

**CAERPHILLY COUNTY  
BOROUGH COUNCIL  
STRATEGIC EQUALITIES  
PLAN 2020-2024**



## **FOREWARD**

Caerphilly County Borough Council believes that nobody should be discriminated against or placed at a disadvantage because of their identity or background. We want a county borough where everyone is treated equally and fairly in all aspects of everyday life.

Whilst we strive for all residents and visitors to the county borough to be treated equally, we also recognise that people have different needs. This plan takes these differing needs into account and aims to ensure that there are no barriers which prevent anyone accessing council services.

As our communities change, diversity is a key issue for us. We believe that it is our duty to tackle discrimination and encourage greater cohesion; creating communities where everyone feels respected and safe from harassment.

We also remain committed to achieving equality within all aspects of our service delivery and in our employment practices, which is even more important during these challenging times and in such a difficult financial climate.

The plan will be monitored each year in order to review the impact of the progress we make and the annual reports 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.

We hope that you agree that this plan continues to develop the equality and diversity work we have undertaken to date and shows our ongoing commitment to ensuring respect and fairness for everyone in the county borough.

**Christina Harray**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Caerphilly County Borough Council**

**Cllr. Philippa Marsden**  
**Leader**  
**Caerphilly County Borough Council**

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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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> century. We must respect what has been before and the achievements up to that point but we must also accept and respect that things have changed and continue to evolve. We must be respectful for every individual who lives or works here, who represents or who visits the county borough.

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. Local government finances are increasingly under challenge and any changes 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 is 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.

This 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 well-being 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 have been 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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Penallta House  
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CF82 7PG  
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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:

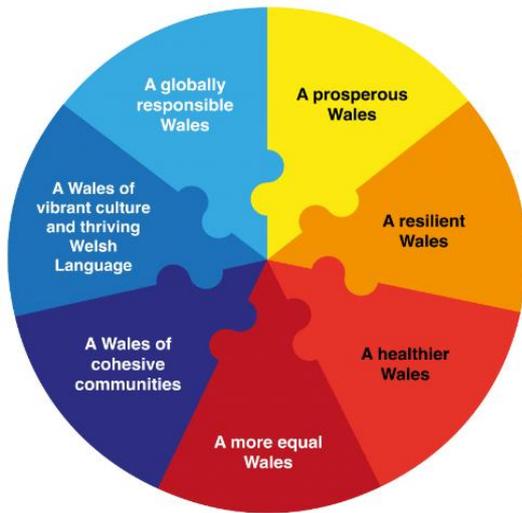
- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

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 ***Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011*** 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**

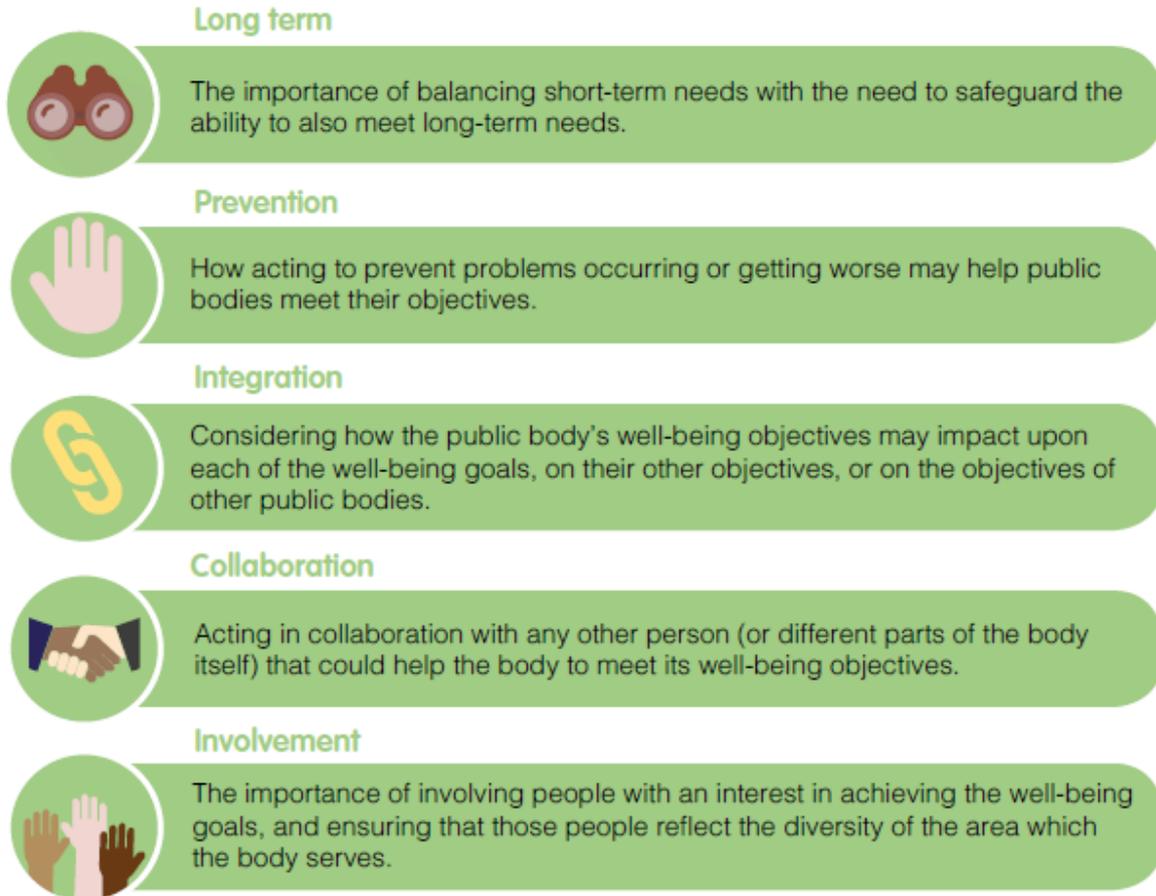
The Council is committed to ensuring that the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) is embedded within its service delivery and activities. The Act puts in place a sustainable development principle with a view to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being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

<b>Equality Objective 1</b>
Service Planning and Delivery – Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services
<b>Context</b>
<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 &amp; 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>
<b>Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018</b>
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation
<b>Relevant Protected Characteristics</b>
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language
<b>Supporting Documents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Caerphilly Public Services Board's Well-being Plan 2018-2023</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Corporate Plan 2018-2023</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Welsh Government - Digital Inclusion Framework</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Caerphilly County Borough Council – Customer and Digital Strategy</a></li> </ul>

**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.

<b>Equality Objective 2</b>
Education, Skills and Employment – Improve education opportunities for all
<b>Context</b>
<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 <b>Council’s Corporate Plan</b>, will be delivered using outcomes identified within the <b>Shared Ambitions 2019-2022 Strategy</b>. 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>
<b>Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018</b>
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation
<b>Relevant Protected Characteristics</b>
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language
<b>Supporting Documents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">‘Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report’</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Shared Ambitions 2019-22 Strategy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Prosperity for All Action Plan</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Corporate Plan 2018-23</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Cymraeg 2050</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Nurture, Equip and Thrive (NET)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015</a></li> </ul>

**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?**

**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.

**Education Opportunities** – The Council has listed *‘Improving educational opportunities for all’* as the first of its Well-being Objectives, and implemented a *Shared Ambitions Strategy* to drive this work forward. As an authority we have committed to an ambitious 21st century schools investment programme. The 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

**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.

<b>Equality Objective 3</b>
Community Cohesion – Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities
<b>Context</b>
<p>Community cohesion as defined in Welsh Government’s <b>Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2014-2016</b> (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"> <li>• there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;</li> <li>• the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;</li> <li>• those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities;</li> <li>• strong and positive relationships are developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.</li> </ul> <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>
<b>Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018</b>
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation
<b>Relevant Protected Characteristics</b>
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language
<b>Supporting Documents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Corporate Plan 2018-2023</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">‘Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report’</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2014-2016</a></li> </ul>

**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 Resettlement Scheme

**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.

<b>Equality Objective 4</b>
Inclusive Engagement and Participation – Engage with citizens to encourage participation, to have their voices heard when planning service delivery
<b>Context</b>
<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>
<b>Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018</b>
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation
<b>Relevant Protected Characteristics</b>
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language
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**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 *Consultation and Engagement Framework* 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?**

**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.

**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.

**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.

<b>Equality Objective 5</b>
Welsh Language – To ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements
<b>Context</b>
<p>Welsh language issues are not covered by the <b>Equality Act 2010</b> but have a set of standards under the <b>Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011</b>. These are detailed in the regulations approved by Welsh Government as the <b>Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015</b>.</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 <b>Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022</b>.</p> <p>We must comply with all agreed Welsh Language Standards as detailed in the <b>Council’s Compliance Notice</b> to ensure that the Welsh-speaking population, whether they be staff, citizens, students or visitors can access the council’s services in Welsh.</p>
<b>Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018</b>
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation
<b>Relevant Protected Characteristics</b>
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language
<b>Supporting Documents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Council’s Compliance Notice - Welsh Language Standards</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Five Year Welsh Language Strategy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Cymraeg 2050</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015</a></li> </ul>

**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?**

**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 *Five Year Welsh Language Strategy* and Welsh Government's *Million Welsh speakers by 2050*.

**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.

**Why?**

**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.

<b>Equality Objective 6</b>
Inclusive, Diverse and Equal Workforce – Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough
<b>Context</b>
<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>
<b>Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018</b>
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security, Participation
<b>Relevant Protected Characteristics</b>
Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Welsh Language
<b>Supporting Documents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Level 2 Disability Confident Employer</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Stonewall Diversity Champions</a></li> </ul>

**Actions:**

1. Develop online equalities training which will be mandatory for all staff and elected members
2. Implement the National Training Framework on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
  - % 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 ***Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011*** 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?**

**Workforce** – The mantra of *Stonewall Cymru* 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.

**Stonewall Cymru** – We will continue to work with Stonewall Cymru to re-establish our membership and position in the Workplace Diversity Champions Index.

**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

<b>Equality Objective 7</b>
Reducing the Gender Pay Gap
<b>Context</b>
<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>Under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties Wales) Regulations 2011 the Council is required to collect and publish annual employment data across a number of protected characteristics. Information regarding the number of people employed by the council, arranged by, job, pay, contract type and working pattern, should only be broken down in relation to women and men. In addition the Council must publish data on pay differences and their causes, between employees with and without protected characteristics.</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>
<b>Themes from Is Wales Fairer? 2018</b>
Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Participation
<b>Relevant Protected Characteristics</b>
Age, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex
<b>Supporting Documents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Corporate Plan 2018-2023</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">‘Is Wales Fairer? 2018 Report’</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Chwarae Teg – State of the Nation 2019 Report</a></li> </ul>

**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 employment information as required by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties)(Wales) Regulations 2011
3. Use the *My Time* 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 of the Strategic Equality Plan 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. Whilst an effort was made to consult with all sectors of the community, it is evident that some stakeholders did not engage in the process.

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 British Sign Language) 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 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.

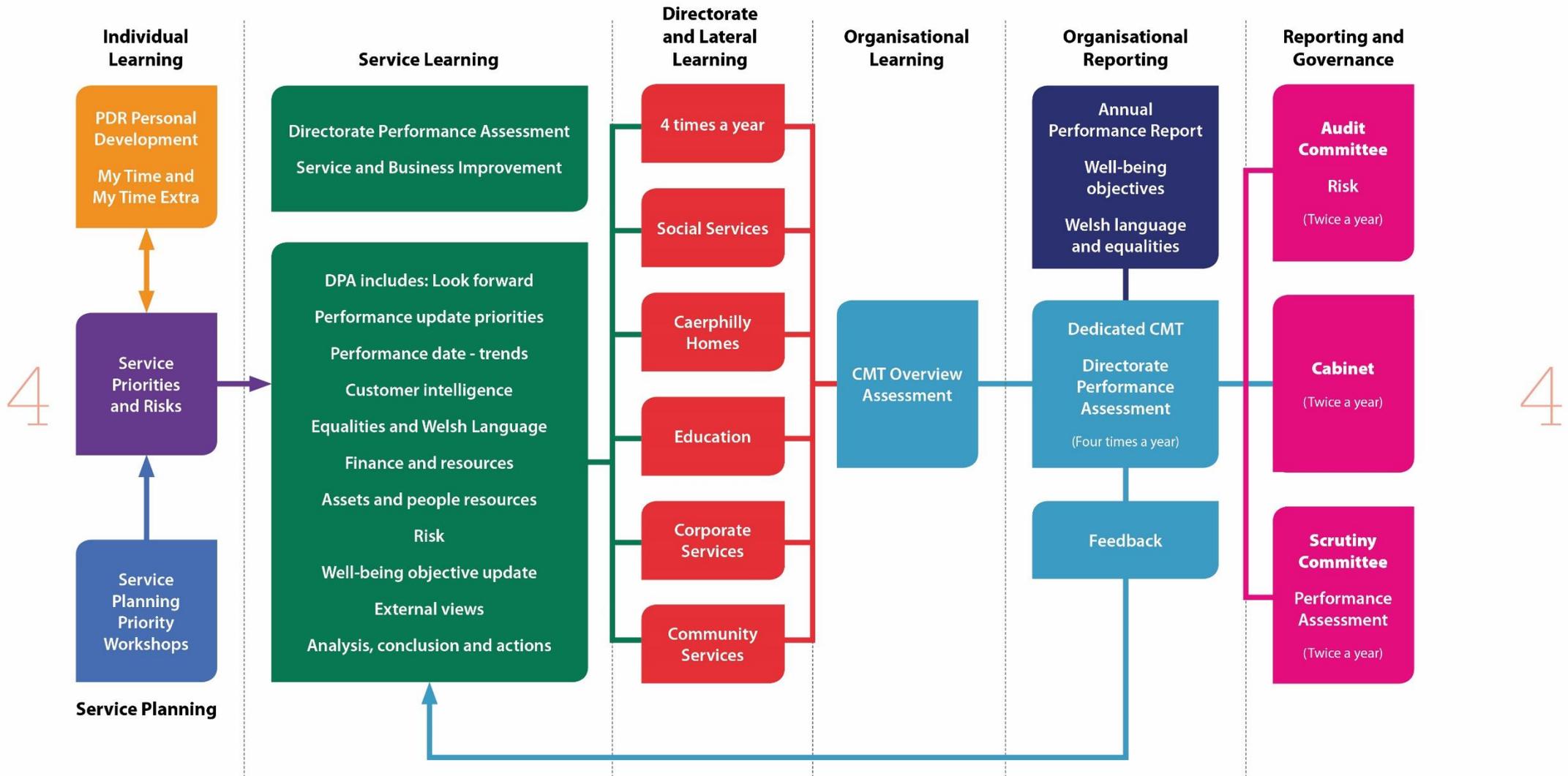
### **Performance Reporting**

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 31<sup>st</sup> March each year.

# Performance and Equalities Reporting 2019



The Service Plan and its subsequent priorities are part of the overall framework as shown above.

