

CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2023

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 09:30

Present

Councillor N Farr – Chairperson

HJ David

W R Goode

JC Spanswick

Present Virtually

JPD Blundell
A Wathan

M J Evans
AJ Williams

D M Hughes
E D Winstanley

M Lewis

Apologies for Absence

J Gebbie, RL Penhale-Thomas and HM Williams

Officers:

Zoe Edwards

Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager

Mark Galvin

Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Angela Granville

HR Business Development Manager

Paul Miles

HR Service Centre Manager

Philip O'Brien

Digital Transformation and Customer Services Manager

Susan Roberts

Group Manager - School Support

Kirsty Williams

Partnership & CSP Manager

CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2023

Nimi Chandrasena

Democratic Services Officer - Support

32. Declarations of Interest

Decision Made	<p>The following members declared personal interests :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor M J Evans – Item 5 : School Governor at Pencoed Comprehensive and Croesty Primary. Also has a child attending Pencoed Comprehensive School.• Councillor N Farr – Item 5 : Has grandchildren in one of the schools discussed mentioned in the report• Councillor A Williams – Item 5 : Has children attending one of the schools mentioned in the report• Councillor E Winstanley – Item 6 : Is an employee of Awen Cultural Trust who have delivered library events using Summer of Fun funding, and also a Food and fun session and partnered with Halo on delivering Feel Good for Life sessions.• Councillor R Goode – Item 6 : Holds a position as Head of the Terrence Higgins Trust Cymru which plays a large role in STI/HIV testing nationally. Highlighted World AIDS Day 2023 and Welsh HIV Testing Week
Date Decision Made	8 November 2023

33. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<p>That the minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet Committee Equalities dated 12/07/2023 be approved as a true and accurate record. The following corrections to the minutes were noted :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Chairperson of the meeting was Councillor Neelo Farr and not Councillor Rhys Goode• Councillor Jane Gebbie was present at the meeting
Date Decision Made	8 November 2023

34. Community Cohesion Annual Report

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of the report, presented by the Partnership & CSP Manager was to provide an annual update to Cabinet Committee Equalities on the work of the Welsh Government funded Community Cohesion Officer and the community cohesion work of Bridgend Community Safety Partnership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A member stated that given tensions within communities in relation to events in the Middle East, that officers and members recognise work of the Community Cohesion Team and South Wales Police in dealing those issues.• A member also requested details highlighting the work done by the Community Cohesion Team in the last year.• A discussion between a member and the Partnership & CSP Manager took place in relation to the rationale behind seconding the Community Cohesion co-ordinator to Swansea rather than being based in Bridgend and also enquired about the steps behind effective recruitment to the post. It was stated that there were benefits to Bridgend from the secondment as they receive information that covers the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot areas, which have higher levels of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities than in Bridgend so the team were able to see emerging trends from a regional picture that they could then act upon. It was also mentioned that given that the role was always advertised on short-term basis with short-term extensions, this had proven to be unattractive to the applicants.• Members and officers commended the work done in subways and various parts of Bridgend to cover up hateful graffiti.• A member stated there was little mentioned about work done in relation to the LGBTQ+ community and wanted to know what work had been done in terms of empowering and engaging the community within the borough.• The Community Cohesion Officer responded that they endeavour to reach grassroot community groups through small grant funds to create awareness and engagement and cited examples of community groups that have benefited. She also mentioned their links with the Youth LGBTQ+ forum alongside South Wales Police which meet on a weekly basis.• RESOLVED : The Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the content and the updates within the
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CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2023

	report submitted.
Date Decision Made	8 November 2023

35. Update on Racial and/or Discriminative Incidents Within Schools

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of the report, presented by the Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager was to provide Cabinet Committee Equalities (CCE) with information on racial and/or discriminative incidents within schools, as monitored using the Racist Incident Report Form, along with initiatives to combat racism within schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A member stated that though the title suggested that the report was an update on Racial and/or Discriminative Incidents Within Schools, there was only information regarding Racial discrimination, he inquired the possibility of elaborating on other Discriminative Incidents as well as solely racial discrimination.• A member noted that Porthcawl Comprehensive recorded a significantly higher level of incidents than the other secondary schools in the borough as they had done in the previous year. He enquired what support had been provided to address the problem; had there been an impact on the support provided and was there a reason for the high level of incidents.• The Group Manager - School Support stated that the size of the school would have an impact on the numbers reported. She also stated that schools that have undergone training around discrimination were likely to have higher numbers reported than schools who had not undergone the training. She mentioned that they would seek the assistance of the Central South Consortium to cater for further training requirements.• The Group Manager - School Support informed the committee of the Diversity and Anti Racist Professional Learning conference on the 21st of November which the team had already alerted all schools to attend. She stated that she did not have any data regarding other hate/discrimination incidents reported but will obtain this information and take away an action from the meeting that all forms of discrimination will be reported upon in future, covering a wider scale.• It was noted that the question regarding reporting only racism and not other aspects of
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discrimination was raised in 2022 with an assurance that subsequent reports regarding the subject were to include all forms of discrimination.

- A member suggested that given the figures of the age groups of pupils where incidents had been reported, it would be beneficial to have training conducted within primary schools. The Head of Education and Family Support responded that whilst she agreed there was a need, the challenges they face was the cost attached to the training. Funding was only available for fixed time periods and schools had difficulties in releasing their teachers to undergo training due to sickness levels and staff shortages. There were however checks in place by way of audits which the schools undertook.
- The Group Manager - Transformation and Customer Services and the Cabinet Member for Education both informed the committee to record any kind of discrimination that comes to their attention under the Discrimination Incident Report form on the BCBC my account page (https://bridgend-self.achieveservice.com/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-96142699-6f19-4055-8f87-35687ae8429e/AF-Stage-1fd9d647-ec04-4182-a5c7-20f229a50083/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en) as this would assist in the reporting of figures.
- The Chairperson added that it would be useful to have data on the level of reporting of incidents from schools and mentioned that it could possibly be looked at by Team Bridgend, meetings of which head teachers within the borough were invited to. He agreed with the Head of Education and Family Support that they would look to obtain this information as well as an update from Team Bridgend in this regard.
- A member mentioned that as a governor of Brynteg Comprehensive, she would discuss with fellow governors what the school is doing in relation to the 'Show Racism the red card' campaign.
- The Group Manager - School Support stated that they would liaise with the Central South Consortium to establish how many schools had undergone the relevant training
- It was suggested that there needed to be a linking in of information between the Equalities and Education teams when reporting figures in relation to incidents at schools.

CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2023

	<u>RESOLVED</u> : The Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the content and the updates within the report submitted.
Date Decision Made	8 November 2023

36. Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of this report, presented by the Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager, was to provide Cabinet Committee Equalities with an update on the work completed within the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020 – 2024 for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A member stated that it had been mentioned that Council had promoted 33 campaigns via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and the BCBC website, she inquired the outcomes of those campaigns, how the success of the campaigns were measured and what improvements could be done in relation to campaigns to be held in the future. The member asked if the committee could be provided with the information so that there is better understanding of the success of such campaigns.• The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager stated that within the Community and Engagement communications team they were able to analyse data by looking at the share rate by partners and followers on social media. She stated they conduct promotional awareness and monitor any interaction. The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager stated that the measure of such data, would vary dependent on the event.• The Group Manager - Transformation and Customer Services added that they would be able to provide data in the future as to campaigns generated and their individual success rates.• The Chairperson referred to page 31 where it was noted that three workshops had been held with 24 delegates attending, she noted her disappointment at the attendance and enquired if these courses could be made mandatory.• The Group Manager - Human Resources and Organisational Development provided clarity in relation to numbers who had attended. He explained steps undertaken to create awareness of the courses and informed the committee that he would come back at a later date with an answer to the possibility of listing particular courses as being mandatory.
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CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2023

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Chairperson referred to page 34 in relation to awareness raising tables were organised by Community Safety Partnership and enquired how these sessions were promoted within the communities and if they knew how well they was attended.• The Partnership & CSP Manager stated that they promote Community Safety Partnership tables around Borough by way of a list of contacts and venues where they can make the arrangements to hold partnership tables. Special attention is paid to ASB hotspot areas but they also try to reach venues across the borough to make sure that awareness is raised reaching a wider audience. They were confident that the Tables were held in spaces that they knew to have gained good engagement, for example, supermarkets, leisure centres, libraries, community centres, bus stations, churches, drop-in centres and food pantries. Additionally, the team liaise with the Communications team in advance of these sessions to publicise the events.• A member referred to page 48 and enquired what had been done to promote recruitment from ethnic minority backgrounds as they do with disabled backgrounds. The Chairperson also queried if there were statistics available on how many employees there are within the authority with protected characteristics.• The Group Manager - Human Resources and Organisational Development stated that they commit to a workplace culture that recruits, retains and develop staff from all backgrounds representing the community. The recruitment system is an open and transparent process where applications are accepted from all suitable applicants for the role, equal opportunities being a feature of the recruitment process. Interviews and recruitment are taken based on merit, without any reference to information around equalities. Recruiting managers are not aware of this information and it is held securely within HR.• The Chairperson stated that there had been a recent appointment to a senior role within Social Services and Wellbeing directorate and the successful candidate was from the BAME community, and this links in with the recruitment process mentioned above. <p><u>RESOLVED :</u> The Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the update on the work completed within the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020 – 2024 for the period 2022 - 2023</p>
Date Decision Made	8 November 2023

37. Development of Strategic Equality Plan 2024 - 2028

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of this report, presented by the Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager, was to provide Cabinet Committee Equalities with an update on the development of the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028, ahead of Cabinet approval to commence public consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members inquired what work had been undertaken to reach out beyond the groups mentioned and the authority's usual process of general consultation, which is online and shared through social media and they cited examples such as those who had disabilities and those who lived in smaller valleys, where it was sometimes difficult to engage in online consultations. The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager responded that there had been work undertaken to establish external links with supporting organisations allowing the team to reach out to their users• A member inquired about the new toolkit mentioned under Objective 4, that had been developed to support a more consistent and effective approach to consulting and engaging with the communities. The Group Manager - Human Resources and Organisational Development responded that the consultation team do not get involved in every consultation that goes on across the Council. There are however, key corporate consultations that the Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager and her team lead on. The Team have developed a corporate toolkit which is available on the Internet to all staff. He stated that the consultations undertaken by the central team, are kept on record and evaluation is conducted after every consultation is undertaken. This exercise looked at the levels of engagement and participation and the Group Manager stated that the information can be made available to the committee, if that was deemed required. <p><u>RESOLVED</u> : That Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the content of the report prior to seeking Cabinet approval to commence a public consultation on the draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.</p>
Date Decision Made	8 November 2023

CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2023

38. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	8 November 2023

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click [this link](#)

The meeting closed at 11:31.