

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL PEN-Y-BONT AR OGWR

REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE - EQUALITIES

19 JULY 2010

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

Report on Equalities in the Bridgend County Borough Council Workforce

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Cabinet Committee - Equalities with an overview of the Council's workforce and to inform the Committee that it is intended to progressively develop comparative data which will enable the Committee to see how the structure of the workforce is changing on an ongoing basis. A workforce report will be produced twice yearly and will address the equality strands identified in the Council's Corporate Equality Scheme and action plan, including:-

- Total headcount of employees;
- Full and part time employees;
- Gender;
- Ethnicity;
- Disability;
- Age;
- Welsh speakers; and
- Unpaid carers.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan & other Corporate Priorities

2.1 The information provided will help mitigate the risk of failure to meet the Council's statutory duties in respect of equalities as identified in the Corporate Improvement Plan. The Council's workforce will support all of the corporate priorities, especially supporting disadvantaged communities.

3. Background

3.1 Reliable workforce data is essential to meet the Council's statutory duties set out under the Equality Act and Welsh Language Scheme. It is also a crucial part of achieving '*improving authority*' status within the Equality Improvement Framework in Welsh Local Government, and provides meaningful information to aid decision-making.

3.2 Additionally, the Wales Programme for Improvement requires the Council to report annually on ethnicity and disability rates within its workforce.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 The data included in future reports will provide:-

- a statistical overview of the workforce within the Council based on the equality strands identified at Paragraph 1.1
- a comparative overview of the workforce within the Council on an ongoing basis

4.2 A summary analysis comparing the Council's workforce as at 31 March in 2009 and 2010 is provided in Appendix 1. The data indicates a small increase in the overall headcount but within this, it can be seen that the numbers of full time staff reduced. The gender balance in the workforce between the years is largely unchanged and female workers continue to represent some three quarters of the total. There have been reductions in the number of staff who have a caring responsibility and in the number of staff recorded as Welsh language speakers but caution is needed when interpreting this data as it is believed to be incomplete and action is being taken to address this issue.

4.3 The majority of the data used for analysis is generated by the Trent integrated HR/Payroll system. Work is ongoing to review and cleanse the data held in Trent to improve reporting and to reflect the structural changes being made under the Transforming Bridgend programme. Data will be included on casual/relief workers who work on a regular basis; the definition of a regular worker being someone who has worked consistently and has been paid regularly over the past six months.

4.4 It should be noted that some of the data is dependent on employees voluntarily providing certain information. Improvements to data capture within the recruitment stage are being implemented to ensure that summary profiles of applicants for posts can be produced which will help assess the impact of action taken by the Council.

4.5 Contact is being made with a number of other Councils and the WLGA to assess what comparative data can be included. Notable developments related to the equalities agenda during 2010 include:

- a) The Council was awarded the 'two ticks' disability symbol in February 2010. This recognises the Council's commitment to employ, retain and develop the abilities of employees with a disability. The Council has agreed to meet five commitments regarding recruitment, employment, retention and career development. Monitoring processes are being put in place to ensure that the principles of the "Disability User Symbol" are implemented. The Human Resources Service Unit is developing the Council's Trent web recruitment system to allow analyses of job applicants by age, BME background and disability. Such information will enable the Council to target applicant groups that are under represented.
- b) Following the rebuild of Trent, all Council employees will be asked to complete and return an Employee Record Form enabling us to capture accurate and up to date equalities data. Human Resources are undertaking a Trent data cleansing exercise with regard to structures and positions and, following completion, the Employee Record Forms will be distributed. This exercise will involve significant data

capture. The Council will then have much more accurate equalities data on employees, including those who considered themselves to have a disability at date of commencement of service, those employees who subsequently became disabled whilst employed by the Council etc. The disclosure by employees of some equalities data is not mandatory.

- c) The Protocol and Managers Guidelines on Domestic Abuse are nearing completion and will be shared with the lead Members, Senior Managers and Trade Unions shortly.

Following agreement, the aim is for the protocol and managers guidelines to be issued during the Summer.

- d) Members will know that following the election on 6 May, the new UK coalition government is making a number of policy changes and the Future Jobs Fund, which aimed to create 150,000 jobs across the United Kingdom for people aged between 18 and 24 who had been out of work for a year, is ceasing. The Council has been an active partner in the South East Wales Future Jobs Fund Partnership and a number of FJF placements already placed within services but the long term plans of this partnership are no longer feasible. The Recruitment Subsidy Scheme which provided the Council with a £1,000 subsidy via Job Centre Plus for every long term unemployed person employed is also being terminated.
- e) P.I.'s on equality issues are being developed but reliable national comparative data is not yet available.

	Q4 2009/10	Q4 2008/09
Percentage of JNC posts occupied by women	47%	47%
Percentage of employees who consider themselves to have a disability	1.09%	0.94%
Percentage of employees aged 50 and over	33.03%	N/A
Percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) employees in the workforce	1.02%	0.9%

- g) The Human Resources Organisational Development Team has delivered ESOL (English as second or other language) and Literacy courses (6 x 2 hours a week at Bridgend College) for migrant workers in Corporate Cleaning and other services. Managers identify employees needing support can liaise with the O.D. Team regarding training. A further ESOL course will be held shortly (via Neath Port Talbot College). ESOL training is funded by the Council's Basic Skills grant which was obtained by drawing down funding from WAG. The Council has also signed the Employer Pledge committing it to improving Literacy and Numeracy, incorporating ESOL and has an Employer Pledge Award by WAG.

5. Effect on Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The report has no direct effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.

6. Legal implications

6.1 There are no legal implications

7. Financial implications

7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. Recommendations

8.1 It is recommended that the Equalities Committee receives and considers this report.

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Background papers:

- Welsh Language Act 1993
- Equality Act 2006