

12th July 2024

APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD OF DATA CYMRU

Purpose

1. To appoint eight members to serve on the Board of Data Cymru for the period commencing with the Board's Annual General Meeting.

Background

2. Data Cymru is a company limited by guarantee, wholly owned by local government in Wales. Established in 2001 to work with and for local government in Wales on data and statistical issues. Data Cymru's focus is supporting local authorities effective use of data – *'putting data at the heart of local government'*.
3. Currently employing 23 staff and with an annual operating budget of around £1.3million (65% of which is generated through commercial income), Data Cymru delivers a wide range of projects in support of local authorities and the WLGA. Its work includes:
 - "Infobase" – a central repository of curated data (relevant to local government) from a range of data suppliers. Data Cymru, uniquely, provide this data with fully bilingual meta-data
 - Developing and maintaining a number of topic specific dashboards where officers and members can access the latest data e.g. around Poverty, Cost of Living, Inflation, Council spend (RO) etc.
 - Creating and maintaining the Self-assessment Performance Dataset to support local authority self-assessments plus individual performance profiles to support peer panel assessments.
 - Developing and hosting the 'Open Data' portal to facilitate data sharing
 - Procuring commercial data for use by local councils as part of a collaborative arrangement
 - Providing a range of data related training offerings for local government officers and members
 - Hosting monthly 'inform and inspire' webinars designed to share effective and/or innovative practice in the use of data
 - Establishing and hosting a number of relevant communities of practice
 - Ad-hoc data support to LAs and WLGA
4. The work of Data Cymru is overseen by a Board of Directors appointed annually by the WLGA Council. The Board is also supported by a number of advisors. Operational management is provided by Richard Palmer, the Chief Operating Officer.

Board Members

5. In line with the provisions of the Articles of Association of Data Cymru, the WLGA has been asked to appoint up to eight members of the Company who will also be the non-executive directors of the Data Cymru for the next twelve-month period.

6. In determining the appointment of representatives to serve on the Data Cymru Board it will be necessary to reflect the political balance of the Association as determined at the WLGA's Annual General Meeting. Whilst Leaders are encouraged to sit on this Board and nominations can be received from the Council or wider local authority membership of the WLGA.
7. Board members will direct the work of the organisation by setting the strategic direction and contributing to the development of annual work programmes. They will act as advocates for the company within their own local authorities and across local government more widely. Ideally, they will understand how data is used within local authorities to inform service development and delivery. They should be able to offer insight into how they currently engage with data and suggest ways in which Data Cymru can further support elected members and local government more widely.
8. Members are expected to attend three Board meetings per year and may attend occasional Data Cymru launches or events as appropriate.
9. The Association's membership of the Data Cymru Board for 2023-24 was as follows:
 - Councillor Colin Mann (Caerphilly) - Plaid Cymru – CHAIR
 - Councillor Jason McLellan (Denbighshire) - Labour
 - Cllr Helen Cunningham, Blaenau Gwent - Labour
 - Cllr James Pritchard (Caerphilly) - Labour
 - Cllr Steve Thomas (Blaenau Gwent) - Labour
 - Cllr Chris Weaver (Cardiff) - Labour
 - Cllr Geraint Thomas (Merthyr Tydfil) - Independent
 - Karen Jones, Chief Executive, Neath Port Talbot
 - Company Secretary: Dr Chris Llewelyn

The Board is also supported in its activities by a number of advisors:

- Jon Rae, Director of Resources, WLGA
- Jo Hendy, Head of Improvement, WLGA
- Lindsey Phillips, CDO for Local Government, WLGA
- Professor Malcolm Beynon - Cardiff Business School

Recommendations

10. The WLGA Council is invited to:

- 10.1 Appoint eight members to serve as members of the Data Cymru Board for the forthcoming twelve-month period, commencing with Data Cymru Board's Annual General Meeting in September (date to be confirmed).

Author: Lee Pitt, Democratic Services Officer

E-mail: members@wlga.gov.uk