plenary and committee meetings are verbal. However, this gets exhausting for her and this, coupled with the reading in the evenings and weekends would be 'incredibly tough'. She could see herself doing it for one term but for any longer would be a struggle because 'you're never off duty'. A key aspect for her was ensuring communication between constituency, assembly and party office and having reliable IT. She would not be able to use speech to text for constituency visits for example because she would have to have someone with her. She felt that she could not use BSL in plenary or committee because she did not have the technical vocabulary. It is possible to do remote speech to text but would not be easy for someone working remotely if it was a noisy room or meeting (Inv_05).

Overall, the issue of office support seemed to be particularly important to those individuals who felt they needed some form of assistance, whilst for others it was less important, the perception being they would be taken care of. It could act as a barrier if adequate support was not provided.

Childcare

Childcare issues were of major importance to many respondents when considering becoming an AM. Whilst the survey results might not necessarily reflect this, the interviews and focus groups in particular highlighted that to those who have childcare responsibilities, especially women and individuals with young families, this would be a barrier to standing.
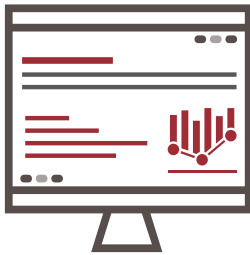
- *57.4% of survey respondents felt that childcare is 'not a barrier, it would not affect my decision to stand';*
- *22.6% of people said it was an important barrier to standing and that they would need support to overcome it;*
- *73% of respondents felt that if the incentive of childcare facilities on site of the Assembly would make them neither more or less likely to become a candidate;*
- *17.9% said they would be more likely to stand.*
- *6.7% said they would be much more likely to stand*
- *Women perceived childcare facilities a bigger incentive than men: 32% said it would increase the likelihood of them standing compared to 19% of men.*

On Loomio one participant raised the point that the current system is discriminatory for those with childcare responsibilities:

"The current system is discriminatory against those with childcare and other caring responsibilities, which is mostly women. If statistics were produced, you would find that a lot of female politicians are childless or don't have childcare or caring responsibilities"

One interviewee, a single mother living in north Wales, outlined the importance of childcare to her when considering standing but said that because she did not live in Cardiff, Assembly childcare facilities would not make a significant difference to her. Location and logistics issues were the most off-putting elements for her. Currently she has to schedule childcare at times when she is most likely to have meetings in the local council. She was worried that by taking it further this would become unsustainable with children. She did admit that she *'can see how if you live somewhere in a commutable distance to Cardiff and you have a baby that it [childcare facilities in the Assembly] might be appealing.'* She raised an important point around childcare expenses in her current role - they have to be formally invoiced and formal childcare facilities close at 5:00pm. Therefore, if she had to attend something in the evening she would have to arrange for a babysitter which might be £20-30 but she would not be able to claim for it. Also, she explained that if she went into the Assembly and needed to catch a train at 6am she would need childcare in the morning to take children to school but this was outside times for childcare facilities (Inv_03).

Issues relating to childcare emerged from the focus groups conducted around Wales, with the impact on family life being a concern when standing as a candidate and when fulfilling the role of an AM. Some people were not comfortable leaving their children in childcare (Merthyr). A

male participant in one of the focus groups pointed out that the lack of creche facilities was sending out the wrong message to potential candidates. He said that:

"Only last week I heard that the Assembly had gotten rid of the creche…because there were not enough people using it, so it's gone. My argument is that they shouldn't have got rid of it because it's going to make thing even more difficult for people when deciding if they should do this. There is not even a creche there anymore, so it is obviously not the job for me."
(Aberystwyth)

A female participant in the same focus group felt that it should not be the place of *'the government to make special arrangements'* for women with young children because if they wanted to do it they would make arrangements and go ahead and do it. This was criticised by other members of the group as it would make the role totally different for someone living in north Wales and that is not right in terms of accessibility.

Overall, we found that issues with regards to childcare raise different considerations to different people, depending where they live in Wales. But to those participants who relied on childcare, not having facilities available, whether in Cardiff Bay or elsewhere in Wales, was considered a barrier to standing.

Travel and Accommodation

With travelling from north Wales and other parts of Wales to Cardiff being necessary for AMs, travel was always going to be a main concern for some about working in the Assembly. Although the survey results do not find travel and accommodation as major barriers to standing, a different view emerges from focus groups, interviews and Loomio.

- *69% of survey respondents felt that travelling commitments were not an important barrier or were no barrier at all to considering standing as an Assembly Member;*
- *This may have been skewed by the geographical spread of respondents.*

The general finding is that depending on where people are in Wales, travel can potentially be a barrier and an unattractive feature of the job. For those who identify geography and the need to travel to Cardiff for the role of an AM, the prospect of the weekly travelling has been described as 'difficult', 'horrendous', 'horrific', whilst travelling to Cardiff from north Wales as 'physically inaccessible'.

The issues raised by travel are likely to affect those with childcare responsibilities disproportionately. A single mother said that location and logistics issues were the most off-putting elements when considering standing. She noted the fact that she'd have to be in Cardiff for a set amount of time, but it was not an option not to pick her children up from an after-school club (Inv_03). A female participant in the Aberystwyth focus group thought that the travelling was a *'great barrier for women with young children'* because it means that they would have to move their children to school in Cardiff for 3-4 days. But for one interviewee, it was exactly these physical barriers between Cardiff and the rest of Wales that motivated her decision to stand as what she wanted was to change transport facilities for the better (Inv_19).

Related to travelling is the issue of accommodation for AMs who do not live near Cardiff Bay. A former candidate who was a young mother noted that the recent trend for AMs to stay in hotels rather than have a stable base in Cardiff was not conducive for young families:

"I think if you are someone from the north, if you have a family you will want to be able to bring them with you and have that flexibility there and there are not many people who can afford to buy a house themselves in Cardiff and have a house in their constituency, and I think… members should have the right to be with their families with them while they are down in Cardiff. This idea of just being in a hotel room is maybe not the best or most suitable thing if you want to bring a young family with you. It's a challenge then if someone cannot afford isn't it, if the expectation is to be in a hotel for two or three nights a week and that's it, that is not going to be very comforting." (Inv_09)

She believed that longer working hours, so that things could be done in two rather than three days, would be advantageous - but maybe not if you come from the south.

Overall, challenges posed by travelling and overnight accommodation as an AM were seen as particularly important by female participants and acted as a barrier to becoming an AM. Concerns were raised with regards to the toll the job would take on family life.

Work/life balance

The issue of work/life balance was explored through the perspectives of the effect working hours and travelling commitments had on AMs and on their families, issues around personal and family safety and emotional strain on personal lives.

- *42.1 % consider spending time away from their family and friends a significant or an important barrier;*
- *39.9% consider personal and family safety an important or significant barrier.*

From the survey results, it can be seen that questions relating to family commitments, particularly 'spending time away from family and friends', started to become important barriers to wanting to be an AM. However, those who believed family issues were a barrier to some degree were still slightly outnumbered by those who felt it was not a barrier.

In one focus group, a participant considered that the hours of an AM were unsociable and not suitable for family life:

"Not only is your life affected, but if you have a partner, their life is affected, your children's life if you have children, is affected. It's the whole structure of your family life that's affected."
(Aberystwyth)

A big discussion in the same focus group was the fact that as an AM is 'never off duty' that it has an effect on family life. It was recognised that this applied to politicians at all levels.

Relating back to the salary of an AM, a potential candidate interviewed noted that the salary was a lot more than she was on now but was concerned about the work/life balance. For her, the salary would need to take into account the longer working hours and being away from her family (Inv_14).

One participant in a focus group was concerned that it could take a toll on their health as the long hours and travelling would not suit everybody. Another added that it would affect their marriage and could cause certain issues at home (Caernarfon).

Amongst Loomio respondents, there was a rather tough stance on the work/life balance question. The expectation is that in positions of power and responsibility, you are expected to be available 24/7 and to work longer hours, one respondent writing:

"Anyone who holds a position of responsibility or seniority in business is often on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so many of us already are quite used to that...and probably work longer hours than most AMs anyway. AMs need to get themselves into the real world and away from the little cocoon that is Cardiff."

Overall we found that work/life balance, whilst being an important considerations for some, is not a major barrier for everyone. Looked at in the broader context of the of job, the level of remuneration is seen as a potential reward for the perceived unsociable hours and the non-stop nature of the job.

Job security

Decisions on whether to stand based on job security varied from person to person but there was an understanding that for many people this might prevent them from seriously thinking about standing (e.g. those with families).

- *63% of survey respondents felt that the uncertain job security of being an AM was either not an important barrier or not a barrier at all;*
- *26.8% of survey respondents felt it was an important barrier and would need support to overcome it.*

Some young people who were interviewed did not see job insecurity as being a barrier. One young person said that the fact that it may be short term did not put him off but might help him think of options of what he could do afterwards. Having 5 years at the Assembly would be an opportunity to build contacts and if he was not re-elected then he could consider other things to go into (Inv_12). One interviewee, a young person who has had experience standing in a seat where there was not much hope of winning, felt that the uncertainty of being a politician did not really come into play. But he understood that if he was to become a parent in the future or had an established career then the uncertainty would definitely be a factor in deciding whether to stand or not (Inv_01).

Other participants shared different views. One young person who was considering standing in the future said that the uncertainty and the risk involved with being an AM was a serious consideration. The experience of people within his party of trying to find a job after losing their seats has been important. He said he knew of some people who have had to move out of Wales in order to find work (Inv_08). Another interviewee admitted that job security was an issue for him but on the other hand, new people should be given the opportunity to stand. *'You want to see a churn, you want to see new people coming into politics'* (Inv_21).

One respondent on Loomio said that the job of an elected politician would always be insecure, and this might stop people from contemplating standing:

"I know a few former AMs who lost their jobs in 2016 […] and then had to re-make their careers. Would they come back? I am not so sure - although most if not all are still involved in political activity behind the scenes. There is no job security, so you have to have a great deal of flexibility in career, life, family etc. to contemplate doing this. That excludes a lot of good, competent people."

Overall, we found that the issue of job security was perceived differently by participants. Some see it as a risk they need to consider carefully before running, some accept it as an inevitable reality of political office, whilst the idea of churn and 'new' people in politics is seen as desirable. But there was evidence to suggest that for some people who are considering standing, it was a barrier.

3.2.3 Ideas for change

As seen above, one of the most significant areas for change that participants in focus groups, interviews and on Loomio saw was *better provision of information and more engagement* with citizens with regards to the role of an AM. It was felt that more visibility, clarity and accessibility was needed for the general public to better understand the role of an AM.

Participants in the Wrexham argued that the *language needed to be simplified* and introduced in a more accessible way so that the electorate, and importantly, young people can get engaged with the process of the Assembly.

An interviewee suggested *Assembly staff go through with candidates what it means to be an AM. This would take the party politics out of it and give candidates the information they need in order to know what they are going to be doing and what the challenges are* (Inv_08).

Another interviewee said it was important for *Assembly Members to go out and engage with people about the role of an AM and the work the Assembly does* (Inv_14). One interviewee believed that *AMs have a role in inspiring their successor to come from their community by giving them one or two days a month of experience in shadowing them* (Inv_20).

One interviewee said he would like to see *social media used to explain the work of AMs, and Ministers and Cabinet Secretaries, in videos such as 'A day in the life of…' that show the different aspects of working as an AM*. This should be done by someone who is impartial and can show a cross section of different Assembly Members from different parts of the country instead of being done by AMs themselves. He also saw this as a way of showing the different types of communities that exist across Wales as well.

"I could see someone who is aspiring, who's never been involved or had the opportunity to work in the Assembly being lost thinking, 'oh my god, what is all this'. I think you can make that easier…you can simplify it as in 'The day in the life of an Assembly Member, 'the day in the life of a cabinet member'… just a little understanding." (Inv_20)

There was also consensus that *there should be more information available with regards to the whole range of support that Assembly Members get:*

"it would be good for the other allowances, eg for travel, accommodation, office, staff etc and pension arrangements, to be better known so that people who are considering standing are aware of the whole financial package and the kind of support this will allow them to secure to undertake the role"

This point was reinforced further in an interview with one interviewee suggesting *it would be useful to have a full breakdown of the salary of an AM, what they earn and their allowance.* (Inv_20).

On expenses

One interviewee said that *there needed to be a way of being able to claim expenses and support where it cannot be used as a political weapon.* She said that at local authority level you can get support for child or family care and nobody needs to know who claimed it (Inv_09). A local councillor echoed these statements, saying that she liked the fact that childcare costs do not show on personal expenses at her local authority because people did have *'stick for high expenses'* even when that remuneration was required (Inv_03).

On office support

A participant with audio impairment mentioned that *a lot of recent technology that can stream audio to a processor and can be used in small meetings or on skype could be useful.* There is a lot of existing technology that can be used and it is about *'using what's already there'.* So apps like Whatsapp or Yammer, if they could be made secure, would be useful. Technology offers a lot of solutions that were not necessarily there 5 years ago (Inv_05).

The interviewee who needed support for visual impairment discussed how an access to work scheme in a previous employment had covered the cost of a driver for her. She felt that similar support to provide specialist software and assistance over the first few weeks to locate the important rooms in the Senedd would be beneficial to her and an incentive to standing (Inv_14).

Remote Working

Flexible working arrangements were generally seen as having the potential to mitigate against some of the negative effects of long travelling distances, accommodation costs and so on. *Remote working* came out particularly strong both in surveys and in focus groups.

- *42.8% of respondents said that working from home would make them more likely to become a candidate;*
- *22.2% said it would make them much more likely to become a candidate;*
- *77% of women said working at home would make them more likely to stand, compared to 56% of men.*

One Loomio respondent also argued that remote working could address a range of issues directly or indirectly linked with diversity as well as issues related to the modern workplace:

"the Assembly needs to be seen to be representative of all of Wales, so it could easily address some of these issues by either moving the Senedd debates around Wales on a regular basis... or by allowing AMs to participate remotely, through video conferencing and online voting. That would certainly avoid the excessive time that is wasted in travelling from one end of Wales to the other."

A participant in one of the focus groups who has caring responsibilities said it is difficult for him to travel further than locally but would love to stand for the Assembly. He brought up why technology could not be better used for remote working: *'What's stopping members being in their home skyping into the Assembly?'* (Aberystwyth)

However, a respondent on Loomio drew attention to the poor Internet connectivity in some parts of Wales, which would make remote working problematic:

"The main problem would be connectivity - and perhaps if AMs had to use broadband for work from all parts of Wales, they would actually prioritise getting a good standard of online service everywhere, which would benefit all the individuals, businesses, and their own constituents who have been crying out for it for years and getting nowhere!".

The creation of regional hubs was also raised by some respondents. In the north Wales focus groups, there was a general feeling of disconnect from Cardiff Bay and the Assembly. *Having*

skype meetings and also holding Assembly meetings in the north were suggested as possible solutions to connecting the north of Wales to the business of the Assembly and for AMs to be able to stay within their communities. Having Assembly meetings in the north would make being an AM 'far more accessible' according to one participant in the Caernarfon focus group. This was an opinion shared by participants in Wrexham.

One interviewee said that she would be more attracted to the role of an AM if she could work out of a regional office regularly (Inv_15). A former female candidate now with a young family thought that regional centres and remote working is something that should be looked at (Inv_09). This would be more beneficial for those with young families who would then be able to spend less time away from their children.

Job Share and other working arrangements

The idea of a job share appeared as attractive to many participants, but there were questions raised concerning the practicalities of the arrangement.

- *40.6% of survey respondents said that some sort of job share would make them more likely to become a candidate;*
- *15.6% saying it would make them much more likely;*
- *68% of women said it would make them more likely to stand compared to 56% of men;*
- *68% of those identifying as disabled also said it would make them more likely to stand.*

One respondent on Loomio wrote:

"I would like to see job share introduced where two candidates stand for one AM position, this has been done in the European Parliament, so I can't see why we can't do it here in Wales. This would enable more AMs with child care or caring responsibilities to stand and would enable women as well as men to share childcare / caring responsibilities more equally with their partners. It would also help achieve more work life balance, perhaps attract more people from underrepresented groups and therefore be better for our democracy. I have personally found that women with childcare responsibilities are being massively discriminated against by our society and perhaps a reason for this is that there are not enough of these types of women in positions of power and making sure that this section of society is being considered and not discriminated against."

Being able to combine an existing career and the role of an AM was seen as an incentive by a several participants in our research, including a doctor, a solicitor, a business owner. The doctor noted that if could balance medicine and being an Assembly member he *'would jump at that opportunity.'*

"I could work less in medicine but I couldn't give it up…because if I was in the Senedd and was voted in for 5 years, well, by the time I come back out of there I couldn't work in medicine because I would have been out of it for too long…there would be no chance, I don't think anyone would hire you anyway, who would want a doctor who hasn't worked for five years?" (Inv_25)

An interviewee, with some knowledge on a job share scheme in her current workplace, felt this would be great for both women and men (Inv_09). A current local councillor has experienced a job share and she was convinced that job sharing would help her and women with families (Inv_03). However, other interviewees questioned the practical workability of a job share for AMs. One Interviewee said she could see how job share would make it easier for people to stand but not necessarily how it can make it more effective (Inv_19).

Overall, job share has been suggested as a possible "straightforward and quick win option" (Loomio respondent) way to address lack of diversity. Specifically, it is seen as increasing the attractiveness of the job for people with family commitments, caring responsibilities (most of them women) and those who do not want to give up their existing professional careers. However, while attractive to some, this needs to be thought through carefully in order for it to work well in practice and avoid the possible problems.

Childcare

A number of interviewees and participants with families felt that childcare provisions would be a major incentive to wanting to become an AM. It has already been noted that *there is an opinion that childcare costs should come under expense*s. This would incentivise people to want to become an AM. Family is important and needs to be taken into consideration when drawing up incentives. *There was support for creche facilities from one young mother and former candidate* (Inv_09).

Whilst Cardiff Bay childcare facilities might be seen as attractive for some, *better alignment of childcare provisions with the working schedules of AMs, or more flexible provisions elsewhere in Wales can equally be an incentive.* Another one suggested *a structure to get evening childcare or claim easily for evening and early morning childcare would be helpful* (Inv_03).

3.2.4 Discussion

The discussion on what aspects of the job are attractive or are putting people off revealed some interesting, mainly, institutional factors that have the potential to attract a more diverse range of individuals to want to become Assembly Members.

We found evidence that participants in our research genuinely think of the National Assembly and the job of an Assembly Member in terms of a 21st century workplace, where geographical barriers are best tackled by remote and flexible working and by the use of technology. Another feature of the 21st century workplace is the lesser focus on salary and a greater focus on support, facilities, working arrangements.

Whilst job (in)security is seen as an accepted feature of the role of an Assembly Member, and therefore a degree of the 'unknown' is accepted, people we spoke with felt that there is an information deficit and genuinely want to have more detailed information about the job, inclusive of the type of roles they are expected to fulfil, the institutional provisions to support them in office, as well as the type of expenses and claims they can make - a very similar expectation to any other kind of job.

3.3. The Bigger Picture

3.3.1 Adjacent findings

In the previous sections we have presented a rich material illustrating the perception, attitudes and the lived experiences of individuals who either stood in an Assembly election or who intend to stand or who are interested in standing. Naturally, not everything that we found will fall under the remit of the Remuneration Board. We have encountered many interesting viewpoints, concerns and ideas for change. In this section we move from the core specific aspects of the journey from being an aspirant to being an elected AM, to offering some interpretations on the more general political, cultural and environmental contexts that affect whether individuals want to stand or not.

3.3.2 What We Found

The National Assembly and Diversity

Attitudes and perceptions around diversity and the National Assembly were varied. The general feeling was that whilst better than Westminster, the Assembly still had a long way to go in terms of becoming more diverse and representative of all people of Wales. Diversity was also linked with the idea of making the Assembly 'less boring' and with attracting more attention from people. The survey highlighted which groups respondents thought were least represented in the National Assembly:

- *70% thought young people were not sufficiently represented;*
- *64% thought disabled people were not sufficiently represented;*
- *59% thought that BME people were not sufficiently represented;*
- *51% thought that working-class people were not sufficiently represented.*

Participants at focus groups felt that the National Assembly was seen to be relatively well balanced in terms of gender, but views were not as positive for other underrepresented groups. In an interview, a young woman felt that, although she was well represented as a female, she was not as a black female. She felt that it may take time to encourage people from different backgrounds to stand and it was notable that part of her motivation to stand was so that people can see that it can be done (Inv_14). Another BME interviewee felt that there was a wider issue beyond Assembly Members and he witnessed some stark differences in the nature of the Assembly as an institution:

"I've never seen, with all due respect, a whiter...middle class... and I just thought, the ethnic minorities...I was just observing that the only ethnic minorities represented within the Welsh Government, or within the Welsh Assembly or in the Senedd were the cleaners or the security. I thought, hang on, if we're seeing that we're going to be pioneering change that we are going to get more diversity in politics and we're the policy makers, and yet, we're sitting...in Cardiff Bay, one of the most multi-cultural, multi-diverse communities, and yet there is not one ethnic minority researcher, well there might be one or two that I might have overlooked." (Inv_20)

It was felt by many in focus groups that the National Assembly is not very representative of people with disabilities and this was questioned at focus groups in Caernarfon and Aberystwyth. An interviewee expressed that there is no representation whatsoever for autistic people in government.

"It seems that the only way you can be in politics is if you're a neurotypical thinker. If you perceive the world differently to those around you and your behaviours are not typical of expected society behaviour, then you're not welcome." (Inv_04)

Focus groups also discussed the issue of social class as a perceived barrier and something which is perceived to be missing. One group felt that *'we need someone approachable… a normal working-class person'* (Caernarfon). Specifically, the perception that politics is an exclusive club for the more educated and the more affluent was prevalent, to the extent that there was a belief that one has to rid themselves of their accents and polish up before entering politics. Further to that, where the success of a working-class candidate is presented in a patronising manner, it leads to what one participant called the "class ceiling".

"When you start looking at which politicians have gone to a state school, which grew up on benefits, who's got a bunch of friends who aren't involved in politics, who comes from different backgrounds. It's that kind of diversity which isn't looked at so much and that is the hardest thing to overcome in a sense as it's not recognised as even something to tackle…you see like, mental health problems, like criminal backgrounds, this kind of diverse situations where no one's counting these people. No one's coming, 'ok I am from am a super poor background and none of you knows what's it like', that kind of thing...Or when they are they are loaded up in a kinda 'oh you did well…', which is patronising and you are almost dismissed as being lucky or an exception to the rule, which I think it's damaging to others coming through. Class, I think, class ceiling." (Cardiff)

Lack of Understanding around Diversity

Several people referred to the wider value of diversity and the lack of understanding of it by institutions, political parties, and the electorate. Participants felt strongly that diversity brings better decision making that could challenge and question the status quo (Aberystwyth). It was felt in Merthyr Tydfil that the current system perpetuates current issues with lack of diversity.

"There's certain individuals or certain personality types or gender types or whatever that tend to monopolise the political arena so it perpetuates those kind of standards in a way because no one comes into question it do they, so perhaps it's even more important that we have a diverse representation in these kind of establishments." (Merthyr Tydfil)

One interviewee suggested that there would be wider benefits in terms of how groups are perceived in society. They argued that once people from underrepresented groups are part of

the institution people will have to change their rhetoric to be inclusive, where it may have been derogatory or dismissive in the past (Inv_04). Another interviewee felt that more than this was required and that people must understand *why* the rhetoric needs to change and understand the value and skills that different people can bring (Inv_05). One interviewee thought that it is not possible to create effective policies if there are deficiencies in representation (Inv_16). A focus group participant highlighted that changes such as inclusive sex and relationship education and gender identity clinics were emerging because of more LGBT representation. For her, *'diversity is the answer'* (Cardiff 2).

"Having people from different backgrounds in life changes the way policy is made and changes the ultimate policy that come out of that process that benefit more people than that usually narrow politician type."(Inv_05)

To achieve diversity, participants discussed that a change of attitude was required by parties, the electorate, and that the Assembly had a key role as well. For example, an interviewee with neurodivergent differences felt that the parties needed someone with experience of such difficulties to come in to teach them about the positives of neurodivergent thinkers, and how people with neurodivergent differences can be supported in politics.

"There's no way any party is actually trying to get someone like me on board and it's mainly down to the lack of knowledge… Ultimately, it comes down to the fact that people with neurodivergent differences don't make the parties look good. So not one of the parties would take the risk. And what they actually need isn't to encourage people like me at the moment, it's to bring in people like me to teach them." (Inv_04)

Another interviewee felt that the greatest barrier to ethnic minorities standing is how they will be treated by the electorate. He felt this was also true of LGBT candidates and thought that if a candidate came out as LGBT then the reaction towards them from the public would change (Inv_21). A former local authority candidate felt that the electorate are more open to diversity than usually thought:

"In terms of the public, I believe that they, when they see a candidate that is different, in my case it was age, from different backgrounds, I think that they want to see more diverse candidates, and I believe that when candidates like that stand they do see it as something positive." (Inv_12)

One interviewee felt that the Assembly has a direct role in promoting diversity:

> *"I think that the Assembly has a role as an institution to promote itself to try and get more people from a wider range to stand. [They need] resources and then ensure resources are promoted…If the Assembly came out and said, 'we need more women, disabled, LGBT, young people', if they made an emphasis on opening themselves up and say, 'we want these types of people to stand as candidates' that would I believe give the confidence for people like me and more people to stand."* *(Inv_12)*

There was a recognition among participants of a lack of diversity, even though they often said that the National Assembly is better than Westminster (Caernarfon) (Aberystwyth).

Overall, a lack of understanding regarding the value diversity can bring to the institution and to the decision making was referred to as an important issue worth explaining. As this was highlighted to be a wider social issue, participants suggested that a change of attitude and response is required from political parties, the electorate, and the National Assembly.

Welsh Language and Identity

A significant factor in the survey identified as a personal barrier was 'my ability to speak Welsh'. This was the single biggest perceived barrier to standing in an election to the National Assembly for Wales by a considerable margin:

- *51.3% of all respondents identified 'My ability to speak Welsh' as a personal barrier;*
- *compared to 33.5% who identified their age as a barrier (the second largest perceived barrier).*

This was explored further through focus groups and interviews and two nuanced strands appeared. Firstly, language was perceived as a potential barrier for specific areas. Secondly, the issue of identity and the feeling of being 'Welsh'. Both these factors were also couched in personal experience and perceptions.

The discussion at the Wrexham focus group mentioned Welsh as a potential barrier, but not a specific barrier for Wrexham itself. They mentioned Gwynedd and west Wales as areas where they perceived this may be an issue. Interviewees also linked language as a barrier to specific areas and noted that *'rules are different depending where you are in Wales'* (Inv_21).

In discussions, the Welsh language as a potential barrier was mostly seen from examples of local authority elections. One focus group participant expressed that she would expect the language to be a barrier for her to stand at a local election in her area because the incumbent was a first language Welsh speaker. Also, at local authority level, one of the focus group participants, had received criticism that his leaflet was not bilingual in a seat in mid Wales. However, there was a perception that National Assembly elections were different, and they believed that it 'would not be as much of an issue there'. They continued by noting that this perception was also based on personal background and self-perception:

"It wouldn't be a barrier to me standing. Depending on where you are geographically, it could be a barrier to being elected. But it is always something that I am conscious of. I always feel that I have somehow failed because I don't speak Welsh." (Wrexham)

The second strand of this debate was that it is not just a matter of language but also a matter of identity and feeling 'Welsh'. An interviewee felt she couldn't stand for the Assembly because she didn't know enough about Welsh culture and didn't speak the language which she felt was really important to be able to represent Wales (Inv_10).

In particular, there was a perception among some interviewees that Englishness, and sounding English, is a barrier. A former candidate from England was initially worried about how people would perceive their Englishness even though they felt they had been here long enough to feel Welsh. This issue of their 'Englishness' was a major concern to them (Inv_21). Another interviewee expressed similar concerns about sounding English.

"No doorway in especially to Welsh Assembly because the first thing I'm told is I don't speak Welsh, and although that's not a barrier, I sound very English…Truth is…I speak a number of languages and my kids all go to the Welsh medium school." (Inv_04)

The issue of identity was also touched on in a wider sense than Englishness as well, with one BME young woman who said that a future female BME candidate 'should feel like she's Welsh' and not just be there to fill a quota.

"It would be nice if we did have an ethnic minority woman, but I don't want it to be a quota. I want it to be that she feels like she represents Wales, she feels like she's Welsh and she exemplifies that but just through another realm of being Welsh." (Inv_10)

The discussion in a focus group also touched on this. The general feeling was that a better understanding of different types of Welsh identity could result in greater diversity in the National Assembly itself *"Different facets of Welsh identity… perhaps that will come with greater diversity."* (Wrexham)

Even though language was highlighted in the survey, the qualitative study shows that this is perceived as more of an issue in some areas of Wales than others, more local levels of government than others, and that there is a more nuanced understanding that combines language and identity.

Abuse and Harassment

Abuse and harassment were discussed widely in the qualitative study. There were several concerns raised which affect people in different ways; the general perception of 'toxicity' and political environment being a barrier in the first place; concern about background and history being unpicked by the media; concerns by underrepresented groups; and political tactics.

An interviewee who is very active in politics felt that the tone and atmosphere in politics at the moment is quite toxic both with the general public and within political parties (Inv_22). The general culture of politics was discussed by participants as off-putting. Opening yourself up to personal attacks and abuse was an area that former and prospective candidates were concerned about. A candidate at the last Assembly and general election *'felt exposed'* and *'incredibly isolated and lonely'* as their party did not have a big infrastructure to deal with this. But even if they did, they felt that it was still *'you putting yourself out there'* and *'you that they're targeting'*. They felt that it could be a *'huge barrier to somebody who felt threatened being part of that environment.'* (Inv_13) Participants in focus groups were worried about getting their lives unpicked and being judged on that. A member of a focus group, who is in a same-sex marriage, had encountered elements of this in local elections and said that, although it did not bother her, it might be off-putting to other people.

"So, I have a wife. In local elections it gets dredged up like 'oh yeah, you're the one' and it's like 'yeah', but luckily, I have very broad shoulders and I don't really care but it wouldn't be the same for other people and if I did want to stand anywhere higher, I don't want to be known as 'that one', it doesn't matter. It doesn't bother me, they can say what they want."

Another participant explained that they have a trans history and they did not want that to be brought up in newspapers. They felt that the media needed to be curbed but realised that this was an issue for Westminster rather than Cardiff.

A woman felt that you must be prepared for your personal life to be put under scrutiny because 'that's the way the world is unfortunately'. Bullying can be stamped out in the Assembly, and legally in other working environments, but trying to stamp it out on social media and among the public would be very difficult. However, issues of harassment of female candidates is not something that would stop her; it would 'hack her off' and she would need to 'bite her tongue' but it would not stop her (Inv_19). Another recognised the way women are trolled is 'horrific' but she still believed 'that it is important that we do put ourselves forward' (Inv_19).

Another interviewee concurred with the importance to stand, but emphasised that she had received 'nasty' and the *'very unpleasant'* harassment:

"I was getting anonymous letters, I was getting e-mails from made up accounts saying it would be better if social services took my son away from me because I had tried to stand to be a politician, that type of stuff. I think from that side, people think it's a little bit of sexist things but there are fierce things coming through quite regularly and I don't think we can stop that as political parties, but we can provide more information to candidates I think." (Inv_09)

An interviewee with dyslexia pointed towards the ridicule of politicians who make mistakes such as misspelling or stumbling and not finding the right words. They highlighted that it would be exactly the kind of thing an adult with dyslexia would do. They felt that there *'are certain things we're disadvantaged at'* and those things were being ridiculed in public by politicians and that there was no awareness of this at all in politics (Inv_04).

An interviewee with hearing difficulties said it is getting increasingly difficult to get involved with campaigning because of the amount of abuse and risk to personal safety. They were concerned about not hearing things at night or being caught in a confrontational situation in a public meeting but not being able to follow the conversation. *'The more you know the more unsure you are about it'* (Inv_05).

This is not just from members of the public but also between politicians and between supporters of different parties (Inv_08). For example, a female candidate found that colleagues and acquaintances would ignore her once they knew which party she stood for, and it's that culture that she did not like.

"If the culture was different, and the environment was different, and if it was much more about working with each other, and yes, exploring differences of opinion and accepting that and trying to improve the lives of people in Wales I would want to consider standing, but what I experienced didn't feel like that. I wouldn't want to be in that kind of system…No organisation is perfect…I'm not sure if I was naive but I didn't think it would be quite like that in Wales." (Inv_13)

She explained that this *'went up a gear'* in the general election in 2017. Other political parties contacted her personally and asked her to step down on the basis that she was a woman. They felt that they had a strong female candidate and that our interviewee should give them the opportunity to win because her party was not going to win the seat. She explained that suggestions and pressure being put on her personally and on social media *'quite frankly I felt was bullying'* (Inv_13). A BME candidate at local authority level experienced similar intra-party comments and had people asking them why they were standing in the local election because there was another BME candidate standing for another party.

"I've even had some of the advisors from another party come up to me and saying, 'why are you standing?'…You could read in between the lines in that we've already got […] representing you, and I just thought, 'wow, oh my God, it's not even hidden'. I just thought that's disgusting. And I just said, 'you've got to have words with yourself' and I said 'just evaluate what you have just said and put it in context'. (Inv_20)"

One participant highlighted that even if there was no wider public interest, your private life could be used as a political tactic to be used against you in a campaign and that *'there's a vulnerability in that'*:

"But I think there's two different types of tactics aren't there, there's sort of public opinion and public interest in what people have done and how they live, but there's the tactics that are used between politicians in how they bring demise to each other. So, I agree with what you're saying that other people might not necessarily be interested, but when someone feels that their position is threatened by another political person that you're standing against they might want to find that information out and make it public to belittle you." (Wrexham)

There were widespread concerns regarding the threat of abuse, bullying, and harassment, discussed by participants. It was felt to be prevalent, and almost in some contexts, accepted as part of the process. The whole culture and environment that attacked individuals on their personalities rather than their policies was off-putting and a barrier for participants.

Education and Knowledge

A wider barrier which was often discussed in focus groups was the lack of political knowledge and education about politics in Wales. There was a feeling that this leads to apathy due to disillusionment and a lack of knowledge.

"Education is a huge one for me, because everybody that I speak to about politics in Wales, not everybody, the majority of people, know very little about the Welsh Assembly, what goes on or about what it takes to be a member or a politician, you know" (Llanelli)

This was commonly directed towards educating young people. One young interviewee felt that one of the main barriers to people standing as an AM and getting involved with politics, was that knowledge of the basics of politics was not there for many young people. They argued that you would not get people involved with the political process if they felt they had little knowledge of Welsh politics (Inv_16). Another young person explained that she only had knowledge of Welsh politics through being a student and joining a Non-governmental Organisation (Inv_10).

It was common that older participants wanted children and young people to be engaged and interested in Welsh politics so that it is not perceived to be something which is only for 'posh rich people' and 'your betters', but where 'everyone should have a chance and it should start with educating our kids' (Aberystwyth). In the Llanelli focus group it was mentioned that:

"If we are not fostering that with our kids, what's the next generation going to be? Diverse or not nobody's going to want to go into politics." (Llanelli)

There was a mixed response to voting at 16. For one group it was something that *'has to happen'* (Wrexham). But some participants were concerned that young people *'would have no idea'* about how to vote (Merthyr). Overall, there was a feeling that there is a need for education in politics in general, and not just party politics.

3.3.3 Discussion

Many of the issues raised during discussions were wider cultural and individual factors. Diversity in the National Assembly was generally seen as relatively strong in comparison with Westminster, but there are notable absence of representation for particular groups: namely, disabled members, young people, BME, and people from working class backgrounds. Several participants stressed that incentives to improving diversity would be strengthened by an understanding of why diversity is a positive institutional factor in terms of good decision making. It was felt that the lack of understanding of diversity was a wider issue for society and so all actors in the system had a role to play in promoting and encouraging, or even just understanding, diversity. This includes political parties, the National Assembly, and the electorate itself.

The political culture of abuse and harassment was consistently raised as a barrier. In particular, an environment where participants were worried about personal matters being raised and used in public, rather than debate on issues and policies. Some took a pragmatic and thick-skinned approach and felt that it was partly a part of the role, while, for others, it was an off-putting factor that they wanted to avoid. The fact that harassment was coming from several perspectives, where it could be driven by the public or the media, or driven for political gain between parties, makes it a complex issue to tackle.

The ability to speak Welsh was raised as a potential barrier in the survey. When this was discussed through qualitative methods comments revolved around the issue of location, where the need to speak Welsh was perceived to be more prevalent where Welsh is more widely spoken, and an issue of identity. In particular, some participants raised personal factors, such as they did not feel Welsh enough or that they felt that they were being seen as 'too English'.

Political education and the lack of public knowledge about Welsh politics were seen as a barrier for the general public to be more involved with the National Assembly. Several focus groups pointed out that this leads to apathy and disillusionment with the institution. Political education for young people was seen as a key way of encouraging more interest and engagement with Welsh politics and the National Assembly.

Wider cultural and societal matters are naturally beyond the direct powers of the Board. However, we believe that the Board can make a contribution to assist with tackling the challenging political culture that candidates face through liaising with other actors and contribute to education initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Remuneration Board Strategy for 2016-21 recognises the need to "be responsive to the evolving needs of this Assembly while having its eyes firmly fixed on creating a Determination which is fit for the Sixth Assembly". The strategic objectives for the Board for 2016-2021 are:

- To engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we understand their needs and views [SO1];

- Ensure that the Determination for the Fifth Assembly remains fit for purpose [SO2];

- Produce a Determination for the Sixth Assembly to inform all potential candidates one year before the Welsh general election which reflects the Assembly's evolving constitutional responsibilities and the wider Welsh context [SO3];

- Ensure that the system of financial support for Members should represent value for money for the taxpayer and that the Board operates effectively [SO4].

Our field study has revealed that challenges faced by candidates in Wales are not dissimilar to those identified in the review of evidence. As well as matters of direct relevance to the Remuneration Board, there are a host of other individual, structural, political and institutional factors raised here that are affecting whether or not individuals will stand for elections.

Our work shed light on the context in which a wider and more diverse range of candidates are either deterred or incentivised to run for the National Assembly elections. We focused specifically on the individual journey, from being interested in politics to becoming candidates and running for elections. We found that along the way there are numerous challenges to, and opportunities for, candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds.

With regards to the journey from being an eligible individual to being an aspirant candidate, we found that people encounter several barriers - individual, structural, political, institutional, or cultural - but many are prepared to overcome them in order to become AMs. Some forms of socialisation into politics, naturally, remove some of these existing barriers (i.e. lack of knowledge of the structures and processes in party politics, lack of network and support systems and political capital), whilst others are more prohibitive (i.e. a newcomer into formal politics, active in their community, but who feel they do not belong to any party-political ideology and would want to stand as an independent candidate).

Structural barriers, such as the cost of standing, time, and limited accessibility constitute important deterrents for some categories of people: young people, women, people with young families, and people with disabilities. For some, the element of risk involved in standing for election, coupled with issues around finance is clearly too big. This acts as a negative filtering process, eventually excluding individuals from less affluent socioeconomic backgrounds from standing.

Systemic and political factors, such as the electoral system, the electoral process, and candidate

selection and nomination procedures in political parties are a major contributor to the lack of diversity of candidates. The nature of campaigning (traditional door to door campaigning) is also limiting for some individuals (i.e candidates with disabilities or with family or caring responsibilities). Cultural factors such as the (unconscious) bias of the selectorate (within political parties) and the default preference for the archetypal candidate, as well as a lack of understanding of diversity, are important deterrents for ethnic minority candidates, women, and people with disabilities. There is a lot of evidence suggesting the need for serious introspection on political parties' behalf with regards to diversity matters.

With regards to the job of being an Assembly Member itself, we found that people perceive and expect the Assembly to be a 21st century workplace. There is a lesser focus on salary and job security, and a greater focus on support, facilities, and working arrangements instead. There are expectations that geographical matters can be tackled and resolved by technology, and that flexible working patterns should be in place in order to fit in with the complex needs of individuals occupying that job (i.e. caring responsibilities, professional development etc). Job (in)security is seen as an accepted feature of the role of an Assembly Member, therefore a degree of 'unknown' is accepted. However, we also found that research participants genuinely wanted, and needed, more detailed information about the job, inclusive of the type of roles they are expected to fulfil, the institutional provisions to supports them in their role, as well as the type of expenses available - very similar expectation to any other kind of job. Additionally, some factors associated with being an elected politician, such as the hostile political climate, abuse, trolling, intrusion into privacy and the perception that the general public does not appreciate (or know) what politicians do, are further deterrents.

More broadly, our research uncovered many cultural and individual factors affecting both the willingness of individuals to put themselves forward for elections and the attractiveness of the job. We found that diversity in the National Assembly was generally seen as progressive, but there is notable absence of representation for particular groups; namely, disabled members, young people, BME, and people from working class backgrounds. It was felt that the lack of understanding of diversity was a wider issue for society and so all actors in the system had a role to play in promoting and encouraging, or even just understanding, diversity. This includes political parties, the National Assembly, and the electorate itself.

The political culture of abuse and harassment was raised as a barrier. The fact that harassment was coming from several perspectives, where it could be driven by the public or the media or driven for political gain between parties, makes it a complex issue to tackle.

The ability to speak Welsh was raised as a potential barrier in the survey. This was raised mostly in relation to distinct locations. The issue of identity, in particular, not feeling Welsh enough or the fear they were being seen as 'too English', was another barrier.

Political education and the lack of public knowledge about Welsh politics was seen as a barrier for the general public to be more involved with the National Assembly.

List of Recommendations within a Theory of Change Framework[128]

Within the context of these findings, and the further context of the Board's own strategic objectives, we set out our recommendations:

To engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we understand their needs and views [SO1] and Produce a Determination for the Sixth Assembly to inform all potential candidates one year before the Welsh general election [SO3]

R1: The Board should review / design a clear public engagement and outreach strategy.

R2: As part of the strategy, the Board should review its provision of information and use of external communication channels. This would entail a redesign of the Remuneration Board website and use of other platforms in line with principles of:

   A. **Interactivity:** moving away from static to more dynamic content. For instance, the Board could create short videos about the range of expenses AMs can claim, and the rules for claiming expenses, but also about the support AMs receive in their roles.

   B. **Accessibility:** create and publish easy read versions for all major reports and disseminate via multiple channels and formats.

   C. **Two-way communication:** move away from the 'push' of information to establishing dialogue with stakeholders i.e. interactive webinars.

R3: As part of the new strategy, the Board should consider liaising with relevant internal stakeholders (i.e. the Assembly Education and Youth Engagement Service) to review what type of content and material they can feed into Assembly's outreach, education and engagement initiatives.

R4: As part of the new strategy, the Board should liaise with relevant internal stakeholders (i.e. the Assembly Commission) to review how to improve the visibility of the National Assembly and the Remuneration Board across Wales: holding more meetings across Wales; participate in an 'Open Senedd Week', or candidate 'roadshows', to bring information about standing as an AM into communities.

R5: As part of the strategy, the Board should consider regular engagement with external stakeholders (i.e. political parties, campaign groups, non-political leadership and mentoring programmes, prospective candidates not affiliated to political parties). The Board should provide early information and guidance regarding the determination and support available.

R6: The Board should consider ways it could provide shadowing opportunities or open some of its meetings to the public to better publicise its own work.

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128 A detailed Theory of Change table is provided separately in Annex 3

In order to ensure that the support for AMs is fit for purpose [SO2] and to ensure that the system of financial support for Members should represent value for money for the taxpayer and that the Board operates effectively [SO4], the Board should:
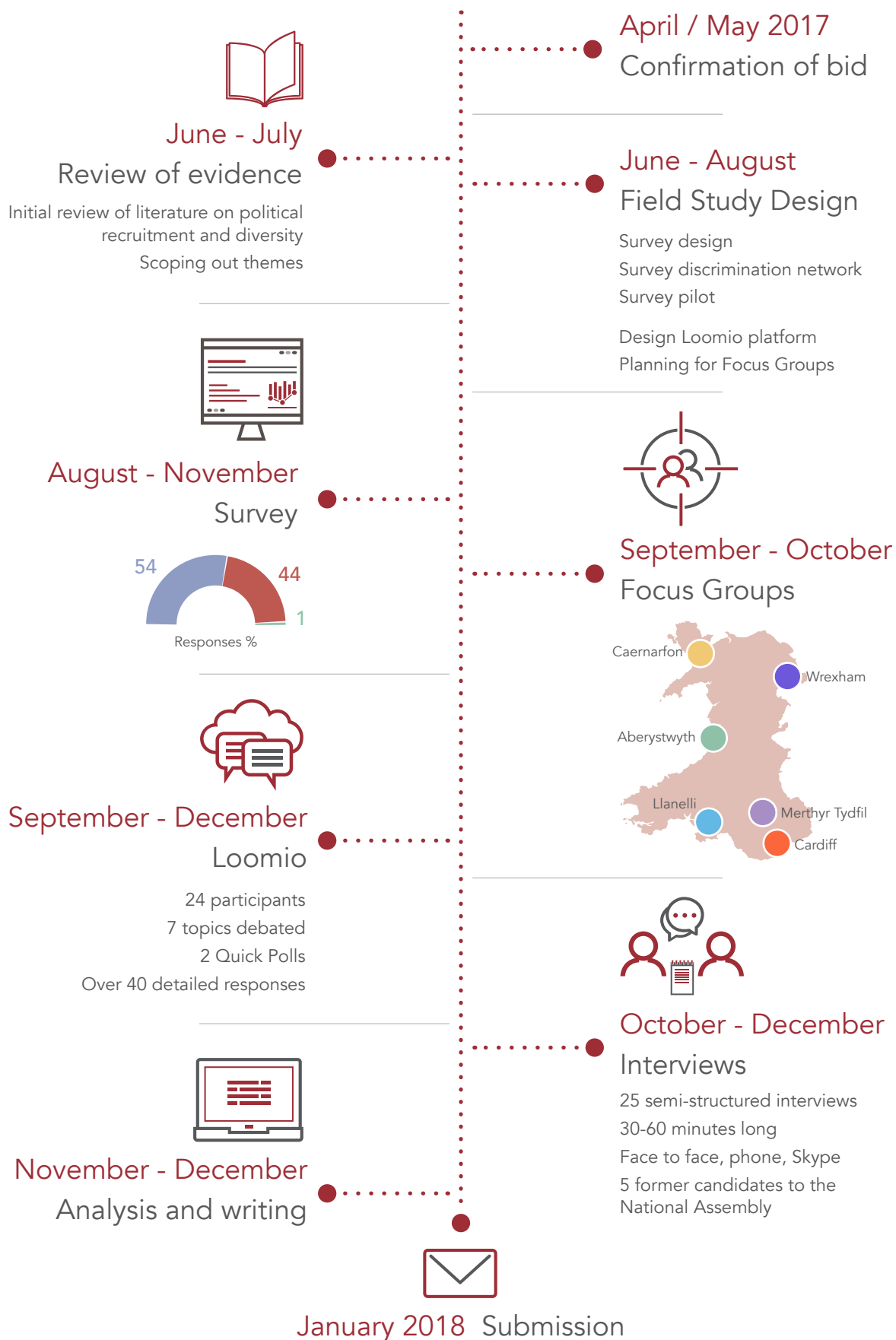
R7: Consider aligning its provisions on childcare support (expenses and facilities) with:

   A. the sitting of the Assembly, and

   B. the schedule of AMs to include commuting time (early morning and late evening)

R8: The Board should raise with the Assembly Commission for consideration:

   A. Reviewing the appropriateness of provisions around flexible working (including remote voting) and explore other ways in which technology could facilitate the work of Assembly Members.

   B. The merits of job shares, or second jobs, for Assembly Members.

R9: Consider reviewing the 'exceptional expenses' rules, clarify in what situations these apply, and better publicise the more specific support offered (i.e. specific support available for people with a disability).

R10: The Board should consider whether it is possible to give allowances to AMs to support shadowing opportunities and work experiences for people from their constituencies and regions. For example, an allowance to support constituents to travel to the National Assembly for a shadowing opportunity could be provided for AMs through their remuneration package. The Board should consider what type of rules should be in place to support this.

R11: The Board should explore with organisations like the Electoral Commission, the National Assembly, and the Welsh Government, how an *Access to Politics* fund could be established for candidates. Such a fund should be used to support disabled candidates and candidates from other underrepresented groups.

In addition, there are a series of areas where a much broader conversation is necessary. We recognise that the Board may not have immediate scope to act on it, but it is important to have this conversation with the Board's stakeholders. Further research and consultation is required in order to address some of the critical barriers to diversity addressed in this report:

• A non-politically affiliated 'one stop shop' advice website for candidates would address some of the information deficit, limitations, and barriers encountered by some candidates along the journey from being interested in politics to actually standing for elections. This should contain Remuneration Board approved content on the remuneration package, the job itself, additional support offered to AMs and rules for claiming expenses.

- The Board should contribute to the debate, with other relevant actors (EHRC, Electoral Commission, political parties etc), on the implementation of diversity quotas and diversity monitoring and reporting at all stages in the candidates' journey.

- The extent to which the nature of electoral campaigning is limiting diversity requires further research. The Electoral Commission and the Electoral Reform Society are perhaps the most relevant actors, together with the Assembly Commission, in starting a conversation along these lines.

- Tackling issues of abuse and harassment of candidates and elected politicians would require a cross party dialogue and consultation involving political parties, the Standards Commissioner, other civil society organisations and public bodies.

ANNEX 1: THE FIELD STUDY

April / May 2017
Confirmation of bid

June - July
Review of evidence

Initial review of literature on political recruitment and diversity
Scoping out themes

June - August
Field Study Design

Survey design
Survey discrimination network
Survey pilot

Design Loomio platform
Planning for Focus Groups

August - November
Survey

54   44   1
Responses %

September - October
Focus Groups

Caernarfon
Wrexham
Aberystwyth
Llanelli
Merthyr Tydfil
Cardiff

September - December
Loomio

24 participants
7 topics debated
2 Quick Polls
Over 40 detailed responses

October - December
Interviews

25 semi-structured interviews
30-60 minutes long
Face to face, phone, Skype
5 former candidates to the National Assembly

November - December
Analysis and writing

January 2018 Submission
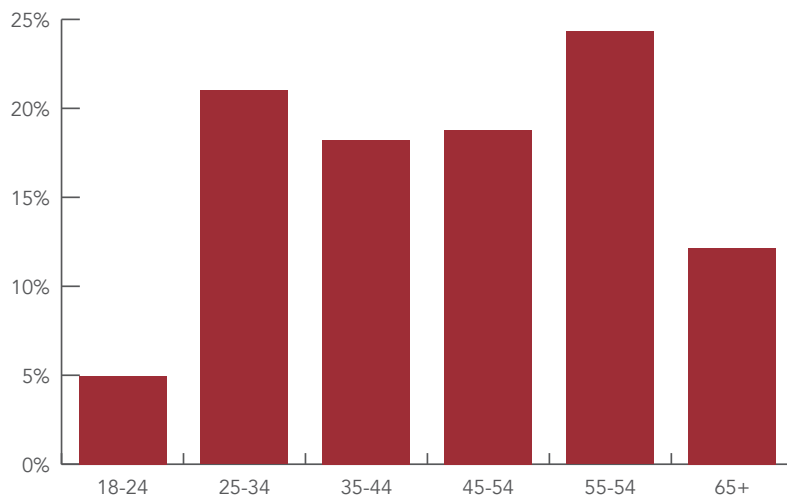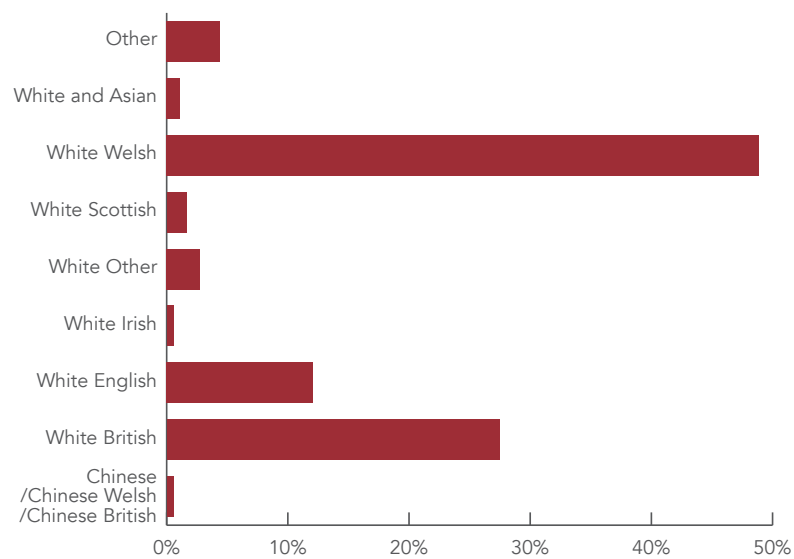
ANNEX 2: SUMMARY OF SURVEY ANALYSIS

Key distributions of survey respondents' socio-demographics
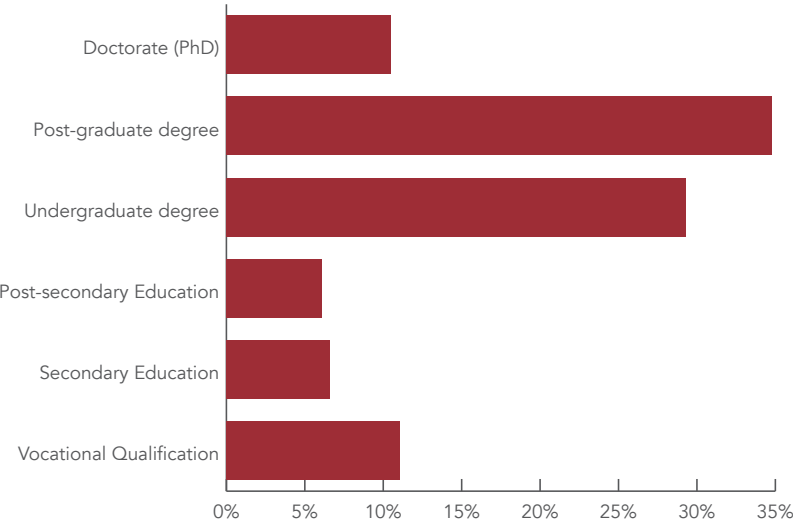
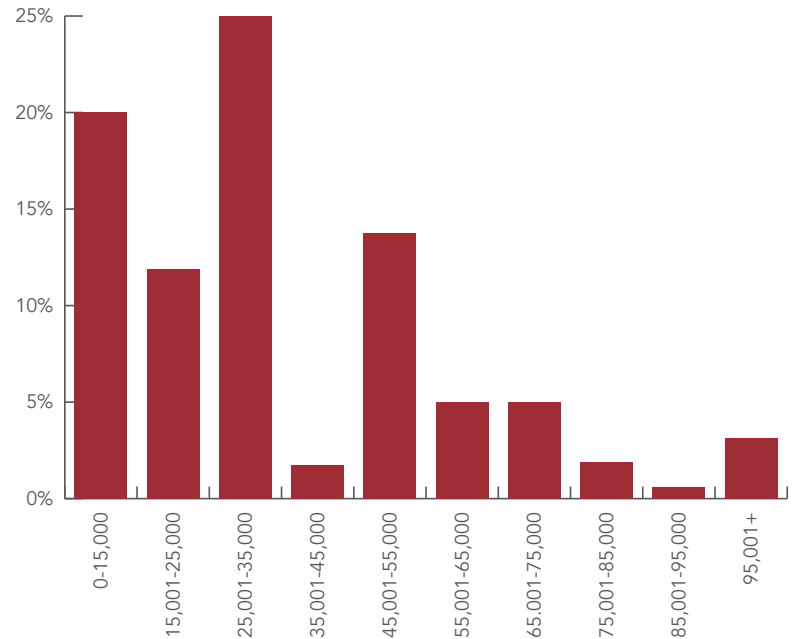### Age Distribution of Respondents

Ethnicity of Respondents

Highest Education Qualification

Current Salary of Respondents

Highest Educational Qualification of Parents
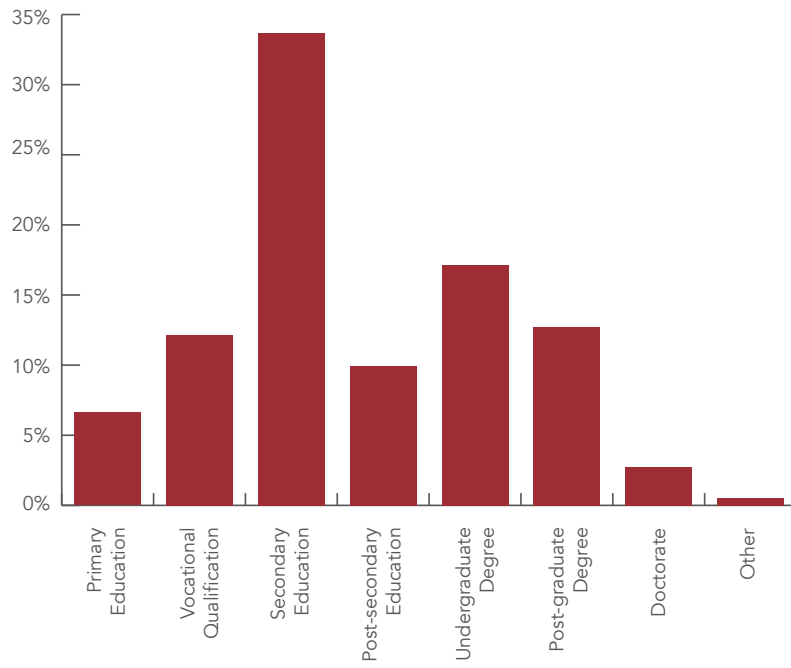
Key survey findings

Top 5 barriers to being an AM

Top 5 aspects of campaigning barriers

Bar chart showing percentages for:
- The financial cost of standing as a candidate — ~66%
- Fitting in a political party — ~45%
- Fitting in with my preferred party selection critieria — ~42%
- Dealing with the mainstream media — ~40%
- Personal and family safety — ~39%
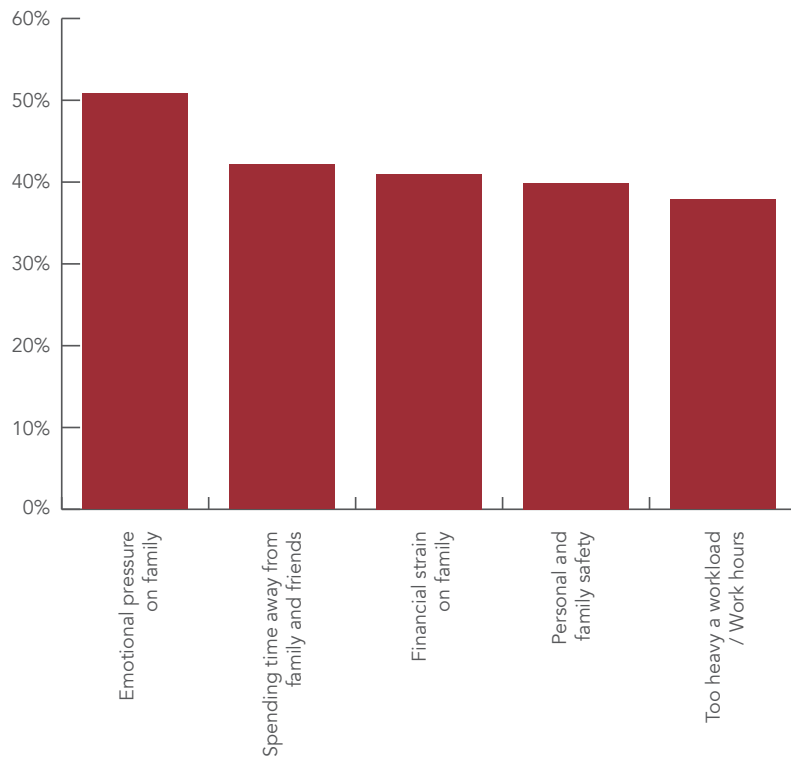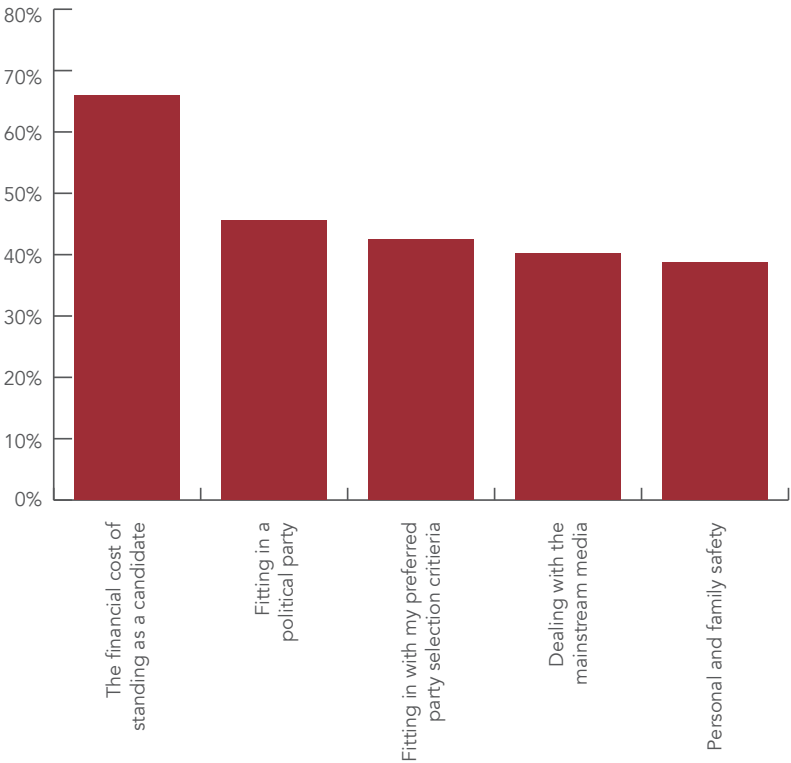
The Top 3 and Bottom 3 Incentives (%)

Bar chart showing percentages for:
- Advice from an Assembly Member mentor — ~75%
- Loan/grant options to finance an election campaign — ~73%
- Flexible voting for Assembly member (including electronic voting) — ~70%
- Increased campaign spending limits — ~19%
- National Assembly sport/ gym facilities on site — ~18%
- English language training — ~6%
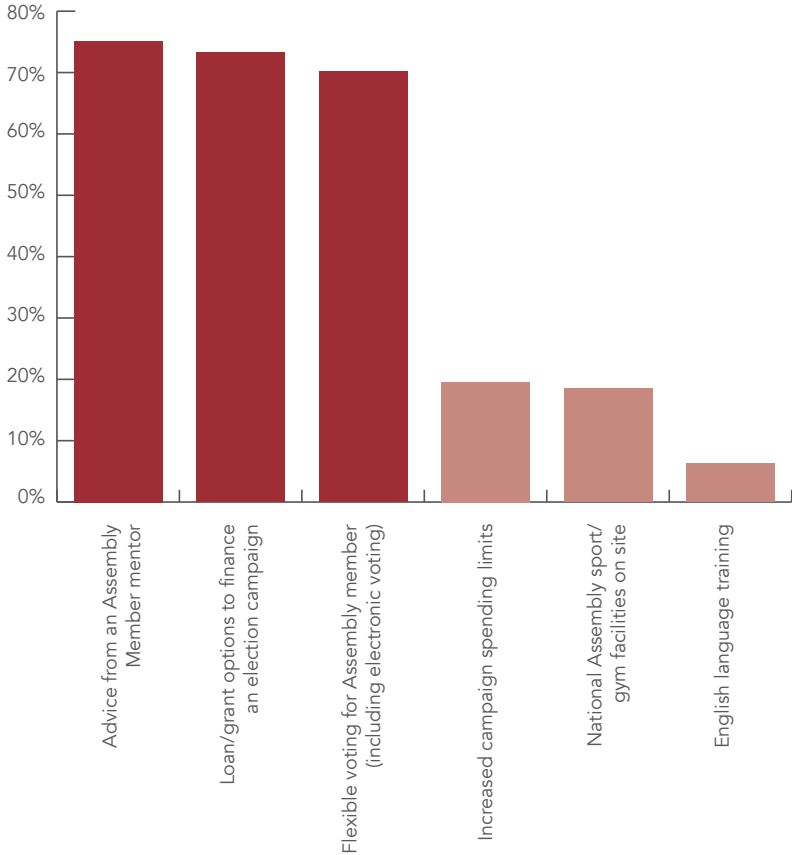
Gender Breakdown

Top 3: Barriers and Incentives by Gender

Top 3 Barriers to Standing

Women
Men

Personal and family safety
Spending time away from family and friends
Emotional pressure on family
Financial strain on family
Spending time away from family and friends
Emotional pressure on family

What would make you more likely to stand?

Women
Men

Flexible voting for Assembly member (including electronic voting)
Loan/grant options to finance an election campaign
Advice from an Assembly Member mentor

Percentage who Consider their Personal Attributes as a Barrier to Standing
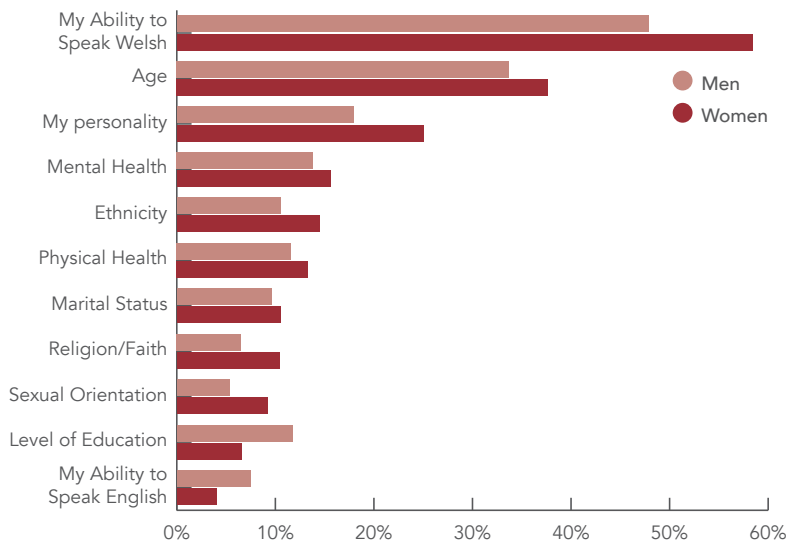
Legend: ● Men ● Women

Categories (top to bottom):
- My Ability to Speak Welsh
- Age
- My personality
- Mental Health
- Ethnicity
- Physical Health
- Marital Status
- Religion/Faith
- Sexual Orientation
- Level of Education
- My Ability to Speak English

x-axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

Average by Gender: Please rate how much you consider these factors to be barriers or incentives for you to stand as a candidate for the National Assembly. (0 - A significant barrier / 10 - A significant incentive)

Legend: ● Male Average ● Female Average

Categories (top to bottom):
- Serving the public
- Representing my own area or consituency
- Campaigning to change specific issues
- Representing people like me
- Opportunity to do a better job than my current AM
- Working in the NAW
- Representing any area or constituency
- Advancing a career in politics
- Pension scheme
- The current salary
- Prestige of the Role
- Having a resettlement grant if I'm not re-elected
- Advancing my career prospects in general
- Raising my personal profile

x-axis: 0 2 4 6 8 10

Average by Gender: Please rate how much these aspects of being an Assembly Member would be barriers or incentives in your decision to stand for election? (0 - Significant Barrier / 10 - Significant Incentive)
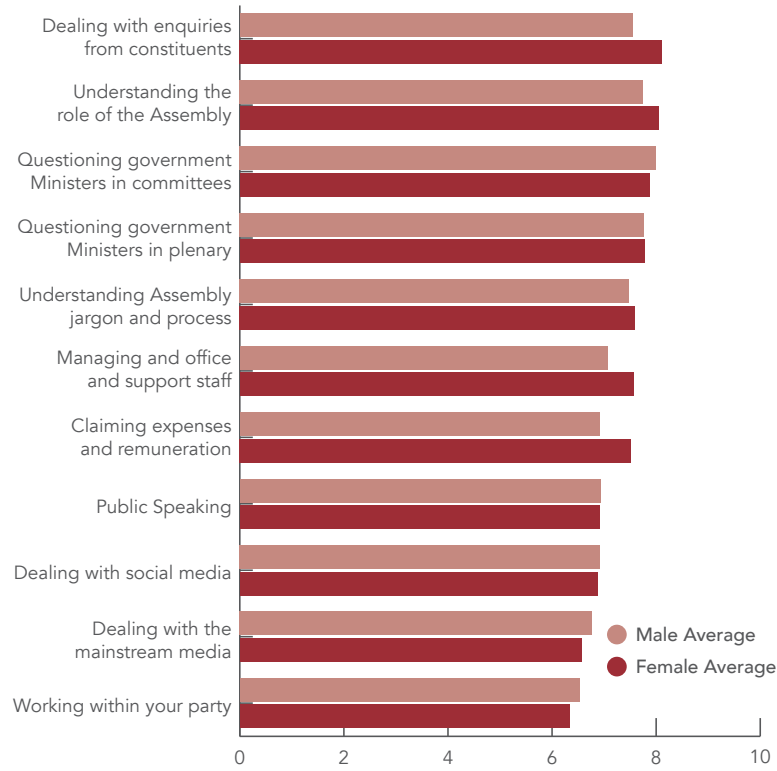
Percentage of Respondents who consider 'X' a Barrier to Standing

Percentage by Gender: What would make you more likely to stand?

Gender Differences: How much do you believe your personal attributes would constitute a barrier in your decision to stand for election to the National Assembly? (Positive points are where women score higher than men)

Attribute	
My Ability to Speak Welsh	10.5
Age	4
My personality	7
Mental Health	2
Ethnicity	4
Physical Health	2
Marital Status	1
Religion/Faith	4
Sexual Orientation	4
Level of Education	-5
My Ability to Speak English	-3.5

Scale: -6, -4, -2, 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12

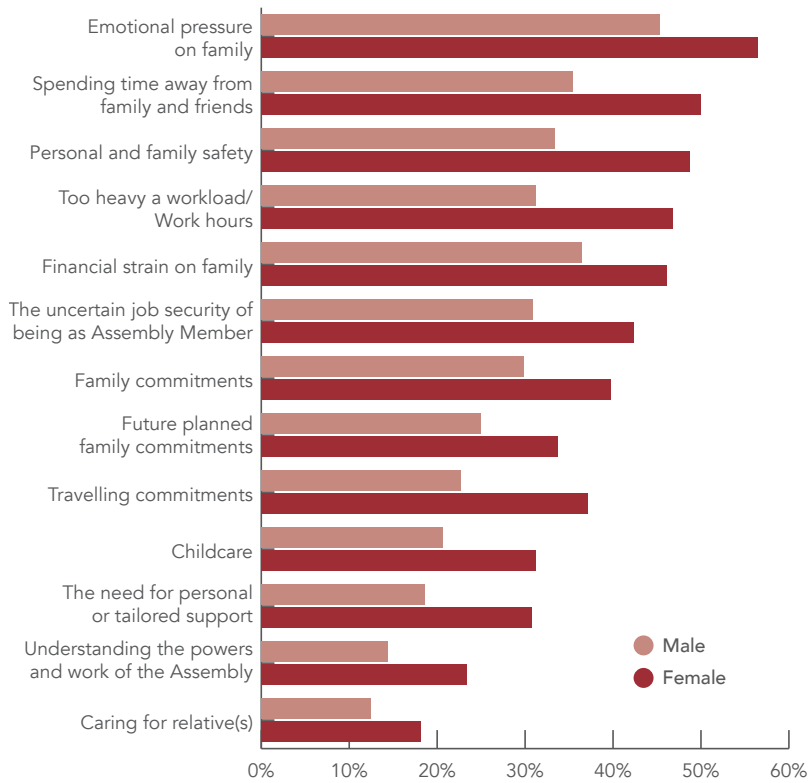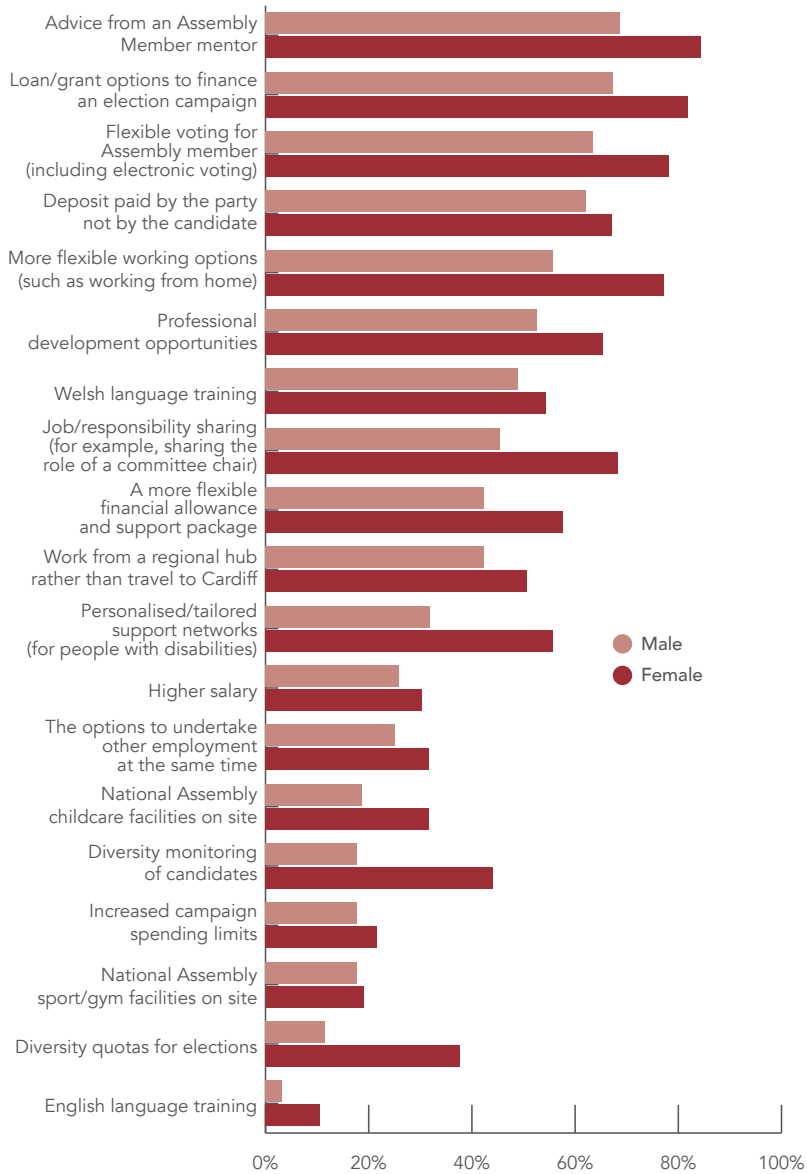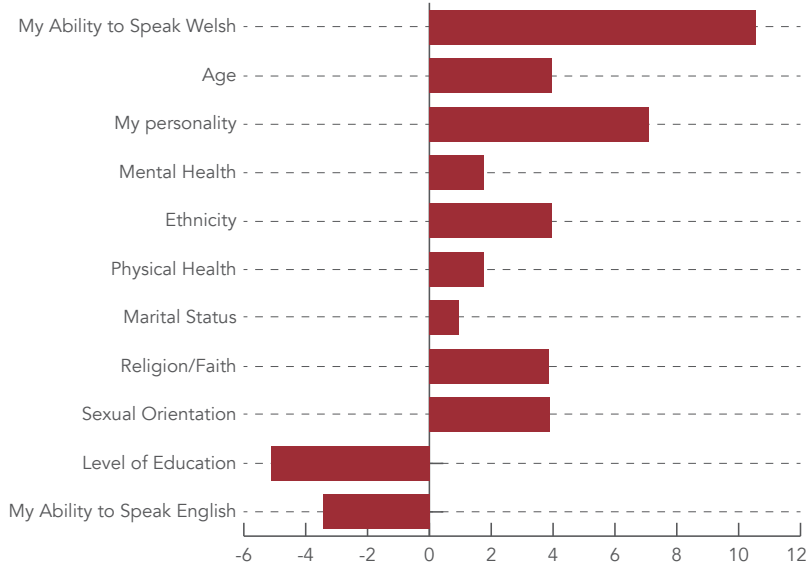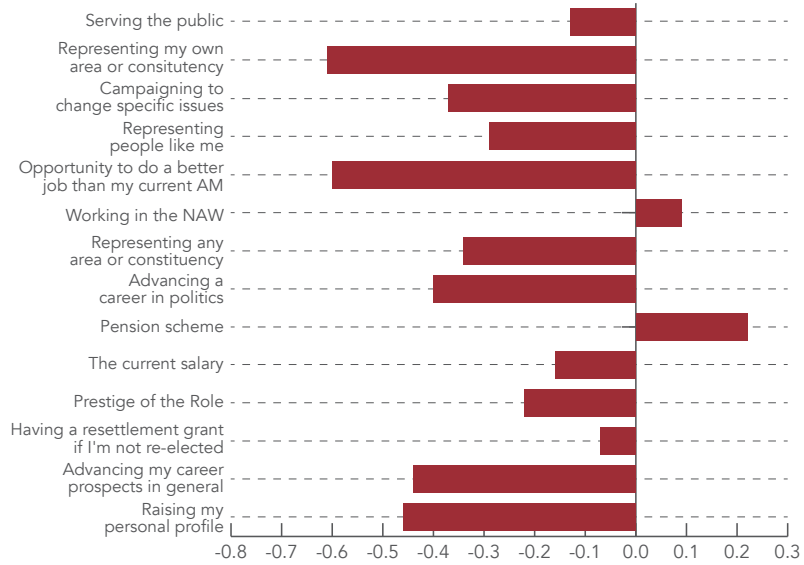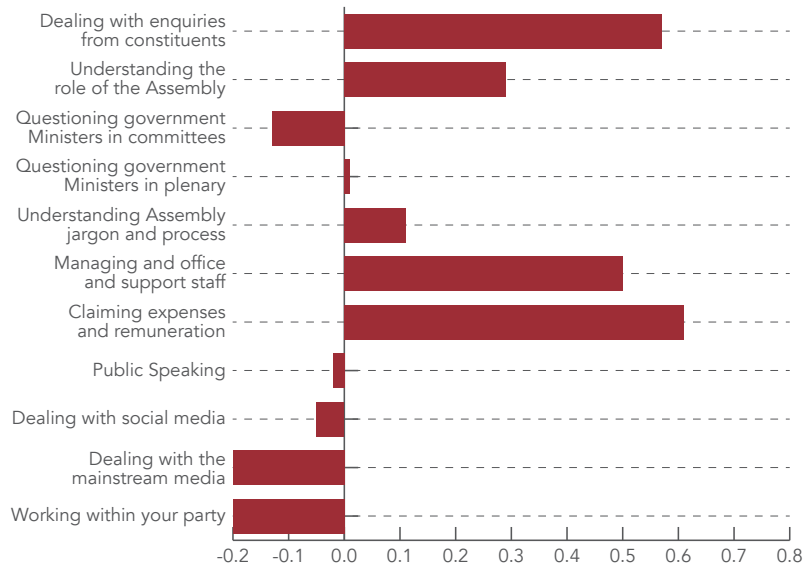**Gender Differences: Please rate how much you consider these factors to be barriers or incentives for you to stand as a candidate for the National Assembly. (Positive points are where women score higher than men)**

Factor	
Serving the public	-0.1
Representing my own area or consitutency	-0.4
Campaigning to change specific issues	-0.35
Representing people like me	-0.3
Opportunity to do a better job than my current AM	-0.4
Working in the NAW	0.1
Representing any area or constituency	-0.35
Advancing a career in politics	-0.4
Pension scheme	0.2
The current salary	-0.15
Prestige of the Role	-0.2
Having a resettlement grant if I'm not re-elected	-0.05
Advancing my career prospects in general	-0.4
Raising my personal profile	-0.45

Scale: -0.8, -0.7, -0.6, -0.5, -0.4, -0.3, -0.2, -0.1, 0.0, 0.1, 0.2, 0.3

Gender Differences: Please rate how much these aspects of being an Assembly Member would be barriers or incentives in your decision to stand for election? (Positive points are where women score higher than men)

| Aspect	
Dealing with enquiries from constituents	▬
Understanding the role of the Assembly	▬
Questioning government Ministers in committees	▬
Questioning government Ministers in plenary	▬
Understanding Assembly jargon and process	▬
Managing and office and support staff	▬
Claiming expenses and remuneration	▬
Public Speaking	▬
Dealing with social media	▬
Dealing with the mainstream media	▬
Working within your party	▬

Scale: -0.2 -0.1 0.0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 0.6 0.7 0.8

Gender Differences: What would make you more likely to stand? (% Women - % Men)

Item	
Advice from an Assembly Member mentor	▬
Loan/grant options to finance an election campaign	▬
Flexible voting for Assembly member (including electronic voting)	▬
Deposit paid by the party no by the candidate	▬
More flexible working options (such as working from home)	▬
Professional development opportunities	▬
Welsh language training	▬
Job/responsibility sharing (for example, sharing the role of a committee chair)	▬
A more flexible financial allowance and support package	▬
Work from a regional hub rather than travel to Cardiff	▬
Personalised /tailored support networks (for people with disabilities)	▬
Higher salary	▬
The options to undertake other employment at the same time	▬
National Assembly childcare facilities on site	▬
Diversity monitoring of candidates	▬
Increased campaign spending limits	▬
National Assembly sport/gym facilities on site	▬
Diversity quotas for elections	▬
English language training	▬

Scale: 0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30%

Age Breakdown

Percentage who Consider their Personal Attributes as a Barrier according to Age

● 18-24   ● 25-34   ● 35-44   ● 45-54   ● 55-64   ● 65+
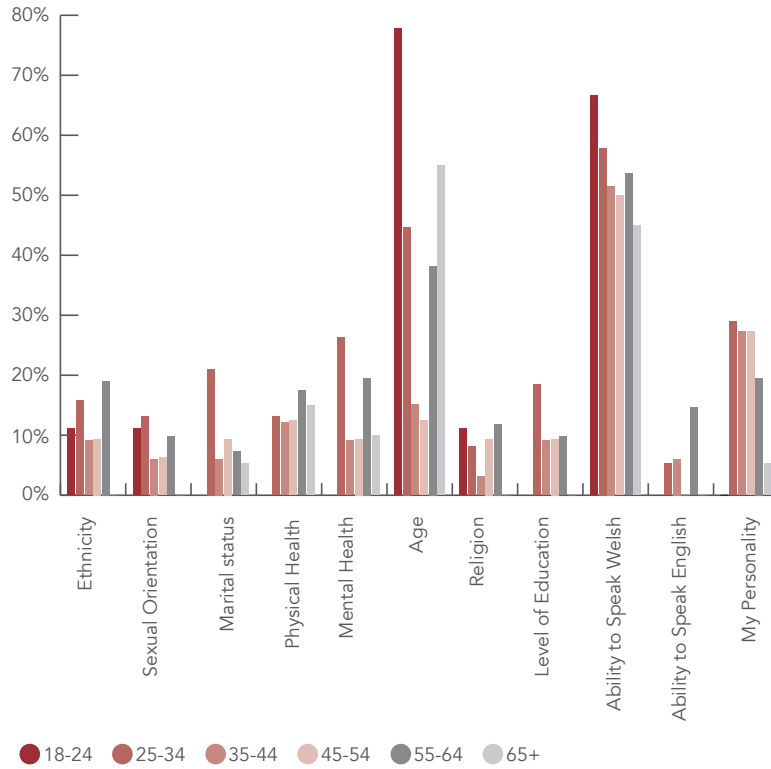
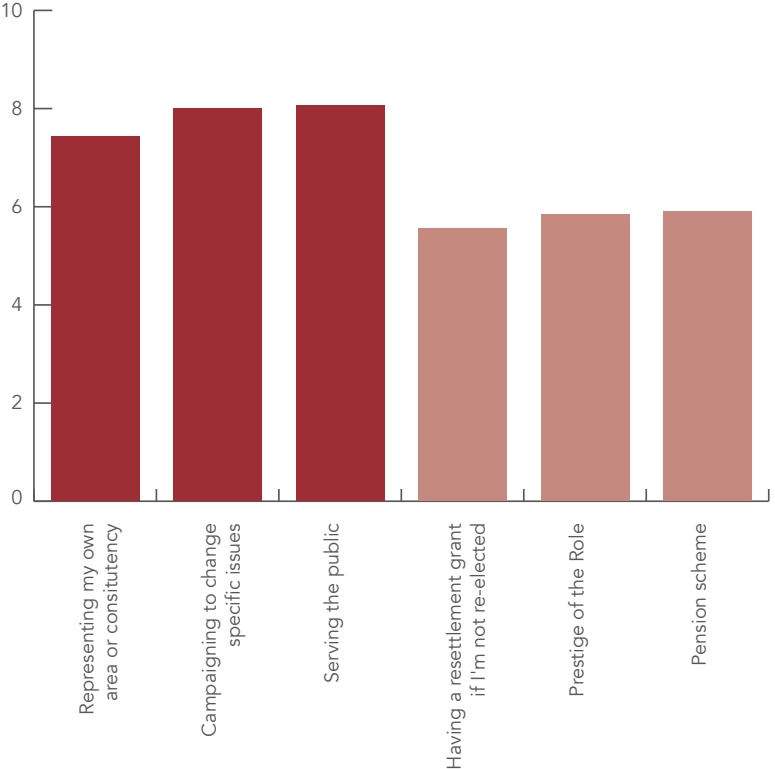## The Top and Bottom 3 Incentives on Average:18-24 year olds
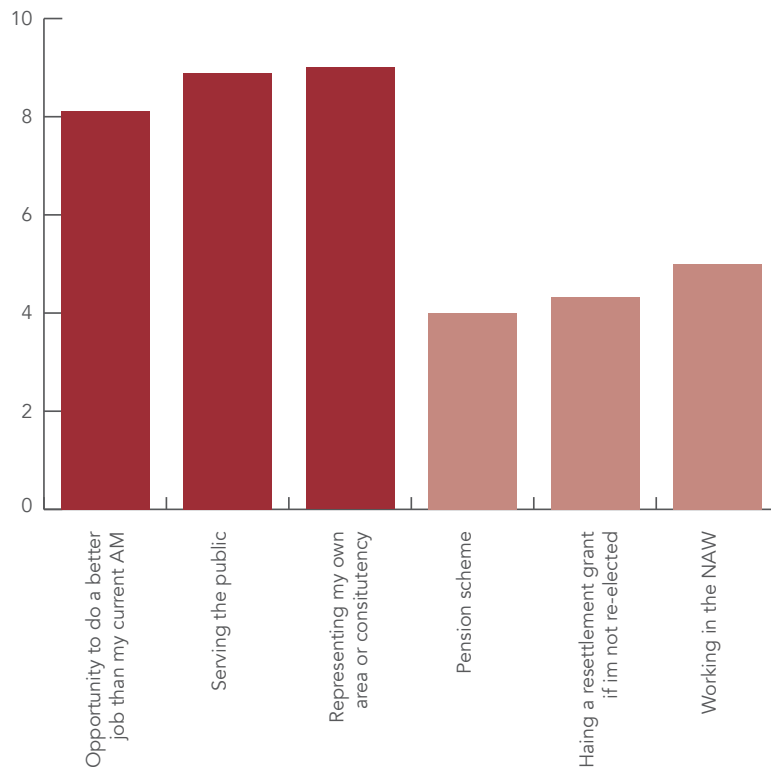
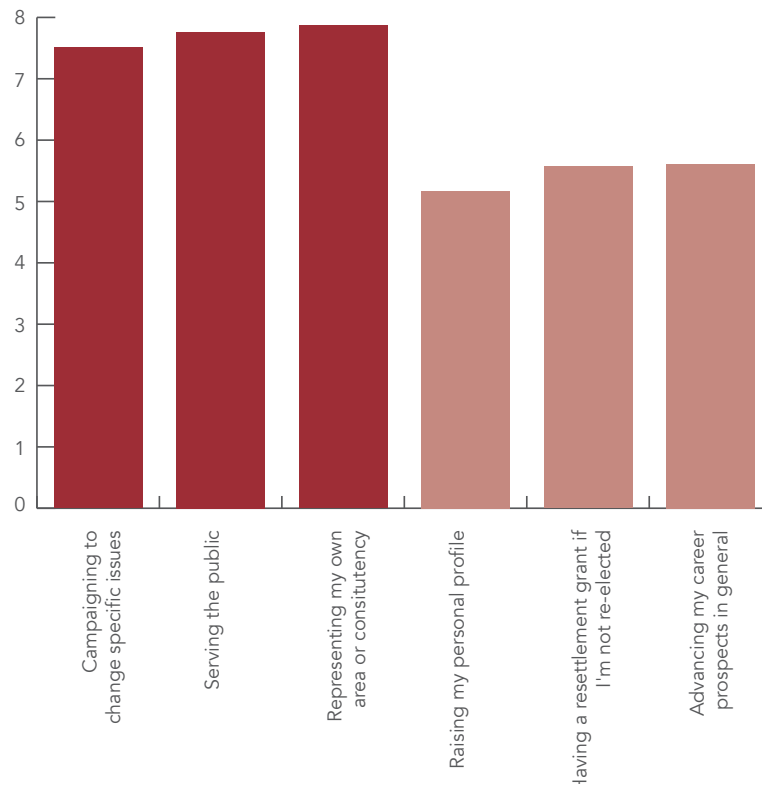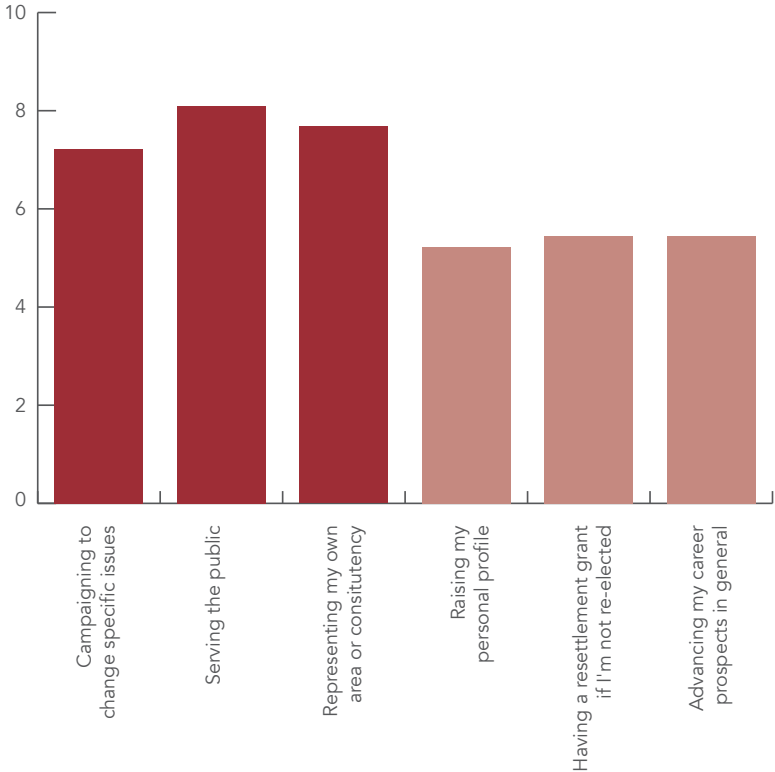**The Top and Bottom 3 Incentives on Average: 25-34 year olds**

Bar chart y-axis 0 to 10. Categories left to right:
- Campaigning to change specific issues
- Representing my own area or consitutency
- Serving the public
- Advancing my career prospects in general
- Raising my personal profile
- Prestige of the Role
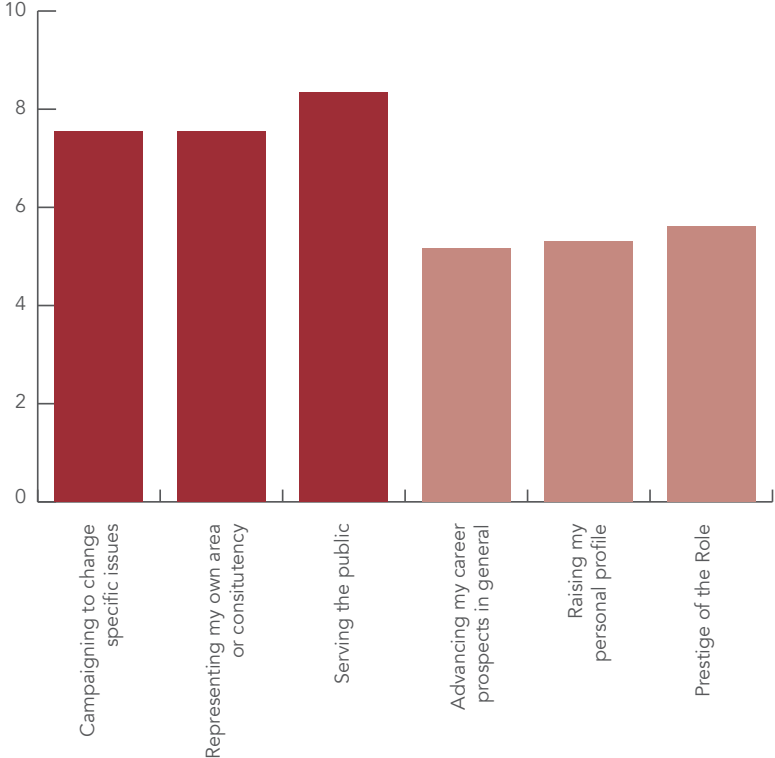
The Top and Bottom 3 Incentives on Average: 35-44 year olds

Bar chart y-axis 0 to 10. Categories left to right:
- Representing my own area or consitutency
- Campaigning to change specific issues
- Serving the public
- Having a resettlement grant if I'm not re-elected
- Prestige of the Role
- Pension scheme

The Top and Bottom 3 Incentives on Average: 45-54 year olds

Chart showing incentives (x-axis) with average values (y-axis, 0–10):
- Campaigning to change specific issues: ~7.4
- Representing my own area or consitutency: ~8.0
- Serving the public: ~8.05
- Raising my personal profile: ~5.6
- The current salary: ~5.9
- Advancing my career prospects in general: ~5.95
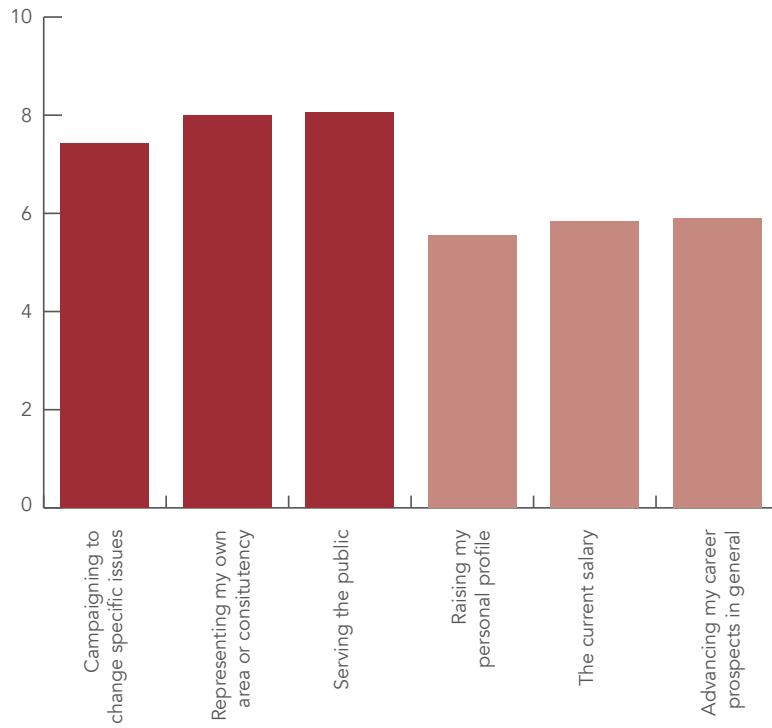
The Top and Bottom 3 Incentives on Average: 55-64 year olds

Chart showing incentives (x-axis) with average values (y-axis, 0–8):
- Campaigning to change specific issues: ~7.5
- Serving the public: ~7.75
- Representing my own area or consitutency: ~7.85
- Raising my personal profile: ~5.15
- Having a resettlement grant if I'm not re-elected: ~5.6
- Advancing my career prospects in general: ~5.6

The Top and Bottom 3 Incentives on Average: 65+ year olds
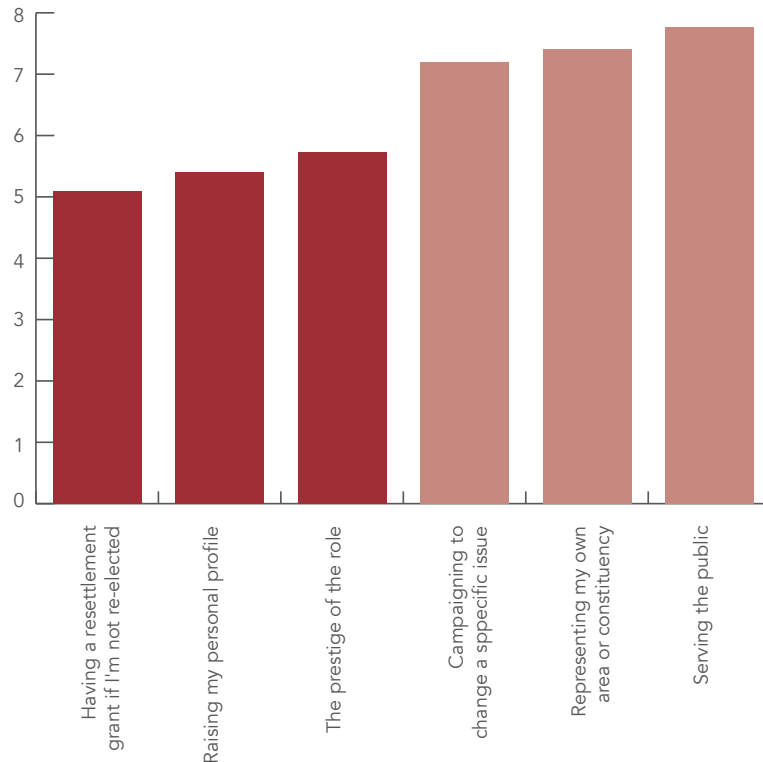
Disability Breakdown

Percentage of respondents who identify as having a disability who said that these incentives would make them more likely to stand in an election
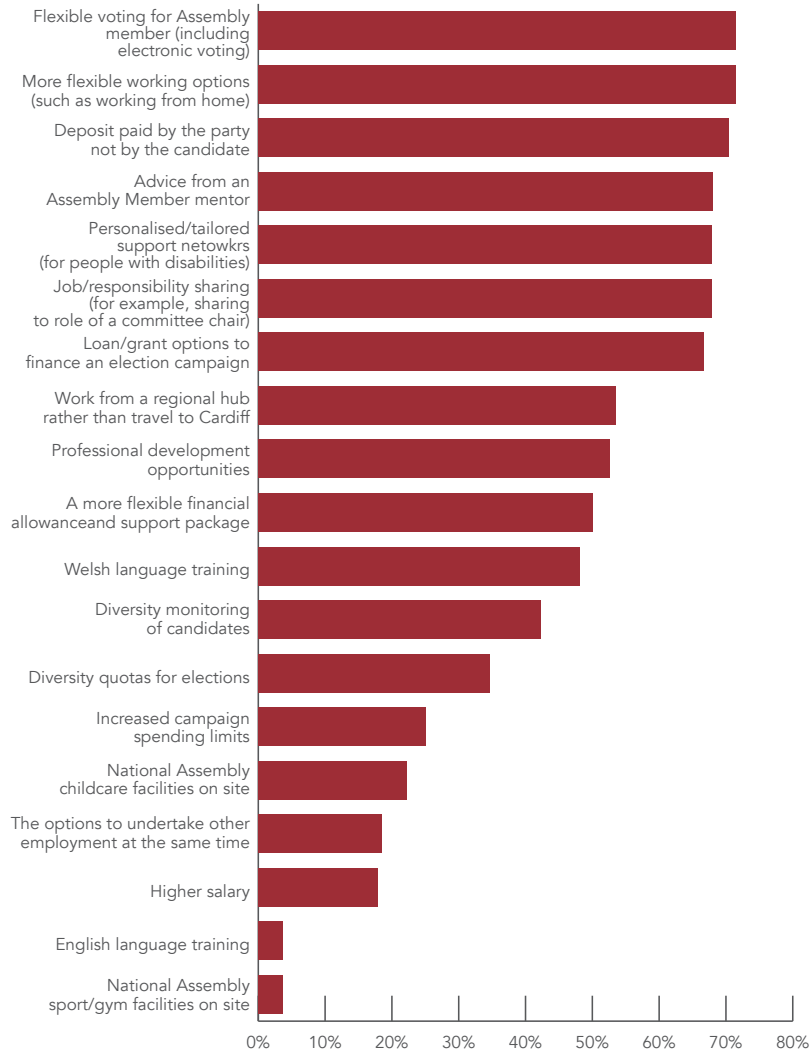
Top 4 Personal Attributes noted as Barriers by respondents who identified as having a disability (%)
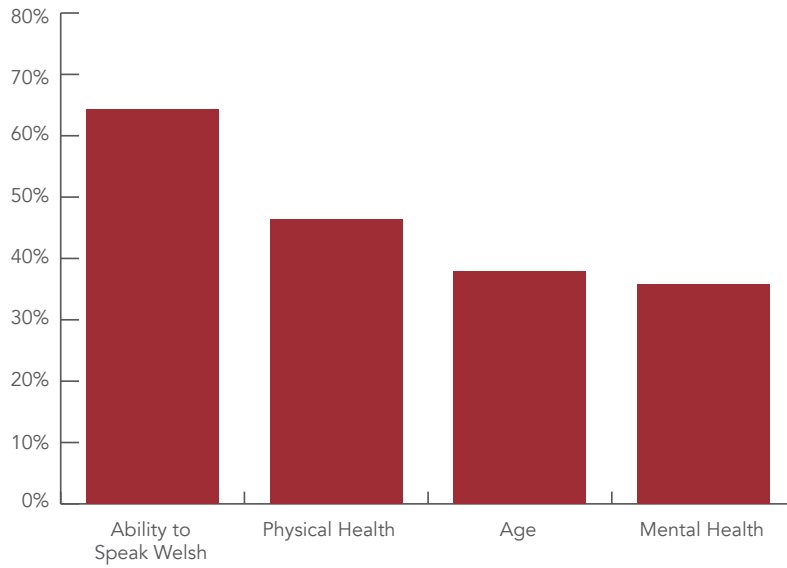
The Top and Bottom 3 Incentives on Average by those who identify as having a disability

ANNEX 3: DETAILED THEORY OF CHANGE

RECOMMENDATIONS			INTENDED RESULTS		
CONTEXT		EFFICIENCY		EFFECTIVENESS	
Theory of change underpinning our recommendations	Activities (Practical Recommendations)	Outputs	SO**	Outcomes (expected)	Impact
ISSUE: The devolution process in Wales was accompanied by a discourse around inclusivity, openness and accessibility. Twenty years on, despite a generally good record on female representation in the National Assembly, issues still remain in relation to the long term sustainability of such advancements, as well as around a more diverse Assembly along other strands: disability, ethnicity, socio economic background, education, age etc. **CONTEXT:** The Board commissioned the Wales Governance Centre to undertake research to better understand barriers and incentives for a wide range of individuals to stand for elections for the National Assembly and whether the remuneration package itself constitutes a deterrent. We found that individual, structural, political, institutional and cultural factors shape an individual's decision to stand for elections or not. Alongside these, there is an information deficit around the process of becoming an Assembly Member, the job of being an Assembly Member, the remuneration package and the support AMs whilst in office, and the rules about claiming expenses. Structural barriers, such as cost of standing, time and limited accessibility constitute important deterrents for some categories of people: young people, women, people with young families, people with disabilities. Systemic and political factors, such as the electoral system, the electoral process, candidate selection and nomination procedures in political parties are a major contributor to the lack of diversity of candidates. Cultural factors such as unconscious bias of the selectorate (within political parties) and the default preference for the archetypal candidate, as well as a lack of understanding of diversity are important deterrents for ethnic minority candidates, women as well as people with disabilities.	**R1** - Design (review) public engagement and outreach strategy	New public engagement and outreach strategy to complement the Board's overall strategy	1 & 3	**R1-5:** Effective and purposeful engagement with a wide range of stakeholders via different channels (i.e. digital, outreach).	Better Awareness, Information and Engagement on matter relating to: • The job of being an Assembly Member • The support AMs get to do their jobs • The role of the Remuneration Board • Diversity in public life Clarity and transparency in relation to: • Rules on claiming expenses Enhanced exposure and better understanding of diversity matters. Leading to: • Reducing the information deficit with regards: a) the role and function of elected members to the National Assembly and b) why diversity in public life matters • Eliminating some structural, political, and cultural barriers for people to stand in elections for the National Assembly • Providing incentives for individuals from a wide range of backgrounds to stand in elections and represent their communities.
	R2 - Improve provision of information and use of external communication channels	Website redesign in line with the National Assembly's digital strategy, focused on more dynamic and interactive content. Easy read and multi format version of the Determination.	1 & 3	Understand stakeholders' needs and capturing their views via an interactive website with a clear digital communication strategy in place that caters for diverse audiences.	
	R3 - Create and deliver content for internal stakeholders' outreach activities (Education)	Accessesible, easy read, multi-channel content on the remuneration package, expenses rules and support AMs receive once in office and after they cease to be AMs	1 & 3	Reduce information deficit, especially among people interested in standing for election by effective informing all potential candidates of the 6th Assembly determination one year before the Welsh general election.	
	R4 - Enhance the visibility of the Assembly and of the Remuneration Board	Liaise with AC for establishing an Annual 'Senedd Open Week ' or 'Festival of Politics' Contribute sessions to Senedd Open Week Organise / contribute to candidate roadshows one year prior to Welsh general elections Hold offsite meetings to engage early with potential candidates Review existing content and generate new, easy read, visual, video content – could do this with the Assembly's Digital Communication team and the engagement team.	1 & 3	Increased availability of multi format, easy read and accessible information about the remuneration package, support for AMs whilst in office and once they leave office, as well as clear information about the rules around expenses. Increased access points for such information (see above) and better integration within the wider Assembly engagement initiatives. Enhanced visibility of the Remuneration Board.	
	R5 - Engage with external stakeholders and contribute information sessions on a regular basis	Create a registry of leadership and mentoring schemes (ask organisers to register their programmes), contribute information sessions, organise Webinars and create info packs	1	Effective and purposeful engagement with a wide range of stakeholders that have direct access to potential candidates for the National Assembly elections.	
	R6 - Offer shadowing opportunities for interested members of the public	A public shadowing opportunity with blog (and other media) dissemination of the experience.	3	Enhanced visibility for the issues The Board deals with (remuneration package)	

We also found that people perceive and expect the Assembly to be a 21st century workplace. There is a lesser focus on salary and job security, and a greater focus on support, facilities and working arrangements instead. There are expectations that geographical boundaries are tackled and resolved by technology, that flexible working patterns are in place in order to fit in with the complex needs of individuals occupying that job (i.e. caring responsibilities, professional development etc). However, we also found that participants genuinely wanted and needed more detailed information about the job. Additionally, some factors associated with being an elected politician, such as hostile political climate, abuse, trolling, intrusion into privacy and the perception that the general public does not appreciate (or know) what politicians do, is a further deterrent.

DESIRED RESULT:
It is expected that these finding would inform the Board's thinking in shaping a Determination for the next Assembly that is fit for purpose.

Within the context of recent constitutional developments in Wales (Wales Act 2017, EPAER report 2017 and the Assembly Commission consultation on electoral reform), it is important that the new determination of the Assembly does not in fact prevent a wider range of candidates from standing in the Assembly Elections.

R7 - Align child care provisions with the sitting of the Assembly and the AMs' schedule	Consider early morning / late evening child care provision that account for travelling / commuting time	2 & 4	Eliminate barriers for individuals with care responsibilities.	
R8 - Raise with the Assembly Commission to consider: the appropriateness of provisions around flexible working (including remote voting), and the merits of job share, or second jobs, for Assembly Members.	Submit response to Assembly Commission consultation	2&3	Improve visibility of the Board and ensure that the working practices and environment are fit for purpose.	
R9 - Clarify and publicise rules for 'exceptional expenses' and specific support offered to AMs	Contain more detail in current and future determination	1	Ensure clarity and improve stakeholders' understanding of rules around exceptional expenses	
R10 - Provide allowances to AMs to support opportunities and experiences for people from their constituencies and regions	Provide annual allowance and publish rules around that	2	Effective engagement with AMs and their constituents	
R11 - Explore Access to Politics Fund with Electoral Commission & others	Organise / Sponsor workshop / Seminar with external stakeholders (including the Electoral commission) to explore merits of an Access to Politics Fund and how this would work	1 & 2	Enhanced visibility of the issues the Board deals with / Enhanced visibility and engagement with diversity issues	

Measuring delivery	Tracking outputs		Tracking outcomes	Assessing Impact
R1-5	Sources of evidence*: • Public Engagement strategy for 2021-25 supporting the overall Board's Strategy • Revamped website and digital communication channels • Multi-purpose and multi channel assets: easy read versions of the determination, video explainers, interactive pdfs, infographics, basic training / educational materials • Events attended / sponsored by the Board • Events the Board contributed to with information materials		Sources of evidence*: • Online engagement metrics: Direct engagement metrics • Calls for information materials and information sessions from internal and external stakeholders • Evaluation surveys of events	To be done in end of term / legacy reports
R6	• Series of blog posts about the shadowing opportunity and experience, as well as the role of the Board and the issues it deals with			
R7-10	• New Determination of the Assembly			
R11	Workshop findings report / press release			

*Indicative list - not a comprehensive list / Not necessarily intended to be absolute

**SO - Strategic Objective