



CABINET – 11TH MARCH 2020

SUBJECT: STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS 2020-2024

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

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- 1.1 The attached draft Strategic Equality Plan, Objectives and Actions 2020-2024 was considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 25th February 2020. Members were asked for their views on the draft Strategic Equality Plan prior to it being considered by Cabinet on 11th March 2020.
 - 1.2 The scrutiny committee were advised that the Public Sector Equality Duty in Wales came into force on 6th April 2011 and included a requirement for public authorities to develop and publish a Strategic Equality Plan every four years. The Council has had a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) in place since 2016, and must now update this for the next 4-year cycle.
 - 1.3 Members sought clarification on Objective 2 of the Corporate Plan 2018-2023, enabling employment, which was also reflected as part of Equality Objective 2. Two Members requested information on action being taken in the north of the County Borough to increase employment and the number of people accessing services and commercial opportunities in town centres. Officers advised that the issues raised related more to regeneration policies rather than the Equality Plan, and highlighted the Draft Heads of the Valleys Masterplan which utilises the Cardiff Capital Region Investment Fund to support the region's economic growth.
 - 1.4 A Member asked about the support available to Elected Members and the voluntary sector so that they can galvanise and facilitate community cohesion. Issues highlighted in the Draft Plan under Equality Objective 3: promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities. Officers advised that training sessions with Regional Community Cohesion Officers could be arranged and different forms of current public engagement were highlighted. Discussion ensued on the need to explore better and new ways of engaging and galvanising communities in order to make them more inclusive and cohesive. Members suggested that public seminars be established with the support of Regional Community Cohesion Officers in order to improve public engagement. Discussion also ensued on the implications of possible future funding cuts to the voluntary sector. Members were advised that future funding was currently being considered as Service Level Agreements with the voluntary sector had not been reviewed since 2008.
 - 1.5 Members raised the issue of deprivation as a key factor that can lead to examples of inequality. Officers advised Members about partnership working that had taken place in order to combat challenges caused by deprivation. The regeneration of the Lansbury Park Housing Estate in Caerphilly was given as an example.
 - 1.6 Members sought clarification with regard to Equality Objective 7: reducing the Gender Pay Gap. One Member wanted to know why part-time posts, which are mostly held by females, attracted salaries in the lower quartiles according to data contained in the Strategic Equality

Plan. Officers advised that the data indicated that part-time posts attracted salaries in the lower quartiles, regardless of gender. But, because of societal reasons the responsibility of childcare still falls disproportionately upon women and that therefore females tended to favour part-time employment in order to accommodate this commitment. One Member queried the suggested action of reviewing and updating HR policies regularly to include matters such as flexible working, part-time or job-share options and shared parental leave. It was suggested that a bolder response was needed. Officers advised that a review would help the Council to understand the size and causes of any pay gaps and identify any issues that need to be addressed. It was outlined how a future action plan would help tackle any causes identified. Discussion ensued on further measures such as the possibility of developing childcare facilities within council buildings. Officers advised that a report on the Gender Pay Gap was coming to Cabinet next month. Members were also advised that the council was confident that any gender pay gap did not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work. The gender pay gap is the result of roles in which male and females currently work and the salaries that these roles attract.

- 1.7 The Chair summed-up the views expressed by Members during the meeting. It was outlined that the Strategic Equality Plan should include:
- (i) The establishment of public seminars in communities to increase greater Community Cohesion. Regional Community Cohesion Officers to be asked to explore new ways of promoting and increasing public engagement.
 - (ii) Exploration of new ways of eliminating the Gender Pay Gap, the reduction of which was identified as an Equality Objective in the draft Strategic Equality Plan.
- 1.8 Following consideration and discussion the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommend to Cabinet that:
- (i) The views outlined in 1.7 are given full consideration.
 - (ii) The Strategic Equality Plan, Objectives and Actions 2020-2024 be presented to Council for its approval as adoption as Council policy.
- 1.9 Cabinet are asked to consider the report and the above recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee.

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Appendices:

Appendix Report to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee 25th February 2020 – Agenda Item 8



POLICY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 25TH FEBRUARY 2020

SUBJECT: STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS 2020-2024

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Report is seeking the views of Members and provides information on the Council's draft Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 (Appendix A).

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty in Wales came in to force on 6th April 2011 and included a requirement for public authorities to develop and publish a Strategic Equality Plan every four years. The Council has had a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) in place since 2016, and must now update this for the next 4-year cycle.
- 2.2 This has also ensured that the Council has a good foundation in place to meet three of the Well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 2.3 The views of Policy and Resource Scrutiny Committee are sought on the draft Strategic Equality Plan, to inform a version to be presented to Cabinet and Council for its approval for adoption as Council policy.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The views of Policy and Resource Scrutiny Committee are sought on the draft Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, to inform a version to be presented to Cabinet and Council for its approval for adoption as Council policy.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To allow the adoption of the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 for the next 4 years.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Since April 2016, the Council has had in place a four-year operational document known as the Strategic Equality Plan - Equalities and Welsh Language Strategic Objectives; this has been accompanied by a separate Action Plan.
- 5.2 The Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 has undergone a full revision compared with the previous version, in order to reflect changes in best practice, changes in the objectives or to provide additional information. The combined Objectives and Action Plan have been developed to take achievements and progress into account and merged them into one

operational document.

5.3 The Strategic Equality Plan has been developed so that the Council can set out how it aims to meet its commitment to equality and how it will meet its legal obligations contained within the Equality Act 2010.

5.4 A comprehensive engagement process took place during November and December 2019 to involve as many people as possible in developing the draft Equality Objectives and to give an opportunity for suggestions for additional or alternative objectives and any relevant actions. An engagement report has been produced (Appendix B).

5.5 Feedback on the consultation process was very supportive of the draft objectives on the whole. Areas for improvement and barriers identified have been included as actions under each relevant Equality Objective.

5.6 The Equality Objectives included in the Strategic Equality Plan are:

- **Service Planning and Delivery** – Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services
- **Education, Skills and Employment** – Improve education opportunities for all
- **Community Cohesion** – Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities
- **Inclusive Engagement and Participation** – Engage with citizens to encourage participation, to have their voices heard when planning service delivery
- **Welsh Language** – To ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements
- **Inclusive, Diverse and Equal Workforce** – Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough
- **Reducing the Gender Pay Gap**

5.7 The Gender Pay objective is a requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

5.8 **Conclusion**

The updated Strategic Equality Plan and associated actions will ensure that the Council has a fit-for-purpose document in place to demonstrate compliance with the latest statutory Equalities and Welsh Language duties. It has been developed in line with legislative requirements and guidance produced by the Equality & Human Rights Commission.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions have been made in preparing this report.

7. **LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

7.1 The following Council policies are relevant to the decision being requested:

7.2 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023**

Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all – this objective is reflected in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 as Equality Objective 2. We need to identify and remove the barriers to accessing education, training and employment which will positively contribute to creating cohesive and resilient communities. The skills agenda is fundamental to economic development and economic prosperity.

Objective 2 - Enabling employment - this objective is also reflected in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 as part of Equality Objective 2.

Objective 3 - Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people's well-being – Housing can be seen as a barrier to accessing other goods and services and can impact on people's mental health and well-being. Living in conditions where you feel safe and belong is vitally important and these are considered within Equality Objectives 2 and 3 of the Strategic Equality Plan.

Objective 4 - Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity promotes prosperity and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment – Transport can be seen as a barrier to accessing services and employment within the county borough. This was a theme which was discussed within the focus groups we held as part of the consultation process. Transport is considered within Equality Objective 2, increased and improved transport links will enable and encourage people to access education, training, employment and services easily.

Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being – This is a key thread within the Strategic Equality Plan. If citizens live in the right living conditions and have easy access to transport, these enable them to reach education, training and employment opportunities. They also support citizens to access goods and services independently and to participate in consultations around service planning and delivery. By having their voices heard, services can be tailored to suit the needs of citizens thus empowering them to feel included. It includes supporting people to help themselves by providing comprehensive advice and guidance including signposting to other services. It's about having meaningful conversations with people to help them identify what matters to them, which will inform services to suit their needs.

Welsh Language Standards

Equality Objective 5 in the Strategic Equality Plan supports the Welsh Language. Language is not considered a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, however communicating with citizens in line with their language preference is a statutory duty under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Council's Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice. A number of the actions are underpinned by the county borough's Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022.

Shared Ambitions Strategy

This strategy outlines the Council's commitment to work with schools and the Education Achievement Services (EAS) to improve educational attainment and achievement and links with Equality Objective 2.

Communication and Engagement Strategy

The availability of information in various formats is essential in ensuring that all citizens are able to participate in any or all engagement exercises. Whilst advances in technology enable us to provide information in digital formats, there continue to be barriers that prevent citizens from engaging.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 The Strategic Equality Plan contributes to all 7 of the Well-being Goals which are:-

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
- A globally responsible Wales

The Strategic Equality Plan is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act and are as follows

- Long Term – Any actions identified in the Plan will be used to plan service delivery over the next 4 years and will be reviewed and updated should any actions be met within the 4 year timeframe of the Plan.
- Prevention – By having a Plan in place ensures that services understand what is expected of them to deliver inclusive services and without discrimination.
- Integration – There is a crossover between the Strategic Equality Objectives and the Objectives of the Corporate Plan 2018-2023. This ensures consistency in meeting objectives and reporting. It also places a stronger and joined-up link between services and the Plans the Council already has in place.
- Collaboration – Working with key stakeholders is important to learn and understand how we can improve on how we currently deliver services based on the actions in the Plan.
- Involvement – The Strategic Equality Plan is about making citizens feel equally valued whilst recognising that people have different needs and delivering services in a non-discriminatory way. To understand what people's needs are its very important to involve them in any service planning, design and delivery. The public consultation responses on the Strategic Equality Objectives assisted us in identifying key actions to include in the final version of the Plan.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Equality Act 2010 introduced a general equality duty and a specific public sector equality duty that is applicable to Councils. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Single Equality Duty) requires public authorities to demonstrate that they have paid 'due regard' in their decision-making process to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

9.2 The Council must have due regard to the impact of any proposals on those with a protected characteristic. The Council has a specific duty to publish information to demonstrate how it has paid due regard to the aims above as part of its decision-making. Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment screening exercise (and if necessary a full Equality Impact Assessment) would be evidence that the Council has considered its legal obligations in making the decision on the recommendations in this report.

9.3 The equality objectives provide a positive impact on all groups with protected characteristics. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. Whilst an effort was made to engage

with all sectors of the community, it is evident that no responses were received from individuals representing local religious groups or the black and minority ethnic community. This is particularly concerning as we are not aware if there are any support / advocacy groups in the borough representing the needs of BAME and Religious citizens. As a result, actions within the equality objectives will ensure efforts are made to develop communication and engagement routes with BAME and religious groups and citizens to ensure their voices are heard in the future.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Equality Objective 6 - Inclusive, Diverse and Equal Workforce and Equality Objective 7 – Reducing the Gender Pay Gap both relate to Human Resources activities. The Gender Pay objective is a requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

11.2 In light of the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and the wider requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty, any personnel implications will be dealt with as they arise by Human Resources and the Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation Team, and reported on in the annual reports.

12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 All responses from consultations have been incorporated in the report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015
Human Rights Act 1998
Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

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Consultees: Christina Harrhy – Interim Chief Executive,
Richard Edmunds – Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services
Cllr Eluned Stenner – Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Planning
Cllr James Pritchard – Elected Member – Equalities Champion,
Stephen Harris – Interim Head of Business Improvement
Robert Tranter – Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Lynne Donovan – Head of People Services
Keri Cole – Chief Education Officer
Liz Lucas – Head of Customer and Digital Services
Rhian Kyte – Head of Regeneration and Planning
Mark Williams – Interim Head of Property Services
Kathryn Peters – Service Improvement and Partnerships Manager
Ros Roberts – Business Improvement Manager
Christopher Hunt – Community Cohesion Coordinator (West Gwent)

Background Papers:

Appendices:

Appendix A [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024](#)

Appendix B [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 - Consultation Report](#)

Appendix C [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 - Equality Impact Assessment](#)

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Section 1:

- **ABOUT US**

The Caerphilly county borough covers an area stretching from the Brecon Beacons National Park in the north, to Cardiff and Newport in the south. It is bordered to the north by Merthyr Tydfil, the west by Rhondda Cynon Taf, and to the east by Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen local authorities.

The area lies at the heart of both the South Wales Valleys and the Cardiff Capital Region. The Caerphilly county borough occupies some 108 square miles (28,000 hectares) of the Valleys area of South East Wales. It is a little over 18.6 miles long and nearly 11 miles wide, and is formed by the valleys of three rivers: the Rhymney, Sirhowy and Ebbw. The county borough has 180,000 residents living across a mixture of urban and rural communities. Three quarters of the county borough is used for agriculture and forestry. The Council is the 5th largest local council in Wales and is the largest employer in the area.

The Council employs nearly 9,000 staff with 73 % of them living in the county borough. They are employed into a variety of different roles within service areas which make up the following Directorates:

- Corporate Services and Education
- Social Services and Housing
- Communities

The Directorates are headed by Corporate Directors and together with the interim Chief Executive make up the Corporate Management Team who oversee the strategic management of the council's business. The Council operates a cabinet style of local government which is led by a Leader and who is supported by 8 Cabinet Members. We have 73 elected Councillors who have a variety of roles including agreeing the Council's policy framework, Council Tax and budget.

Our vision and values are an integral part of our Transformation Strategy #Team Caerphilly – Better Together. Its aim is to transform the way in which we have previously delivered services. It will examine how services are prioritised, how they can become more business efficient, explore new opportunities for greater customer focus and digital delivery, consider alternative delivery models and seek commercial opportunities.

Central to this programme of transformational change is our new mantra of **'Social Heart and Commercial Head'**. This recognises our commitment to public service and the needs of our citizens, while also demonstrating our desire to explore new innovative, commercial opportunities where appropriate, to generate additional income to reinvest in services to help them remain resilient.

Our purpose in this strategy is:

"To create capacity and foresight to develop solutions to some of the county borough's biggest challenges, ensuring the Council understand and responds to the changing needs and priorities of our communities."



The outcomes we aim to achieve are:

- To have strong working relationships with our communities and partners to maximise the use of our collective resources to ensure a resilient county borough for the future.
- To embed a new operating model that will encourage innovative approaches to service delivery and ensure that we are making the best use of our resources.
- To help close the gap between poverty and prosperity through improving educational attainment and stimulating the local economy to create high quality jobs.

The Council's equalities statement makes its commitment clear;

The Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL and other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

Respect for diversity is a key issue as our communities change and develop in the 21st century; respect for the old and the new and respect for every individual who lives or works here, who represents the county borough, or who visits here.

Council services must reflect these diverse needs and Caerphilly County Borough Council already has a strong background in delivering accessible services in a sensible, measured and cost-effective way. The cuts to council budgets being made at the time of publishing this plan have to take into account the impact on the most vulnerable in society through Equality Impact Assessments, which carry the full authority of this plan.

The Council is committed to ensuring it achieves value for money from its third party procurement recognising the value of using procurement to support its wider Cultural, Social, Economic and Environmental objectives, in ways that offer real long-term benefits to the community it serves and the people of Wales, whilst balancing the issues of value for money.

Our Programme for Procurement needs to be a living strategy, flexible, adaptable and alive to the changing environment; modular in nature so that it is easy to review and update annually in line with developments in the procurement landscape. Our approach will be continuous improvement to bring about real change and to improve the lives of those who live and work within our borough.

The Council will use its procurement processes to foster positive social change where appropriate. The Council has adopted the Ethical Supply Chain Code of Practice and we will apply this to foster fair working conditions for all.

The plan will be monitored each year in order to review the impact of the progress we make and our statutory Equalities Report will continue to be published. It will also be publicised and promoted widely both internally and externally in order to raise awareness of the work being done.

- **CONTEXT**

This Strategic Equality Plan has been developed to primarily demonstrate the Council's commitment to meeting the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. It highlights links to legislation and regulations covering the Welsh Language Standards and Human Rights issues and how it supports 4 of the 7 aims of Welsh Government's *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*; *A healthier Wales, A more equal Wales, A Wales of cohesive communities and A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*. It also outlines how the council will meet its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty, to advance equality and inclusion for all protected groups.

Building on our previous equalities work the Plan explains to staff, citizens, stakeholders and elected members, how Caerphilly County Borough Council intends to deliver its equalities commitments whilst continuing to be an inclusive organisation that does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

To assist us in writing this Plan, we engaged with our citizens, staff, stakeholders and elected members. We also used a range of equality information which supported us in defining what would be our equality objectives for the next 4 years, and by listening to them we hope that these objectives are both meaningful and achievable for us to deliver.

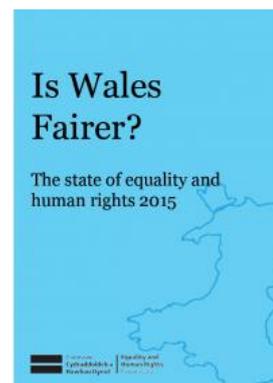
We looked at what priorities there were to consider both nationally and at a council level, and based them on what evidence we had available to us to support the work. A lot of work has been undertaken over the years into assessing our progress against the Public Sector Equality Duty through service plans and the self-assessment process.

We considered external sources of information such as reports by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Welsh Government, policies and priorities, research reports and other relevant statistics available to help us.

A number of external reports undertaken by the Equality and Human Rights Commission have supported and influenced the development of our new equality objectives.

Is Wales Fairer? 2015 – Equality and Human Rights Commission

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), [Is Wales Fairer? 2015](#) report looked at 7 key challenges that needed to be addressed in Wales. According to the report, inequalities and abuses of human rights are entrenched and will require a concerted effort from individuals and public, private and third sector organisations to tackle and reduce them.



The 7 challenges identified were:

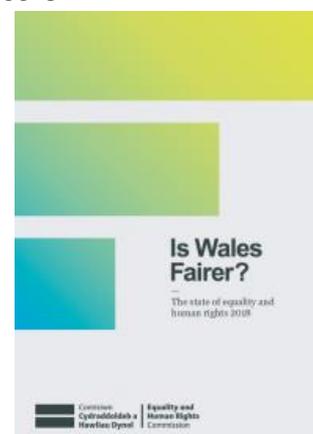
1. Close the attainment gaps in education
2. Encourage fair recruitment, development and reward in employment
3. Improve living conditions in cohesive communities
4. Increase access to justice and encourage democratic participation
5. Improve access to mental health services and support people experiencing poor mental health
6. Prevent abuse, neglect and ill-treatment in care and detention
7. Eliminate violence, abuse and harassment in the community

These are ongoing challenges; however, progress has been made towards meeting them via a number of effective action plans within the Council. For example, in March 2018 the Council adopted a set of Well-being Objectives for 2018-2023 within its [Corporate Plan](#). Well-being Objective 1 is **Improve education opportunities for all** and this will be addressed through the Shared Ambitions Strategy 2019-2022. A full list of relevant supporting documents is included within each the objectives.

Is Wales Fairer? 2018 – Equality and Human Rights Commission

The format of the latest report from the EHRC; *Is Wales Fairer? 2018*, outlines the following themes. The objectives within the Plan have been developed to align with these themes;

- Education
- Work
- Living Standards
- Health
- Justice and Personal Security
- Participation



The report identifies that some progress has been made in making Wales fairer, but suggests that there is much more work that needs to be done. The Equality and Human Rights Commission's key focus will be socio-economic disadvantage, disability, gender and race and these will be reflected in the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives 2020-2024.

When developing our equality objectives, both *Is Wales Fairer? 2015* and *Is Wales Fairer? 2018* were fundamental in guiding us to the equality objectives we are consulting on and which are detailed in this document.

The Action Plan in Section 2 identifies how the equality objectives and actions link to the themes identified in the *Is Wales Fairer? 2018* report.

To help to improve the annual actions, we also welcome any ongoing, general comments on the content, quality and accessibility of this document and on the impact of those actions on the people we serve and the people we employ.

If you have any comments or would like to know more about the work the Council is doing please contact:

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- **LEGISLATION**

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 brings together and replaces previous anti-discrimination laws in a single Act. The Act includes a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which has replaced all the individual duties previously in place, namely race, disability and gender equality. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty, which places a duty on the Council, and other public organisations, to have due regard when making decisions and delivering services to ensure that we meet the requirement to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't we must also ensure that we;

- Remove and minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups whether these are different to the needs of other people.
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The third aim refers to fostering good relations and this means tackling prejudices and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't. This might mean in some circumstances that some people are treated more favourably than others as long as it's within the provisions of the Act.

There are 9 protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010:

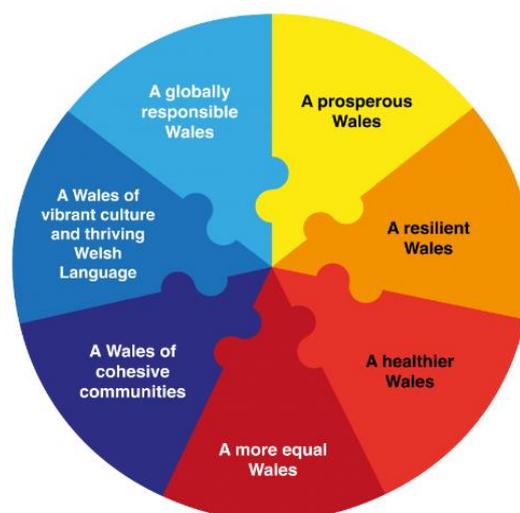
- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

In Wales we have specific statutory duties placed on us, which are regulations that set out the actions the Council must take to comply. The regulations were published by Welsh Government in April 2011 and include the following areas;

- **Equality Objectives** – prepare and publish a set of equality objectives which meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- **Engagement** – involve people who represent one or more protected characteristics and who have an interest in how the Council undertakes its functions.
- **Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)** – undertaking EIAs and publishing them alongside reports which require decisions.
- **Equality Information** – collect and publish equality information which ensures compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- **Employment Information** – collect and publish workforce monitoring data annually.
- **Pay Difference** – ensure the Council has an equality objective which specifically relates to gender pay differences.
- **Staff Training** – promote knowledge and understanding of the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty and the specific duties in Wales. Use performance assessment procedures to identify and address the training needs of staff.
- **Strategic Equality Plan** – publish a strategic equality plan which sets out the Council’s Equality Objectives to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- **Procurement** – when procuring works, goods and services from other organisations, include conditions relevant to the Public Sector Equality Duty within procurement processes.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Council is committed to ensuring that the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) is embedded within its service delivery and activities. The Act puts in place a sustainable development principle with a view to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. This will help us to create a Wales that we want to live, in now and in the future.



To make sure that we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place 7 well-being goals, and whilst the Council's Strategic Equality Plan will cut across all of the well-being goals, the Plan specifically supports progress against the following 3 goals:

- A Wales of Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A more equal Wales

The Sustainable Development Principle of the Act tells the council what to consider in meeting its duties under the Act. The Council, when making decisions has to consider the impact the decision could have on future generations. To do so there are 5 ways of working set out that must be considered and applied when making decisions. They are:



The 5 ways of working have been used to shape the Council's equality objectives.

Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 replaced the Welsh Language Act 1993 and as part of the legislation, in Wales the Welsh language has equal legal status with English and must not be treated less favourably.



Public bodies must comply with a set of national Welsh Language Standards which the Welsh Language Commissioner issued via a [Compliance Notice](#) to the Council. The Compliance Notice sets out which of the 176 standards in the legislation apply to the Council, along with any exemptions and their implementation dates.

Welsh language issues are not covered by the Equality Act but rather have a set of Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, it has long been recognised that the equality and Welsh language policy agendas complement and inform each other. This is further reinforced by the goal within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

Welsh Language developments will be made corporately in line with the aims of the Measure, which:

- confirmed the official status of the Welsh language;
- created a new system of placing duties on bodies to provide services through the medium of Welsh;
- created a Welsh Language Commissioner with strong enforcement powers to protect the rights of Welsh speakers to access services through the medium of Welsh;
- established a Welsh Language Tribunal;
- gives individuals and bodies the right to appeal decisions made in relation to the provision of services through the medium of Welsh;
- created a Welsh Language Partnership Council to advise Government on its strategy in relation to the Welsh language;
- allowed for an official investigation by the Welsh Language Commissioner of instances where there is an attempt to interfere with the freedom of Welsh speakers to use the language with one another.

It is for these reasons that Welsh Language has been integrated into the Equality and Welsh Language Objectives and Action Plan, and has been given a corporate equality objective of its own.

Section 2:

- **Strategic Equality Objectives and Action Plan**

Equality Objective 1	
Service Planning and Delivery – Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services	
Context	
<p>This objective focuses on the provision of accessible and inclusive services to the citizens of the county borough. We will achieve this by continuing our engagement with service users to identify and eliminate barriers to services.</p> <p>Barriers experienced by groups and individuals may include, accessing information in appropriate formats to suit their needs, mental health difficulties, transport, unemployment or accessibility to technology. Service areas should implement plans and strategies collaboratively to successfully address and remove identified barriers.</p> <p>Education, health & mental health services, housing, social services and transport are areas which we wish to improve upon.</p> <p>Empowering groups with protected characteristics to be able to access the services they need is a key focus for the Council.</p>	
Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018	
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation	
Relevant Protected Characteristics	
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language	
Supporting Documents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Caerphilly Public Services Board's Well-being Plan 2018-2023 ➤ Corporate Plan 2018-2023 ➤ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ➤ Welsh Government - Digital Inclusion Framework ➤ Caerphilly County Borough Council – Customer and Digital Strategy 	
Actions:	
1.	Deliver on the principles in the Customer and Digital Strategy
2.	Ensure our staff have the necessary skills to deliver digital services
3.	Explore and consider adopting the Communication Access Symbol to ensure information is provided using different formats and language including BSL
4.	Upskill citizens to enable greater use of digital technology

5.	Identify service needs of specific user groups; what barriers prevent access; and what actions are required to remove those barriers
6.	Ensure the Council's website and intranet is accessible so that people with disabilities can still engage
7.	Improve the collection and recording of equalities monitoring information of our citizens across council services
8.	Collect equalities monitoring information for compliments and complaints
9.	Survey the council's building stock (and schools) in relation to accessibility using the Local Access Group
10.	Survey polling stations in relation to accessibility using the Local Access Group

Why?

Digital Inclusion – Upskilling citizens and staff enables them to use and access information digitally, removing a number of barriers and enabling citizens to be more engaged. This includes the use of social media and networking, the news, access to job opportunities, finance (online banking), transport information, housing options or even online purchases. Digital skills will enable citizens and staff to access details regarding council services, and have up to date information relating to developments which may affect them, such as consultations, roadworks, events etc.

Equalities Monitoring – Improving how equalities monitoring information is collected will identify what issues exist within services, and if citizens with protected characteristics experience any issues or are accessing services equally. Equalities monitoring data will help us understand who our customers are and assist us in tailoring our services to suit their needs. Collecting this data for compliments and complaints will help identify areas where we are doing well and areas where we need to improve. This information will enable us to provide equality of access to services and the removal of identified barriers.

Accessibility – By surveying the council's building stock, which includes schools and polling stations, we can identify buildings that have accessibility problems and work towards rectifying them. Buildings can present physical barriers which prevent citizens from accessing services, for example voting. Clear signage, lighting and access to services need to be taken into consideration as an element of this theme. As an authority we must ensure that we have staff with the necessary language skills, to exceed customer expectations, coupled with a sound and varied knowledge of council services.

Equality Objective 2	
Education, Skills and Employment – Improve education opportunities for all	
Context	
<p>The primary aim of this objective is to ensure that our communities are well equipped to secure sustainable and well-paid employment as a means of preventing poverty. Through ensuring our citizens are ready to enter the working environment we will prevent long term problems associated with low skills and un-employability.</p> <p><i>‘Improve Education opportunities for all’</i> as detailed in the Council’s Corporate Plan, will be delivered using outcomes identified within the Shared Ambitions 2019-2022 Strategy. This strategy outlines the Council’s commitment to work with schools and the Education Achievement Services (EAS) to improve educational attainment and achievement.</p> <p>Increasing the number of citizens accessing education, training and employment will positively contribute to creating cohesive and resilient communities that will thrive. The skills agenda is fundamental to the economic development and economic prosperity of the nation, Cardiff Capital Region and Caerphilly County Borough.</p> <p>Key to this will be focussing our work on reducing the number of young people who are not in employment, education and training, eliminating the economic inactivity gap; identify the skills gaps and shortages in priority sectors, increase the number and quality of apprenticeships and improve people’s perception of apprenticeships as a route into well-paid employment.</p>	
Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018	
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation	
Relevant Protected Characteristics	
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language	
Supporting Documents	
➤ ‘Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report’	➤ Corporate Plan 2018-23
➤ Shared Ambitions 2019-22 Strategy	➤ Cymraeg 2050
➤ Prosperity for All Action Plan	➤ Nurture, Equip and Thrive (NET)
➤ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	
Actions:	
1.	Improve the skills of citizens by providing opportunities to gain qualifications and support to obtain employment
2.	Develop support for Adult Community Education to deliver digital literacy courses that will support local employability programmes

3.	Aim to reduce the impact of poverty by supporting citizens into improved employment opportunities and conditions
4.	Meet the targets set within the local employability programmes by upskilling and supporting citizens into well-paid work
5.	Through investing in our educational and housing stock, and providing apprenticeships, training opportunities and work placements within our organisation, we will increase the number of local citizens who are skilled and qualified workers and contributing to Community Benefits
6.	To further develop an inclusive approach to apprenticeships

Why?	
<p>Skills and Employment Opportunities – By tackling the causes of poverty and ensuring our anti-poverty grant programmes are working collaboratively, we will maximise our ability to support the most vulnerable in our communities. Increasing the number of citizens accessing education, training and employment will positively contribute to creating cohesive and resilient communities that will thrive, thus improving quality of life and the health of those living within the county borough.</p> <p>Education Opportunities – The Council has listed <i>‘Improving educational opportunities for all’</i> as the first of its Well-being Objectives, and implemented a <i>Shared Ambitions Strategy</i> to drive this work forward. As an authority we have committed to an ambitious 21st century schools investment programme. The 21st Century Schools Band A programme was delivered on time and within budget. The first two projects of the equally ambitious Band B programme have been identified and will assist the Authority in meeting the needs of its most vulnerable learners and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Transport – The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal is an ambitious investment programme. Designed to develop transport infrastructure and connectivity, as well as create employment and apprenticeship opportunities to positively promote local and regional regeneration. If transport infrastructure meets the needs of individuals wishing to access education, training and employment opportunities, this will promote prosperity and improve community cohesion.</p>	

Equality Objective 3	
Community Cohesion – Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities	
Context	
<p>Community cohesion as defined in Welsh Government’s Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2014-2016 (latest document) is described as the ability of all communities to function and grow in harmony together rather than in conflict. It aims to build communities where people feel confident, that they belong and are comfortable mixing and interacting with others, particularly with different people and people with different protected characteristics.</p> <p>Caerphilly adopts the principles that a cohesive community is one where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; • the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued; • those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; • strong and positive relationships are developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods. <p>When we refer to ‘communities’ we are often describing a geographical neighbourhood, but the term community may also be used to define individuals who share a protected characteristic (for example ethnicity or culture, age group, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, gender) or interests.</p>	
Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018	
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation	
Relevant Protected Characteristics	
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language	
Supporting Documents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Plan 2018-2023 ➤ ‘Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report’ ➤ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ➤ Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2014-2016 	
Actions:	
1.	Raise the profile for discriminatory incidents reporting in schools through further staff training
2.	Evolve the regional integrated approach, to improve the health and well-being of individuals and families subjected to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

3.	Advocate community diversity work with services and partners to celebrate equality of difference by championing commemorative and celebratory dates (i.e. Refugee Awareness Week, Holocaust Memorial Day, Hate Crime Awareness Week)
4.	Engagement – develop a minority communities citizens panel as a means to improving the engagement with lesser heard voices
5.	Community cohesion team will work with LEA and partners to develop improved equities practices and anti-discrimination work in schools. (This will include training to staff, raising the profile of discriminatory incident recording, support for schools to develop the inclusion of equalities work in the curriculum through schools workshops and a schools swap project linking a local school to one in a different and contrasting area”)
6.	Engage with EU nationals with regards to the EU Settlement Scheme
7.	Monitor community tensions –link with Partners and take proactive steps to mitigate tensions from escalating in the community
8.	To continue support for the LA’s engagement with the UK Refugee Resettlement Scheme (Still TBC)

Why?

The current political discourse following Brexit has, in some regions, had a significant impact on community cohesion - and the national raise in recorded Hate crime in the wake of the 2016 referendum further evidences the division in some communities. Addressing this division and providing equality of opportunity to all residents, regardless of protected characteristic, is essential to ensure Caerphilly encourages positive relationships within and between communities.

Community Cohesion – *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* is one of the 7 goals of the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*, this ensures cohesion remains at the heart of how the Council and other public bodies deliver policies and services now and in the future. The Act and Welsh Government’s *National Delivery Plan* work hand in hand, following the same principles of integration, collaboration and involvement, and ensuring policies and services remain responsive to local needs. The Delivery Plan aligns with Welsh Government’s Strategic Equality Plan, and demonstrates how we will continue to foster good relations and tackle deep-rooted inequality within our communities.

Equality Objective 4	
Inclusive Engagement and Participation – Engage with citizens to encourage participation, to have their voices heard when planning service delivery	
Context	
<p>The availability of information in various formats is essential in ensuring that all citizens are able to participate in any or all engagement exercises. Whilst advances in technology enable us to provide information in digital formats, there continue to be barriers that prevent citizens from engaging. Transport, mental health, socio-economic status, low literacy and numeracy skills and particular difficulties experienced by hard to reach or seldom heard groups, are some of the barriers that continue to prevent citizens from engaging with the council and wider support services.</p> <p>This Objective is reflected in one of our Corporate Objectives that looks at how we can ‘Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being’. It includes supporting people to help themselves by providing comprehensive advice and guidance including signposting to other services. It’s about having meaningful conversations with people to help them identify what matters to them, which will inform services to suit their needs.</p>	
Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018	
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation	
Relevant Protected Characteristics	
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language	
Supporting Documents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Plan 2018-2023 ➤ ‘Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report’ ➤ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ➤ Customer and Digital Strategy 2019-2023-2023 ➤ Team Caerphilly – Better Together Transformation Strategy ➤ Communication and Engagement Strategy (internal document) 	
 <small>CCBC Communication and Engagement Strat</small>	
Actions:	
1.	Support citizens to ‘help themselves’ by providing comprehensive advice and information, including signposting to other services
2.	Have ‘meaningful conversations’ to help citizens identify what matters to them to inform outcome focussed planning
3.	Identify and support carers
4.	Embed the <i>Consultation and Engagement Framework</i> into all consultation exercises undertaken by council services

5.	Identify service needs of specific user groups; what barriers prevent access; and what actions are required to remove those barriers
6.	Review and update our key stakeholder groups within the county borough that represent protected characteristic groups
7.	Review and strengthen internal processes for undertaking Equality Impact Assessments and related consultation
8.	Ensure that activities related to service change and transformation embed the principles of good consultation with communities as part of 'The Caerphilly Conversation'

Why?	
<p>Communication and Accessibility – We need to assist citizens in upskilling to acquire digital skills to access information and to participate online. The information we provide should be provided in an easy read format which uses plain language. We need to look at how we engage and consult with citizens via focus groups and the View Point Panel and increase participations and ensure that they are representative of the protected characteristics.</p> <p>Voice – Consult directly with key stakeholder groups to consult face to face. Using co-production will help build relationships with citizens, where they feel they can influence and make decisions around the services they need. Also builds trust and empowers the public in becoming involved in service design and delivery.</p> <p>Remove Barriers – Consider the Gunning Principles when planning any consultation. Planning sufficient time for consultation exercises and providing adequate information which allows people to make informed decisions / respond knowing the facts.</p>	

Equality Objective 5	
Welsh Language – To ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements	
Context	
<p>Welsh language issues are not covered by the Equality Act 2010 but have a set of standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. These are detailed in the regulations approved by Welsh Government as the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015.</p> <p>Internal working practices continue to evolve to ensure that the principle of language equality is respected in every aspect of service provision. To assist the council in meeting the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and to meet the needs of the Welsh speaking population of the county borough, we work in partnership with organisations such as; Menter Iaith Caerffili, Fforwm Iaith, Welsh medium schools etc. This work is detailed in the county borough’s Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022.</p> <p>We must comply with all agreed Welsh Language Standards as detailed in the Council’s Compliance Notice to ensure that the Welsh-speaking population, whether they be staff, citizens, students or visitors can access the council’s services in Welsh.</p>	
Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018	
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation	
Relevant Protected Characteristics	
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language	
Supporting Documents	
➤ Council’s Compliance Notice - Welsh Language Standards	➤ Cymraeg 2050
➤ Five Year Welsh Language Strategy	➤ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Actions:	
1.	Raise awareness amongst staff that come into contact with children and young people of the need to foster positive attitudes towards the Welsh language
2.	Develop bilingual leadership skills amongst young people to help them become community champions of the language within their communities
3.	Promote the availability of bilingual services by ensuring Welsh speakers and learners within service areas wear appropriate lanyards/badges
4.	Support the development and promotion of a directory of Welsh medium services available locally
5.	Ensure that Welsh medium events and activities are a part of the Council’s community events programme

6.	Promote Welsh language as a recognised objective for managers, to enable them to map Welsh language provision across their service area and increase capacity where necessary
7.	Consider the impact on the Welsh language when planning housing developments, in particular Welsh medium school places, street names etc.
8.	Ensure the council's website is fully bilingual and pages are monitored and updated in both languages on a rolling programme basis
9.	Ensure the council's Intranet has a Welsh interface and menus in line with Standard 126
10.	Create a campaign to attract young Welsh speaking citizens into youth work, sport and art activities as leaders
11.	Work with young people to raise awareness of the Welsh language as a valuable skill for training and employment
12.	Hold an annual Welsh language jobs fair to raise awareness of the value of the language to employment in the Welsh public sector and the ability to contact the council in Welsh by telephone, face to face and by written communication

Why?	
<p>Communication and Accessibility – Information must be available bilingually as required by the Welsh Language Standards. We will consider the needs of Welsh speakers and learners in relation to providing all communication. When consulting with citizens and delivering frontline services, staff must be equipped with the required Welsh language skills to deliver services as required by the Welsh Language Standards. By promoting the availability of bilingual council services we will increase the demand for these services and meet our obligations under the county borough's <i>Five Year Welsh Language Strategy</i> and Welsh Government's <i>Million Welsh speakers by 2050</i>.</p> <p>Voice – Engage and consult with local Welsh language groups and organisations, such as the Welsh Language Forum, Menter Iaith Caerffili, the Urdd etc. Encourage Welsh speaking citizens to become members of the council's Viewpoint Panel to ensure that it is representative. Co-production will help build relationships with Welsh speakers and learners so they feel they can influence and make decisions around the services they need. They can also support the Council to identify examples of good practice and where improvement is required.</p> <p>Remove Barriers – Working in partnership with Welsh medium groups and organisations will help us communicate with a wider audience. It will help us deliver services to members of our community, who may think that the Council does not deliver services through the medium of Welsh. Service areas should actively promote the availability of bilingual services, making Welsh speakers and learners feel a part of the community they live in and that they can access services using their language preference without having to ask.</p>	

Equality Objective 6	
Inclusive, Diverse and Equal Workforce – Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough	
Context	
<p>Creating a workplace which is safe and inclusive promotes a positive working environment where staff feel valued and empowered, enabling them to provide high quality services to our citizens.</p> <p>We need a greater understanding of the diversity of our workforce. To achieve this, collection of equalities monitoring data is crucial. Data must be captured at the beginning of the employment process and cleansed and updated on a regular basis.</p> <p>Fairness at work and good job performance go hand in hand. Tackling discrimination helps to attract, motivate and retain staff and enhances an organisation’s reputation as an inclusive employer.</p> <p>Equalities and Welsh language training equips staff with the skills and understanding required to engage with citizens sensitively. Upskilling staff to have an awareness of protected characteristics ensures that citizens with specific needs, receive services that are accessible and compliant.</p>	
Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018	
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation	
Relevant Protected Characteristics	
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language	
Supporting Documents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report ➤ Level 2 Disability Confident Employer ➤ Stonewall Diversity Champions 	
Actions:	
1.	Develop online equalities training which will be mandatory for all staff and elected members
2.	<p>Implement the National Training Framework on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of workforce who have completed Basic Awareness training (Group 1) / No of staff completed Basic Awareness training (Group 1) • % of identified staff who have completed Ask and Act training (Group 2) • % of identified staff who have completed Enhanced Training (Group 3) • Implement Refresher training when available and appropriate

3.	Disability Confident – improve on our current standard
4.	Ensure compliance with specific regulations and encourage disclosure
5.	Re-establish our membership to support Stonewall’s Workplace Diversity Champions Index
6.	Work collaboratively to build the brand ‘Proud Councils’ to support Pride events
7.	Ensure appropriate Welsh language training is available to staff, from basic to advanced levels
8.	Provide opportunities for staff to improve their existing Welsh language skills for business use
9.	Provide opportunities for Welsh speaking staff and learners to use their language skills in the workplace

Why?	
<p>Workforce – The mantra of <i>Stonewall Cymru</i> is that ‘people perform better when they can be themselves’. We also believe to get the best out of our employees and ensure they provide the best services to our citizens; we must nurture a workplace culture that is safe and inclusive. Encouraging greater disclosure will support our equalities monitoring process and will provide us with a greater understanding of the diversity of our workforce.</p> <p>Stonewall Cymru – We will continue to work with Stonewall Cymru to re-establish our membership and position in the Workplace Diversity Champions Index.</p> <p>Disability Confident – We are currently a Disability Confident employer. Attainment to Level 3 accreditation status in acting as a champion for Disability Confident will help us to transparently express our commitment to support the recruitment, retention and development of disabled people who support our services to achieve and succeed as valued employees. In achieving recognition as a Disability Confident Leader, we can gain recognition from disabled staff in our business, disabled people outside of our business, our customers and the wider community through transparent recording and reporting on disability, mental health and well-being in the Council</p>	

Equality Objective 7	
Reducing the Gender Pay Gap	
Context	
<p>We are required to look at gender pay differences within the council and identify an objective that will address any identified difference.</p> <p>The Council publishes an annual Gender Pay Gap Statement 2018 which is a requirement under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. In addition The Public Sector Equality Duty in Wales requires us to produce annual data relating to jobs, grade, pay, contract type and working pattern broken down by gender. There is a further requirement to provide data across a number of protected characteristics in relation to employees at work.</p> <p>As a council we are confident that our gender pay gap does not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work. The gender pay gap is the result of roles in which male and females currently work and the salaries that these roles attract.</p> <p>Our gender pay gap is reflective of the causes of gender pay gap at a societal level. For example research has identified that, although parents are increasingly flexible, the responsibility of childcare still falls disproportionately upon women. It is a fact within this data that the vast majority of part time posts are held by females and that these are the posts that attract salaries in the lower quartiles.</p>	
Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018	
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Participation	
Relevant Protected Characteristics	
Age, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex	
Supporting Documents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Plan 2018-2023 ➤ ‘Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report’ ➤ Chwarae Teg – State of the Nation 2019 Report 	
Actions:	
1.	Review the data relating to the workforce and determine actions required to meet the general duty as laid down in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011)
2.	Publish an annual Gender Pay Statement in line with the Equality Act 2010
3.	Use the <i>My Time</i> appraisal process to develop female staff
4.	Raise awareness of job and business opportunities to non-traditional groups (i.e. not stereotyping jobs to gender)
5.	Review and update HR policies regularly to include matters such as flexible working, part-time or job-share options, shared parental leave etc.

Why?

Reporting on gender pay gaps helps us to understand the size and causes of our pay gaps and identify any issues that need to be addressed.

Having a gender pay gap does not necessarily mean that there is gender discrimination. Publishing and monitoring pay gaps will help us understand the reasons for any pay gap and consider whether we need to develop an action plan to tackle the causes. For example, if analysis shows unequal distribution of men and women in occupations and the over-representation of women in lower paid positions.

Section 3:

• DEVELOPMENT OF EQUALITY OBJECTIVES AND THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The Caerphilly We Want 2018-2023 – Well-being Plan – Caerphilly Public Services Board

For the past two years the Caerphilly Public Services Board, its partners and stakeholders, citizens and communities have been working together to assess the well-being of Caerphilly county borough and develop a set of shared objectives to improve well-being over the next five years.

The Well-being Plan; 'The Caerphilly We Want 2018-2023' sets out what the Public Services Board will deliver in collaboration with the statutory, private and third sectors together with our communities.

This, the first plan for the area aims to achieve long-term improvements in well-being and has 4 high level Objectives:

- **Positive Change** – A shared commitment to improving the way we work together
- **Positive Start** – Giving our future generations the best start in life
- **Positive People** – Empowering and enabling all our residents to achieve their own potential
- **Positive Places** – Enabling our communities to be resilient and sustainable

The Well-being Plan and its Delivery Plan show how the Public Services Board has chosen its objectives and the steps it intends to take to meet them.

The Plan has been developed using a wealth of data and consultation responses and sets out activity for the 5-year period of the Plan. In so doing the planned activity has been prioritised to make the best use of collaborative resources and maximise the contribution to the national well-being goals for Wales.

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

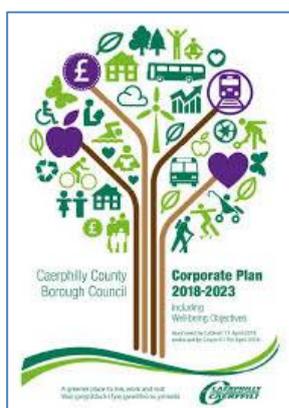
The Act came into force in April 2016 and means that councils must provide information, support and services in the way that the Act sets out. The Act gives individuals and their carers more of a say in the care and support they receive. To support people to achieve well-being, they will make decisions about their care and support in equal partnership with professionals. To help them to do so, they will have easy access to information and advice about what is available in their area.

A new assessment process for care and support will be based on what matters to them as an individual. It will consider their personal strengths and the support available to them from their family, friends and others in the community.

The Act focuses on helping people to stay well, to be safe from harm, to be as independent as possible and to be supported within and by their local community.

The Act has five principles:

- **Promoting Well-being:** Working with people to understand what matters to them and helping them achieve what is important for their well-being
- **Voice and control:** Putting people at the centre of their care; giving them a voice in making decisions about their life and control over reaching the outcomes that matter to them
- **Prevention and early intervention:** Increasing preventative services within the community to help people to keep well and help us to know when they may need extra support to prevent problems reaching a critical stage
- **Coproduction:** Providing opportunities for people to be involved in how their care and support is designed and provided
- **Collaboration:** Strong partnership working between the various organisations and people that support them, helping people live the life they choose for longer



The Corporate Plan 2018-2023 Including Well-being Objectives

In 2018 we set our six Well-being Objectives and incorporated them into our Corporate Plan. Setting objectives is not new, we have been setting Well-being Objectives and Improvement Objectives for a number of years; however this was the first time we have set objectives over a five year planning period.

We set our Well-being Objectives by using intelligence and data from the Well-being Assessment that was carried out to inform the PSB Well-being Plan. This told us about the concerns people had and the areas they would like to see improve.

The Objectives were also informed by our duty to deliver sustainability which is described within the five ways of working in each objective. We also looked at how we could build on strengths that support improvement in our action planning (and not just areas to improve).

We show how our Objectives contribute towards the seven national Well-being Goals and the areas below are not all that we do, indeed it is not possible to cover everything the Council does, but we have set these six objectives as they are critical to improving citizens' well-being both in the long and short term. These Objectives will be reviewed periodically and we will consult on any changes with our citizens.

Objective 1 – Improve education opportunities for all

Objective 2 – Enabling employment

Objective 3 – Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people's well-being

Objective 4 – Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment

Objective 5 – Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the Sustainable Development Principle within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015,

Objective 6 – Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

Our Strategic Equality Objectives will support progression in advancing equality and inclusion for all protected characteristics and delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The objectives will ensure we are fulfilling our obligations as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

To ensure our Strategic Equality Objectives are relevant, views were sought on whether the objectives outlined would help the Council reduce inequalities in the workforce and assist service access and delivery.

Consultation Process and Outcomes

A formal consultation was conducted from 11 November 2019 to 6 December 2019. The consultation was widely promoted, accessible on a variety of platforms and was available bilingually and in easy read format.

The consultation was published on the Council's website. Downloadable versions of the survey were available in a variety of formats on request. Details of the consultation were shared via the Council's social media platforms reaching 4173 people and resulting in 187 engagements. A press release was prepared for local media and promoted on the Council's Website.

A number of engagement events with key stakeholder groups were held; members of staff from the Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation Team attended the County meeting of Caerphilly People First and Parent Network Groups to seek participants' views in relation to each of the draft equalities objectives. A British Sign Language facilitator met with Deaf people across the county borough, she documented their views on the draft plan, and provided a summary of their comments. Similarly, Disability CanDo carried out consultation sessions with Disability Groups to seek their views on the draft equality objectives.

Consultation responses highlighted a number of overarching themes as well as specific issues and barriers in relation to the draft objectives outlined.

What people think we should do:

- Information should be provided in formats and language choice (including BSL) to ensure that it is accessible to all. This is particularly important in relation to key Council services (e.g. refuse and recycling) and not just targeted services within Social Services (*Equality Objective 1 – Action 3*)
- Council employees should have equality and diversity training (*Equality Objective 3 – Action 2*)
- Provide staff training to raise awareness of equalities and Welsh language issues to empower staff to identify and tackle discrimination and stereotyping (*Equality Objective 3 – Action 2*)
- Work with third sector organisations to identify ways in which we can work together in delivering our equalities duties (*Equality Objective 3 – Action 4*)
- Review and strengthen internal processes for undertaking Equality Impact Assessments and related consultation (*Equality Objective 4 – Action 7*)
- Keep respondents and the wider community informed about the progress of the Plan and other consultations that are undertaken
- The Council needs to ensure that the development of Welsh language education provision remains a priority
- The Council should take the lead in identifying reasons for the gender pay gap and work with others (in particular Welsh Government) to set out proposals on how to reduce the gender pay gap
- Ensure that Elected Members gain an awareness of equalities issues and ensure that there is clarity on the role of Elected Members in helping to deliver on equalities issues (*Equality Objective 3 – Action 2*)

Whilst an effort was made to engage with all sectors of the community, it is evident that no responses were received from individuals representing local religious groups or the black and minority ethnic community. This has been addressed as an action under Strategic Equality Objective 4 - *Review and update our key stakeholder groups within the county borough that represent protected characteristic groups.*

To see the report in full click on the following link: [Consultation Report](#) or alternatively please visit <https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Equalities>

Section 4:

- **DELIVERY AND MONITORING OF THE EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

Corporate Plan

The Council has a 5 year Corporate Plan with six Well-being Objectives. Within those six objectives are actions to improve inclusivity and diversity across a range of areas.

Service Planning

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, places a duty on local authorities to 'make arrangements' to continuously improve. Part of those arrangements is our planning cycles. Our planning cycles identify our priorities and built into this cycle is equalities, Welsh language and inclusivity aims.

Directorate Performance Assessment

We have introduced a new way of assessing and reporting called 'Directorate Performance Assessments' (DPA). These assessments are designed to bring together a range of separate reporting information into one 'single source of the truth'. The purpose is to provide learning into how each Directorate is performing, identifying cause and effect and to act on this knowledge to improve. This will include equality and language information and is also reported to Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet.

Performance Reporting

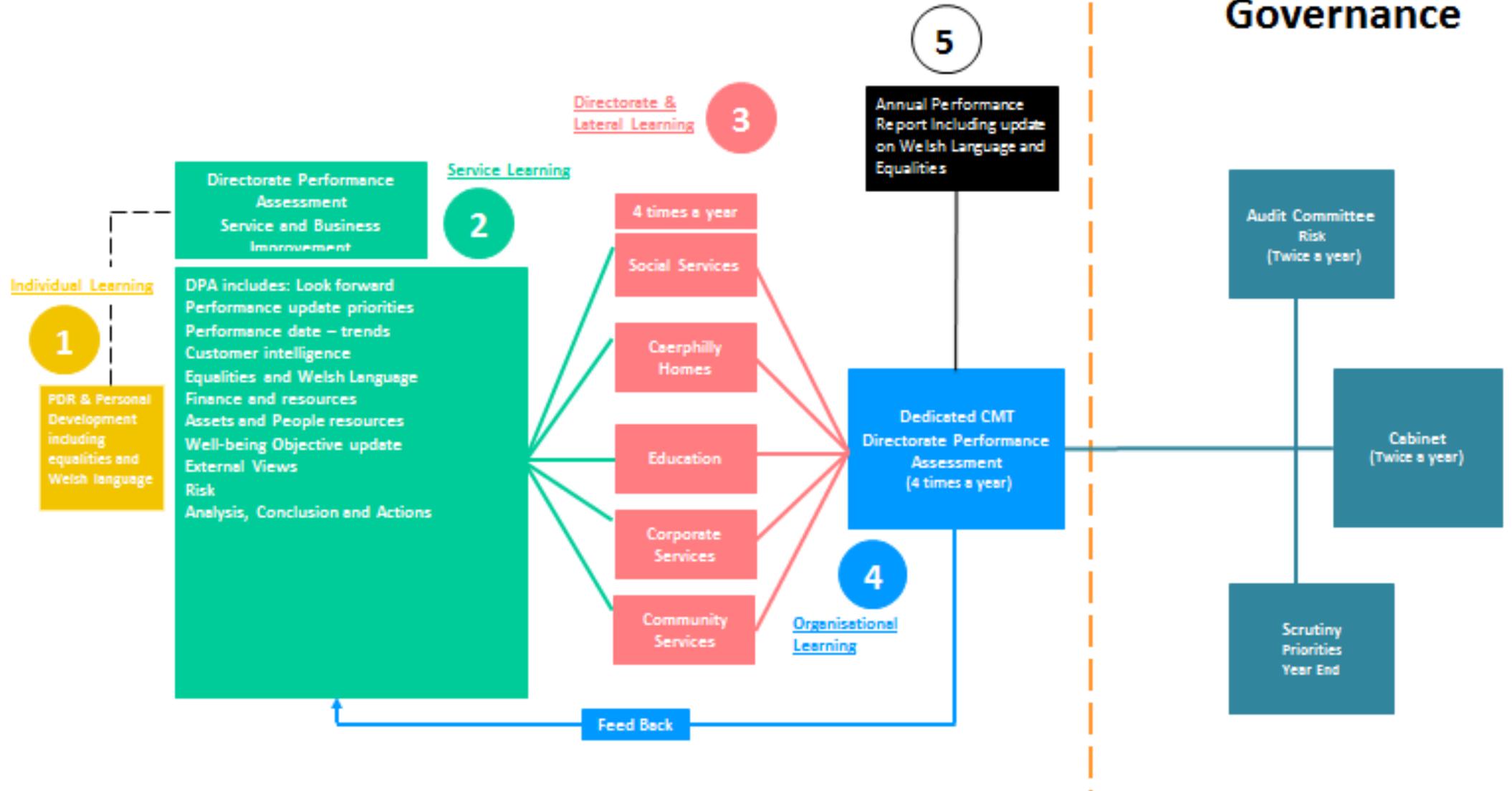
Once a year we report to the public on how we are performing against our Well-being Objectives and include updates on equalities and Welsh language improvements. We identify what has not gone well and what we have learnt and what we are doing to improve.

Strategic Equality Plan Annual Monitoring Report.

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty the Council has a legal duty to produce and publish a Strategic Equality Plan Annual Monitoring Report which reports on the Council's progress in delivering services against the statutory duties, the public sector equality Duties and the Council's own Strategic Equality Objectives. The report must be published by the 31st March each year

Internal Document

Performance and Equalities Reporting 2019



Caerphilly County Borough Council Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24

Consultation Report

Introduction and Context

Alongside every local authority in Wales, to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty, Caerphilly County Borough Council is required by the Welsh Government to prepare a Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-2024. This needs to be published by April 2020. The Plan has been written to explain to staff, elected members, citizens and stakeholders, how Caerphilly County Borough Council intends to deliver its equalities commitments whilst continuing to be an inclusive organisation that does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

Building on the ongoing commitment and previous work of the Council to achieve equality, the Council undertook a range of evidence gathering and pre-consultation engagement to develop the content of the draft Strategic Equality Plan and to develop draft Equality Objectives in a considered way:

- A review of legislative requirements
- A review of external reports and guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission
- A review of the Council's current Strategic Equalities Plan and associated documents and guidance
- A review of previous consultation exercises undertaken by the Council in relation to equalities issues
- An analysis of local and national datasets
- A review of the Welsh Government and other local authority equalities documents
- Engagement with service delivery managers within the Council
- Discussions with the Welsh Local Government Association, Welsh Government and other local authorities across Wales, regarding key equalities issues which are current and in the future that could be considered equality objectives

The draft equality objectives within the Plan were then subject to a period of formal consultation.

Purpose

The purpose of the formal consultation undertaken was to seek the views of citizens, elected members, staff and other stakeholders on the draft objectives outlined within the draft Strategic Equality Plan and to identify the most appropriate actions to help the Council achieve those objectives, once agreed. This approach will help identify meaningful actions based identified need and is in line with that of Welsh Government.

Specifically, the consultation invited respondents to give their views in relation to each of the draft objectives as outlined below:

1. Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services
2. Improve education opportunities for all
3. Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities
4. Engage with members of the community to participate and have their voices heard when planning service delivery
5. Ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements
6. Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough
7. Reduce the Gender Pay Gap

Views were sought on whether the objectives outlined will help the Council to reduce inequalities in the workforce and assist service access and delivery. Where respondents disagreed with any of the objectives they were asked to give reasons for their views. The consultation also asked respondents to highlight any areas of inequality not covered by the proposed objectives and to then identify key actions the Council should take to ensure that we reduce inequalities in the workforce and assist service access and delivery. Respondents were also asked whether their response to the consultation had been influenced because of any of the protected characteristics as this may have a bearing on the responses given.

Methodology (What we did)

The formal consultation took place over a period of 4 weeks from 11th November 2019 to 6th December 2019.

Supporting documents used in the consultation can be found in **Annex 1**

- a) Summary of Context and Strategic Objectives
- b) Easy read version
- c) Questionnaire
- d) Presentation used at face to face consultation meetings

To enable all those who wished to give their views to take part, all consultation documents were made available bilingually and in a variety of formats including easy read and large print. The consultation was promoted in a variety of ways and made available across a range of platforms. The primary consultation tool was a questionnaire but participants were encouraged to respond in a number of ways. Face to face consultation took place with groups who have a particular interest in this consultation and are harder to reach via other consultation methods.

Staff and Elected Members

The consultation was promoted internally to elected members and employees:

- via e-mail messages
- Service Managers via Management Network
- via the Council's Intranet page and
- paper versions were made available to non-office based staff where requested

Stakeholder groups

Details of the consultation and how to get involved were distributed widely to:

- local and regional organisations with an interest in equalities issues and local public sector partner organisations via e-mail distribution lists for wider circulation
- local third sector organisations via Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) for wider dissemination
- local town and community councils via e-mail. All town and community council's held meetings within or just after the consultation period
- Caerphilly Viewpoint Panel members, Caerphilly People First, the Regional Community Cohesion Officer, Menter Iaith Caerffili, Disability Cando, Caerphilly 50+ Forum, Umbrella Cymru, Stonewall Cymru, Disability Wales, Deaf-Friendly and Caerphilly County Borough's Youth Service and LGBT Youth Group were contacted via e-mail and encouraged to take part

To give the opportunity for in depth feedback, face-to-face focus groups were held with:

Caerphilly People First

Members of staff from the Equalities team attended the County meeting of Caerphilly People First at their offices in Bargoed on 26th November 2019. A presentation was made to the group and participants views were sought in relation to each of the draft equalities objectives.

Caerphilly Parent Network

Members of the Equalities team attended both meetings with both Gelligaer and New Tredegar groups on 3rd December 2019. Details of the presentation were provided as a handout and the group members were guided through a discussion around the proposed equalities objectives.

Caerphilly Deaf Community

During the consultation period, a British Sign Language facilitator met with Deaf people across the county borough and asked their views on the draft plan. A written response summarising their comment was then provided to the Council.

Disability CanDo

On behalf of the Council, Disability CanDo carried out three sessions with

- **Dementia Friendly Café at St Gladwys Church Hall, Bargoed**
- **Mental Health Group at Platform Offices, Oakwood and**
- **Sight Club at Fleur De Lys Community Hall.**

Many of those contacted would not have been able to complete the survey online.

Residents and the wider audience

To reach as wide an audience as possible

- the consultation was highlighted on the front page of the Council's website with a link directly to the consultation documentation and an online survey. A paper version of the survey was also available for printing from the Website or on request in a variety of formats
- details of the consultation were shared via the Council's Twitter feed and Facebook page. The Facebook post reached 4173 people and 187 engagements
- A news release was prepared for the local media and shared on the Council's Website

Results

Responses and respondent profile

Overall, 15 respondents completed the questionnaire online. Of these, only two people were under the age of 50. Half of those who completed the survey had a disability, two thirds were female and all identified their ethnic origin as white and English as their main language. A number of those who responded to the consultation indicated that they had first-hand experience of equalities issues.

In addition, three written responses were received, one from representatives of the Deaf community, one from a local councillor and one from a local resident.

In total 12 members of Caerphilly Parent Network attended the face to face focus group discussions. These were split between two separate groups (5 participants in Gelligaer and 7 participants in New Tredegar). All were female and 2 were grandparents.

At the meeting with Caerphilly People First, there were 20 people with learning disabilities 13 men and 7 women. The youngest at the meeting was 22 years old and the oldest 78 years old.

The group sessions carried out by Disability CanDo represents the involvement across the three groups of 38 people with disabilities and 18 carers or support workers. Those with disabilities were between 40 and 60 years of age with a predominance of older people.

Whilst an effort was made to engage with all sectors of the community, it is evident that no responses were received from individuals representing local religious groups or the black and minority ethnic community.

Respondent views and emerging themes

The consultation responses highlighted a number of overarching themes as well as specific issues and barriers in relation to the draft objectives outlined.

A digest of the responses received can be found in **Annex 2**:

- a) Summary of survey responses generated by SNAP
- b) Notes from group discussions
- c) Caerphilly People First Newsletter
- d) Written responses received
 - a. Deaf community
 - b. Cllr. James Pritchard
 - c. Resident response
- e) Response from Disability Can Do

We have incorporated the relevant Equality Objective and Action alongside the feedback that follows to demonstrate how the views of consultees have informed some of the actions.

Context

It was recognised by those who responded to the consultation that Equalities needs to be a high priority for the Council. Whilst not statistically valid due to the small number of responses, there was agreement amongst those who did respond, that the objectives outlined are relevant. The importance of ensuring that measurable actions with clear timeframes are attached to each objective and that progress towards these actions is monitored.

Objective 1: Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services

Barriers identified:

- A lack of knowledge of how the Council works and what and how services are provided – often people do not know about services/education and training opportunities that are available to them
- Whilst digital options are useful to many they are not suitable for everyone in particular older people and adults with learning disabilities
- Libraries (and customer services) offer a vital point of face to face contact and resource to local communities in particular parents with young children and older people
- A lack of access to reliable public transport was considered a barrier to accessing services and impacts on the most isolated communities and the most vulnerable residents within those communities. Some feel very isolated as local facilities are being removed with no means to access services further afield
- Physical access can be a barrier (areas of Council responsibility in relation to this include maintenance of pavement surfaces, tree maintenance and street lighting)
- A lack of understanding of disabilities, mental health issues and other areas of equalities is seen to act as a barrier

What people think we should do:

- Information should be provided in formats and language choice (including BSL) to ensure that it is accessible to all. This is particularly important in relation to key Council services (e.g. refuse and recycling) and not just targeted services within Social Services (*Equality Objective 1 – Action 3*)
- Council employees should have equality and diversity training (*Equality Objective 3 – Action 2*)

No further comments came out of the consultation relating to this objective

Objective 2: Improve education opportunities for all

- Ensure that the education is a priority for the Council to ensure that all pupils are afforded the opportunity to learn in a cohesive environment
- Need to ensure adequate educational support for those with additional learning needs and consider the impact of the Additional Learning Needs Bill
- Need to improve employment opportunities for those with disabilities including autistic adults and those with learning disabilities
- Increase participation by removing barriers and ensuring that opportunities meet the needs/interests of residents

What people think we should do:

- To improve educational opportunities, there is a need to understand the difficulties people with disabilities have in accessing and maintaining employment and the impact a change of circumstances regarding employment can have on the lives of people with disabilities.

No further comments came out of the consultation relating to this objective

Objective 3: Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities

- On the whole, participants in the consultation feel safe and included within their communities although with those with both physical and mental health conditions expressed that they had encountered discrimination
- There is a role for Elected Members in galvanising community cohesion
- The important role of the voluntary sector in facilitating community cohesion needs to be fully recognised

What people think we should do:

- Provide staff training to raise awareness of equalities and Welsh language issues to empower staff to identify and tackle discrimination and stereotyping (*Equality Objective 3 – Action 2*)
- Work with third sector organisations to identify ways in which we can work together in delivering our equalities duties (*Equality Objective 3 – Action 4*)

No further comments came out of the consultation relating to this objective

Objective 4: Engage with members of the community to participate and have their voices heard when planning service delivery

- Consideration of Equalities issues should be a key factor when making decisions in relation to service development and change. Carrying out a thorough Equality Impact Assessment and the appropriate consultation is fundamental to this process
- Well informed communities are able to engage more effectively therefore communication is the key. Communication needs to be appropriate to all audiences and face to face engagement was considered to be very important to those taking part.
- We need to engage with our communities in a *meaningful* way (face to face) and not “pay lip service” to equalities issues
- We need to feed back to our communities to ensure that they recognise how their views are taken on board and empower them to get involved further
- In considering the needs of one protected group, ensure that this does not have a negative impact on other protected groups
- Ensure that we utilise local data sources to reveal patterns of inequality that may be addressed
- We need to engage with staff at all levels within the organisation as they are key to ensuring that services are communicated and delivered effectively to residents and service users

What people think we should do:

- Review and strengthen internal processes for undertaking Equality Impact Assessments and related consultation (*Equality Objective 4 – Action 7*)
- Keep respondents and the wider community informed about the progress of the Plan and other consultations that are undertaken

Objective 5: Ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements

- Whilst not of direct relevance to participants, they recognised that a rise in the number of younger Welsh speakers means that this objective will be of increasing importance moving forward

What people think we should do:

- The Council needs to ensure that the development of Welsh language education provision remains a priority

No further comments came out of the consultation relating to this objective

Objective 6 and 7: Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough and Reduce the Gender Pay Gap

- Whilst considered important by those who responded to the consultation, it was recognised that these are complex issues that the Council should take a lead on
- Diversity should be reflected in both the workforce and amongst Elected Members

What people think we should do:

- The Council should take the lead in identifying reasons for the gender pay gap and work with others (in particular Welsh Government) to set out proposals on how to reduce the gender pay gap

No further comments came out of the consultation relating to these objectives

Is there anything missing from the draft Plan?

- Ensure that Elected Members gain an awareness of equalities issues and ensure that there is clarity on the role of Elected Members in helping to deliver on equalities issues (*Equality Objective 3 – Action 2*)

Next steps

The outcomes of the consultation will be considered alongside feedback from staff and Service managers and will help to inform a revised version of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 before it is approved and adopted in April 2020. Actions identified as part of the consultation will be included within the final Strategic Equality Plan.

Annex 2: Digest of comments

Comments have been redacted to protect anonymity of respondents

[Annex 2a SEP Survey Summary 11.12.19](#)

[Annex 2b SEP Consultation – Parent Network Notes New Tredegar](#)

[Annex 2b SEP Consultation – Parent Network Notes Gelligaer](#)

[Annex 2b SEP Consultation – Caerphilly People First Notes](#)

[Annex 2c SEP Consultation – Caerphilly People First Newsletter](#)

[Annex 2d SEP Consultation – Response Cllr Pritchard](#)

[Annex 2d SEP Consultation – Response Deaf Community](#)

[Annex 2d SEP Consultation – Response Resident](#)

[Annex 2e SEP Consultation – Response Disability CandDo](#)

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

July 2019

THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITIES STATEMENT

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

EIAs are a legal requirement under equalities legislation (Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011) where the potential for a significant negative impact has been identified. This legislation has been in place since 2000. We also have a legislative duty to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The protected characteristics are:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Age | • Race |
| • Disability | • Religion, Belief or Non-Belief |
| • Gender Re-assignment | • Sex |
| • Marriage and Civil Partnership | • Sexual Orientation |
| • Pregnancy and Maternity | • Welsh Language* |

* The Welsh language is not identified as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, however in Wales we also have to treat Welsh and English on an equal basis as well as promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language.

THE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

NAME OF NEW OR REVISED PROPOSAL*	Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024
DIRECTORATE	Education and Corporate Services
SERVICE AREA	Business Improvement and Partnerships
CONTACT OFFICER	Anwen Cullinane
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW OR REVISION	2024

***Throughout this Equalities Impact Assessment Form, ‘proposal’ is used to refer to what is being assessed, and therefore includes policies, strategies, functions, procedures, practices, initiatives, projects and savings proposals.**

The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that Equalities and Welsh Language issues have been proactively considered throughout the decision making processes governing work undertaken by every service area in the Council as well as work done at a corporate level.

The Council’s work across Equalities, Welsh Language and Human Rights is covered in more detail through the **Equalities and Welsh Language Objectives and Action Plan 2016-2020**.

When carrying out an EIA you should consider both the positive and negative consequences of your proposals. If a project is designed for a specific group e.g. disabled people, you also need to think about what potential effects it could have on other areas e.g. young people with a disability, BME people with a disability.

There are a number of supporting guidance documents available on the **Corporate Policy Unit Portal** and the Council’s Equalities and Welsh Language team can provide advice as the EIA is being developed. Please note that the team does not write EIAs on behalf of service areas, the support offered is in the form of advice, suggestions and in effect, quality control.

Contact equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for assistance.

PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL

1	<p>What is the proposal intended to achieve? <i>(Please give a brief description and outline the purpose of the new or updated proposal by way of introduction.)</i></p> <p>The Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) and equality objectives contained within it have been developed to document the steps that the Council intends to take to meet its specific duties. It covers all protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. It contains information about how the Council promotes equality, fosters good relations and deals with discrimination and harassment across all its services.</p>
2	<p>Who are the service users affected by the proposal? <i>(Who will be affected by the delivery of this proposal? e.g. staff members, the public generally, or specific sections of the public i.e. youth groups, carers, road users, people using country parks, people on benefits etc. Are there any data gaps?)</i></p> <p>Everyone who lives, works or visits the county borough, including members of staff, stakeholders, citizens, elected members and visitors of all protected characteristics.</p>

IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

3	<p>Does the proposal ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available or proposed, or benefits equally from the proposed changes, or does not lose out in greater or more severe ways due to the proposals? <i>(What has been done to examine whether or not these groups have equal access to the service, or whether they need to receive the service in a different way from other people?)</i></p> <p>Yes the Strategic Equality Plan looks to identify and address any identified barriers which prevent people with protected characteristics from accessing services and to work with them to find solutions.</p>
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4	Is your proposal going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? <i>(Has the service delivery been examined to assess if there is any indirect effect on any groups? Could the consequences of the policy or savings proposal differ dependent upon people's protected characteristics?)</i>	
Protected Characteristic	Positive, Negative, Neutral	What will the impact be? If the impact is negative how can it be mitigated?
Age	Positive	The SEP has been written to ensure that nobody is discriminated against regardless of protected characteristic. We consulted with the 50+ Forum on the Draft SEP Objectives. Feedback from the consultation has helped inform us of the relevant actions to deliver our services in a more improved and inclusive way.
Disability	Positive	The SEP has been written to ensure that nobody is discriminated against regardless of protected characteristic. We consulted with the 50+ Forum, Caerphilly People First, Disability Wales and Disability Cando. Feedback from the consultation has helped inform us of the relevant actions to deliver our services in a more improved and inclusive way.
Gender Reassignment	Positive	The SEP has been written to ensure that nobody is discriminated against regardless of protected characteristic. Umbrella Cymru, Stonewall Cymru and CCBC's LGBT Youth Group were consulted. Feedback from the consultation has helped inform us of the relevant actions to deliver our services in a more improved and inclusive way.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	Positive	The SEP has been written to ensure that nobody is discriminated against regardless of protected characteristic.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive	The SEP has been written to ensure that nobody is discriminated against regardless of protected characteristic.
Race	Positive	The SEP has been written to ensure that nobody is discriminated against regardless of protected characteristic. Whilst an effort was made to engage with all sectors of the community, it is evident that no responses were received from individuals representing local black and minority ethnic community. This has been included as an action under Strategic Equality Objective 4 - <i>Review and update our key stakeholder groups within the county borough that represent protected characteristic groups.</i>
Religion & Belief	Positive	The SEP has been written to ensure that nobody is discriminated against regardless of protected characteristic. Whilst an effort was made to engage with all sectors of the community, it is evident that no responses were received from individuals representing local religious groups. This has been included as an action under Strategic Equality Objective <i>Review and update our key stakeholder groups within the county borough that represent protected characteristic groups.</i>

Sex	Positive	The SEP has been written to ensure that nobody is discriminated against regardless of protected characteristic. We consulted with Chwarae Teg specifically.
Sexual Orientation	Positive	The SEP has been written to ensure that nobody is discriminated against regardless of protected characteristic. Umbrella Cymru, Stonewall Cymru and CCBC's LGBT Youth Group were consulted. Feedback from the consultation has helped inform us of the relevant actions to deliver our services in a more improved and inclusive way.

5	<p>In line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. (No.1) Regulations 2015, please note below what effects, if any (whether positive or adverse), the proposal would have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p><i>(The specific Policy Making Standards requirements are Standard numbers 88, 89, 90, 91, 92 and 93. The full detail of each Standard is available on the Corporate Policy Unit Portal. Although it is important that what is outlined in the proposal is available in Welsh and English, please consider wider impacts on Welsh speakers.)</i></p> <p>No negative impact on the Welsh language.</p> <p>Although Welsh language issues are not covered by the Equality Act 2010 but have a set of standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. These are detailed in the regulations approved by Welsh Government as the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015.</p> <p>One of the Strategic Equality Objective's is specifically on the Welsh Language with its aim being to ensure that the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements</p>
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INFORMATION COLLECTION

6	<p>Please outline any evidence and / or research you have collected which supports the proposal? This can include an analysis of service users. <i>(Is this service effectively engaging with all its potential users or is there higher or lower participation of uptake by one or more protected characteristic groups? If so, what has been done to address any difference in take up of the service? Does any savings proposal include an analysis of those affected?)</i></p> <p>Our Strategic Equality Objectives will support us to continue making progress in advancing equality and inclusion for all protected characteristics and help us meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. The objectives will also ensure that we are meeting our obligations as outlined in the framework of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>In writing the plan we drew information from current plans that the council has in place set alongside relevant legislation and reports;</p> <p>Corporate Plan 2018-2023</p> <p>Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011</p> <p>Welsh Government's <i>Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015</i></p> <p>Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Caerphilly Public Services Board's Well-being Plan 2018-2023➤ Is Wales Fairer? 2015(EHRC)➤ Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report (EHRC)➤ Welsh Government - Digital Inclusion Framework➤ Caerphilly County Borough Council – Customer and Digital Strategy➤ Prosperity for All Action Plan➤ Cymraeg 2050➤ Council's Compliance Notice - Welsh Language Standards➤ Five Year Welsh Language Strategy➤ Nurture, Equip and Thrive (NET)➤ Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2014-2016➤ Communication and Engagement Strategy➤ Team Caerphilly – Better Together Transformation Strategy➤ Level 2 Disability Confident Employer➤ Stonewall Diversity Champions➤ Chwarae Teg – State of the Nation 2019 Report
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CONSULTATION

7

Please outline the consultation / engagement process and outline any key findings.

(Include method of consultation, objectives and target audience. What steps have been taken to ensure that people from various groups have been consulted during the development of this proposal? Have you referred to the Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance?)

A formal consultation was conducted from 11 November 2019 to 6 December 2019. The consultation was widely promoted, accessible on a variety of platforms and was available bilingually and in easy read format.

The consultation was published on the Council's website. Downloadable versions of the survey were available in a variety of formats on request. Details of the consultation were shared via the Council's social media platforms reaching 4173 people and resulting in 187 engagements. A press release was prepared for local media and promoted on the Council's Website.

A number of engagement events with key stakeholder groups were held; members of staff from the Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation Team attended the County meeting of Caerphilly People First and Parent Network Groups to seek participants' views in relation to each of the draft equalities objectives. A British Sign Language facilitator met with Deaf people across the county borough, she documented their views on the draft plan, and provided a summary of their comments. Similarly, Disability CanDo carried out consultation sessions with Disability Groups to seek their views on the draft equality objectives.

Consultation responses highlighted a number of overarching themes as well as specific issues and barriers in relation to the draft objectives outlined.

Whilst an effort was made to engage with all sectors of the community, it is evident that no responses were received from individuals representing local religious groups or the black and minority ethnic community. This has been addressed as an action under Strategic Equality Objective 4 - *Review and update our key stakeholder groups within the county borough that represent protected characteristic groups.*

To view the full consultation please see the associated [Consultation Report](#)

MONITORING AND REVIEW

8	<p>How will the proposal be monitored? <i>(What monitoring process has been set up to assess the extent that the service is being used by all sections of the community, or that the savings proposals are achieving the intended outcomes with no adverse impact? Are comments or complaints systems set up to record issues by Equalities category to be able analyse responses from particular groups?)</i></p> <p>The equality objectives have associated actions to make them measurable and results orientated. Progress will be monitored through service planning and Directorate Performance Assessments. These assessments are designed to bring together a range of separate reporting information into one 'single source of the truth'. The purpose is to provide learning into how each Directorate is performing, identifying cause and effect and to act on this knowledge to improve. This will include equality and language information and is also reported to Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet.</p> <p>Once a year we report to the public on how we are performing against our Well-being Objectives and include updates on equalities and Welsh language improvements. We identify what has not gone well and what we have learnt and what we are doing to improve.</p> <p>Under the Public Sector Equality Duty the Council has a legal duty to produce and publish a Strategic Equality Plan Annual Monitoring Report which reports on the Council's progress in delivering services against the statutory duties, the public sector equality Duties and the Council's own Strategic Equality Objectives. The report must be published by the 31st March each year.</p>
9	<p>How will the monitoring be evaluated? <i>(What methods will be used to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are being met?)</i></p> <p>We will ensure that the actions outlined in the SEP will be delivered over its 4 year duration.</p>
10	<p>Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified? <i>(Has the EIA or consultation process shown a need for awareness raising amongst staff, or identified the need for Equalities or Welsh Language training of some sort?)</i></p> <p>A number of training requirements were identified and have been incorporated as actions in the SEP</p>
11	<p>If any adverse impact has been identified, please outline any mitigation action.</p> <p>N/A</p>

12	<p>What wider use will you make of this Equality Impact Assessment? <i>(What use will you make of this document i.e. as a consultation response, appendix to approval reports, publicity etc. in addition to the mandatory action shown below?)</i></p> <p>The EIA will be appended to the report and the SEP for approval.</p>
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13	<p>An equality impact assessment may have four possible outcomes, through more than one may apply to a single proposal. Please indicate the relevant outcome(s) of the impact assessment below.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Please tick as appropriate:</p> <p>No major change – the impact assessment demonstrated that the proposal was robust; there was no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Adjust the proposal – the impact assessment identified potential problems or missed opportunities. The proposal was adjusted to remove barriers or better promote equality. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Continue the proposal – the impact assessment identified the potential problems or missed opportunities to promote equality. The justification(s) for continuing with it have been clearly set out. (The justification must be included in the impact assessment and must be in line with the duty to have due regard. Compelling reasons will be needed for the most important relevant proposals.) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Stop and remove the proposal – the impact assessment identified actual or potential unlawful discrimination. The proposal was stopped and removed, or changed. <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Form completed by:	
Name:	Anwen Cullinane
Job Title:	Senior Policy Officer – Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation
Date:	06.12.19

Head of Service Approval	
Name:	Stephen Harries
Job Title:	
Signature:	
Date:	