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Bridgend County Borough Council



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Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 / 643147 / 643694

Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Thursday, 2 November 2023

Dear Councillor,

CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES

A meeting of the Cabinet Committee Equalities will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Wednesday, 8 November 2023** at **09:30**.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008.
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 6
To receive for approval the Minutes of 12/07/2023
4. Community Cohesion Annual Report 7 - 14
5. Update on Racial and/or Discriminative Incidents Within Schools 15 - 22
6. Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 23 - 62
7. Development of Strategic Equality Plan 2024 - 2028 63 - 74
8. Urgent Items
To consider any other item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Rule 4 of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Note: This will be a Hybrid meeting and Members and Officers will be attending in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street Bridgend / Remotely via Microsoft Teams. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon

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as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / .643696

Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

A R Berrow
JPD Blundell
HJ David
M J Evans
N Farr
P Ford

Councillors

J Gebbie
W R Goode
D M Hughes
M Lewis
J Llewellyn-Hopkins
RL Penhale-Thomas

Councillors

JC Spanswick
A Wathan
AJ Williams
HM Williams
E D Winstanley

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY 2023 AT 10:00

Present

Councillor W R Goode – Chairperson

A R Berrow	HJ David	N Farr	D M Hughes
RL Penhale-Thomas	A Wathan	AJ Williams	HM Williams
E D Winstanley			

Apologies for Absence

JPD Blundell, M J Evans, J Gebbie, J Llewellyn-Hopkins and JC Spanswick

Officers:

Zoe Edwards	Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager
Stephen Griffiths	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Lucy King	Consultation & Engagement Officer
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Kirsty Williams	Partnership & CSP Manager

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr E Winstanley – Personal Interest in Item 7 as she was member of Awen Trust

25. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the 20/03/2023 be approved as a true and accurate record

26. ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITY IN THE WORKFORCE - 2022-23

Group Manager HR and Organisational Development presented report which The Group Manager HR and Organisational development presented a report which updated the Cabinet Committee Equalities with a summary of the equality profile of the Council's workforce as at 31st March 2023.

He highlighted appendix 1, which provided an equality profile with comparative data from the previous two years. The data included protected characteristics of the workforce as listed at 3.2 of the report.

The Group Manager HR and Organisational development explained that the Council continued to work through the Strategic Equality Plan in terms of specific actions. The Equalities monitoring form was currently being revised and rollout of this was planned during 2023/24.

The Group Manager HR and Organisational development outlined some of the key monitoring stats in relation to the spread of diversity across the Councils workforce and stated that there were no significant changes on previous years. He highlighted the exception which were the figures for disability, which showed an increased identification of disability compared with previous years.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Regeneration stated that we had an aging workforce in the Council, with 46% of the overall workforce being over 50 years of age. He asked what the Council was doing to recruit younger people and encouraging them to pursue a career in BCBC and to ensure succession planning and risk mitigation.

The Group Manager HR and Organisational development explained that recognising the challenge we have with recruitment and retention of staff in BCBC we were looking to develop the Strategic Workforce Plan and looking to engage with schools, colleges and other further/higher education establishments.

The Deputy Leader echoed the comments of the Cabinet Member and stated that further care needed to be taken on this issue as each year the challenge will be greater and this is reflected also in the aging population of Bridgend.

The Leader stated that the figures for disability identification were a positive reflection on people feeling comfortable disclosing this and understanding that it would not impact negatively on themselves. He stressed the importance that people of all disabilities played in the workforce within BCBC.

A Member asked how many staff completed the information in the report and therefore did it accurately represent the majority of the workforce within BCBC. The Group Manager HR and Organisational development stated that gender and age was a mandatory completion and therefore we held 100% of this data, however all other fields are voluntary and not all staff complete this data and therefore this varied across the questions.

RESOLVED: that the Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the information contained in this report and within Appendix 1.

27. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS - ANNUAL REVIEW - 2022-23**

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager presented a report which updated Members on the Council's requirement to undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), an overview of the Council's approach to EIAs and an outline of EIAs undertaken in Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) service areas in 2022/2023.

She explained that the EIA process was a tool to assess whether new (or changes to existing) policies/services/functions, or the removal of services, could impact on different sectors of society in different ways. EIAs should be carried out when making strategic decisions. An e-learning module has been made available to employees which provides an overview of EIAs, their role in improving services and a guide to conducting them.

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager stated that between April 2022 and March 2023, four full EIAs were undertaken and accompanied Cabinet reports and these were listed in Appendix One. Sixty-two EIA screenings were undertaken during this period and these are listed in Appendix Two. Further information was at sections 3 and 4 of the report.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Regeneration said it was encouraging to see over 250 employees who had completed this training. He asked if employees who had not completed the training were able to assess whether reports needed a full EIA, and would they be required to complete the training before they were able to carry out an EIA. The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager confirmed that staff would

need to complete the EIA training before conducting an EIA or indeed have the ability to assess whether reports needed a full EIA.

RESOLVED: Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the progress made in the Council during 2022/23 in the completion of Equality Impact Assessments and the progress made with training.

28. **ANNUAL WELSH STANDARDS REVIEW**

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager presented a report which informed Cabinet Committee Equalities of the content and approach taken with the council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Report for 2022/2023.

She explained that the Council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022/2023 covered the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and was published, as required, by 30 April 2023. The report was attached as Appendix One (Welsh) and Appendix Two (English). The various elements of reporting that were required to be published were set out at section 3 of the report.

The Leader welcomed the report and was pleased with the progress that had been made since last year. He was pleased with the recent 'Little Welsh Festival' at Bryngarw Park and an example of how we were working together with other organisations like Menter Bro Ogwr.

The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration stated that he was attending a Welsh Medium Primary School with Cllr Blundell tomorrow with the Minister for Welsh Language and Education to discuss what we are doing across the borough to encourage parents to send children to Welsh Medium Schools, take up the Welsh language in their spare time and promote the language. The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration added that any Member who wished to learn Welsh could sign up through the Democratic Services team

RESOLVED: Cabinet Committee Equalities noted this report and the progress made during 2022/2023 in meeting its Welsh Language duties.

29. **ANTI-RACIST WALES ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Partnership and CSP Manager presented a report which updated the Cabinet Committee Equalities on the work underway and being considered to deliver the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan for Bridgend County Borough Council.

She explained that on 7 June 2022 Welsh Government published the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan setting out the intention to be an anti-racist nation by 2030. The Plan covers actions to be undertaken between June 2022 to June 2024 with the intention being to learn from the work undertaken during this period. Since the publication of the Plan we have been liaising with colleagues across South Wales around approaches for the delivery of the Plan and are awaiting updates on the appointment of implementation leads.

The Partnership and CSP Manager explained that in the absence of leads, the Community Safety Partnership in Bridgend have worked with Equalities and the regional Community Cohesion officer for Western Bay to discuss how the council can deliver the Plan. Further details were at section 3 of the report.

CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY 2023

The Deputy Leader asked that we ensure as a Council that trade unions and people who have lived through these experiences are included in conversations and ultimately contribute to the revised plans for future years.

The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration asked if Officers could be mindful of timeframes and look to move ahead with this plan, as it could take some time to get clarification from Welsh Government. As an authority and borough we need to ensure we take a zero tolerance approach to racism and this plan will aid us in that.

The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration also asked what work was being done with other organisations to ensure that the cultural diversity of Wales was understood and took into account when developing our policies, providing services and driving changes forward. The Chair echoed these comments and suggested that we could have speakers at these meetings to talk about various equalities issues.

The Leader suggested an additional recommendation to look at identifying local leads within the organisation to drive the plan forward.

The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration asked if an update report could be provided to the next committee on the LGBTQ action plan and suggested that as a committee, we look at all reports from Welsh Government to ensure a holistic approach to our plans

RESOLVED: Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the content of this update report and; Local Leads be identified within the organization

30. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

Meeting of:	CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES
Date of Meeting:	8th NOVEMBER 2023
Report Title:	COMMUNITY COHESION ANNUAL REPORT
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	REGIONAL COMMUNITY COHESION CO-ORDINATOR
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of March 2023, the Community Cohesion Programme has been funded for a further three years with the possibility of another two years extension. • The Cohesion Officer has been on secondment to Swansea Council as the Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator since September 2022 • For the purpose of this report, progress updates are based on the work plan covering March 2022-September 2023. A new National Community Cohesion Work Plan is in place from October 2023, included in the appendix. • Hate Crime figures have been provided by Victim Support and South Wales Police are included as background documents.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is 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.

2. Background

- 2.1 In December 2018 Welsh Government issued their 'intention to fund' email to all Regional Community Cohesion Co-coordinators in Wales. Welsh Government indicated that each region would be allocated £140,000 to:
- Identify and mitigate community tensions (hate crime, extremism, anxiety, anti-social behaviour) relating to Brexit;
 - Improve community cohesion communications;
 - Organise events / activities to promote social inclusion; and

- Deliver non-Brexit activities as outlined in the National Community Cohesion Plan (2019)
- 2.2. At that time Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC), Swansea Council and Neath Port Talbot (NPT) County Borough Council made up the Western Bay Community Cohesion Region, led by a Regional Community Cohesion Co-ordinator based in Swansea Council. An application for £140,000 for the Western Bay Community Cohesion Region was submitted and accepted.
- 2.3 BCBC appointed a Community Cohesion Officer in September 2019. The post was originally funded until 31 March 2021 and subsequently until 30 June 2021 closely aligned with the Brexit deadline towards the European Union (EU) settlement scheme.
- 2.3.1 In April 2021 Welsh Government extended the funding for the Community Cohesion Officer until March 2022 and a further extension until March this year.
- 2.3.2 In March 2023 the funding was extended until March 2026, with the possibility of another two year extension.
- 2.4 The role of the community cohesion officer up until September 2023 was:
- **Engagement and Awareness Raising:** engagement with minority communities, involving them in developing initiatives to promote community cohesion based on the needs of that community, the wider community, and mitigate tensions. Fostering good relations by developing events to bring people from across different communities together, whether virtually or in person.
 - **Training and capacity building:** support public bodies and others in the region to build their awareness and capacity to effectively implement the Public Sector Equality Duty. Support wider Welsh Government training programmes and policy development (as required), bringing in community engagement expertise. Build capacity within groups supporting minority communities to improve engagement, understanding of cohesion issues and routes to support.
 - **Tension Monitoring and mitigation:** understand ongoing and emerging community tensions and put in place processes and procedures to address them as required. Engagement with relevant networks including the Police to address tensions / hot spots. This may involve a multi-agency response to reduce tensions and/or undertake preventative work.
 - **Inclusive policy and decision-making:** ensure community cohesion issues are considered in the development of Well-being Plans, Strategic Equality Plans, Equality Impact Assessments, Community Safety planning. Ensure Public Bodies are reaching out to and hearing from minority groups when developing policies or taking decisions which are likely to affect them.
 - **Prevention of hate, exploitation and extremism:** have an understanding of the likelihood and prevalence of exploitation and extremism in the community and take action to ensure that vulnerable communities are aware of it, are supported and avoid it escalating.

- 2.5 The Community Cohesion Officer is based within the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The work of the CSP is embedded into that of the Public Services Board. The CSP brings together public, private and voluntary agencies to reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime. They do this by tackling the needs of both individuals and communities. More information on Bridgend CSP can be found at <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/community-safety-partnership/>.
- 2.6 As of September 2022, the Community Cohesion Officer has been on secondment to Swansea Council as the Community Cohesion Co-ordinator for the region. Attempts to fill the vacancy in Bridgend have been unsuccessful.
- 2.7 The workload is being managed by Bridgend CSP with support from the regional Community Cohesion Co-ordinator. This avoids duplication and ensures collaboration across all aspects of community safety and cohesion.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 From October 2023, Community Cohesion will use the new Welsh Government 'National Community Cohesion Delivery Plan' (included as a background document). This is a result of a rapid review of the Cohesion Delivery Plan, conducted by Diverse Cymru in October 2021.

The objectives of the new work plan include:

- **Mainstreaming Community Cohesion;**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Building Resilient Communities**
- **Bespoke Actions**

- 3.2 Recent years have seen unprecedented changes locally, nationally and internationally due to the impacts of the Covid pandemic, cost of living crisis and global events.

- 3.3 This makes it difficult to understand the underlying causes of community tensions. The data included in the appendix has been provided by South Wales Police and Victim Support.

- 3.4 At a local and force level there has been an increase in the reports of hate crime, notably the racially motivated hate crime.

- 3.5 The below provides an update on work undertaken to deliver the Objectives of the last Community Cohesion Work Plan spanning March 2022 – September 2023.

Engagement and Awareness Raising:

- Ongoing support for the Resettlement Schemes supporting the Afghan and Ukrainian communities.
- Delivered Hate Crime Awareness Week 2023 events, sessions and messaging around this year's theme of 'Faith Based Hate Crime'. This included a workshop held in partnership with Bridgend CSP, the youth club at Coleg Cymunedol Y

Dderwen and 'Another Day Another Spray' street artist to encourage the young people to create positive art designs. The young people engaged well and were able to take their art work home with them.

- Refugee Week 2023 was promoted with a social media campaign on this years theme of 'Finding Freedom'.
- Worked as sub-chair of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Heritage working group, creating engagement opportunities in Neath Port Talbot for the GRT community in learning and promoting their heritage. Bridgend will be looking to replicate this progress.
- Ongoing support for Welsh Government's Anti-Hate social media campaign. The 'Hate Hurts Waes' campaign, including a bi-lingual social media package, has been shared across various platforms. This content features videos on the different forms of hate and discrimination.
- Undertaken a 'Positive Messages' project in Bridgend, working with the CSP on community street art projects. Cohesion have funded two community murals in Brackla and Bridgend (Merthyr Mawr subway) to spread a message of 'Hope' and complement the work being done through the Home Office 'Safer Streets' fund to target graffiti hot spot areas.
- Whilst on secondment, the Cohesion Officer is a member of BAVO's Ukraine Support Group to remain informed of local developments and continue engagement with the community and key partners.

Training and Capacity Building:

- For Refugee Week the Cohesion Officer co-ordinated delivery of an information session on the 'Experience of a Refugee and Asylum Seeker'. This session was delivered by Displaced People in Action to staff and key partners.
- 'Safe Online Spaces' training was co-ordinated for partners. This session was delivered with Victim Support to help residents create safe spaces online and identify and report hateful language.
- Hate Crime Awareness week saw the regional Community Cohesion team deliver an online support session to staff and partners on 'Hate Crime and Support Available' in partnership with Victim Support.
- Co-ordination of an information session, delivered by Camau, of an information session for colleagues in education on the topic of 'Controversial Language: Misogyny and Sexism'.

Inclusive Policy and Decision Making:

- Supporting the Welsh Government consultation and responding to the feedback opportunities on the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (ARWAP). The Cohesion Officer and CSP Manager have also been taking part in monthly seminars hosted by the ARWAP team at Welsh Government to consider progress on the plan and future arrangements for the local authorities.
- Participation in the Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equalities Forum.
- Membership of the Wales Community Volunteer Association Grant Panel, ensuring inclusive decision making throughout the grant allocation process, and the Comic Relief Organisational Growth panel, ensuring cohesion priorities are considered in the decision-making process.
- The Cohesion Officer has worked with the regional voluntary sector and cohesion officers in establishing a Small Grant Fund in December 2022 and

October 2023. The purpose of this fund is to engage with and help to develop grass-root community groups that face barriers to funding. The most recent grant fund was launched during Hate Crime Awareness week (14 – 21 October) 2023 and the focus is on creating inclusive spaces. Information on how to apply and the criteria has been shared across our networks. Previous recipients include Cornelly Development Trust for their LGBTQ+ Support Initiative and we hope to award more grants to the Bridgend region.

- There is also input into the Bridgend Equality Focus Group to support the objectives of the Strategic Equality Plan 2024 – 2028.

Tension Monitoring and Mitigation

- Alongside community and stakeholder engagement, work continues on tension monitoring within local communities.
- Tensions identified by partners are reported via the tension monitoring system to the 'Safer Bridgend' inbox.
- Monthly updates are sent to Welsh Government on community tensions and hate crime incidents. The Cohesion Officer attends monthly meetings with Welsh Government to discuss local community tensions, and attends the All Wales Cohesion meeting on a bi-monthly basis. Regions share updates and best practice to help identify and mitigate community tensions.
- Updates are all fed in to Bridgend CSP through the quarterly strategic meetings, with a specific cohesion update. Two CSP meetings have taken place during this reporting period, and street graffiti has featured in both updates.
- Hate crime is also discussed at the regional Contest meetings covering Cwm Taf Morgannwg, giving insight and understanding to the picture in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil, too.

Prevention of Hate, Exploitation and Extremism

- The Cohesion Officer is a member of the National Prevent Extremism Forum, the Forum for Anti-Asylum Hate and Crime.
- CSP and the Cohesion Officer took part in this years' Anti-Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking conference with Cardiff University.
- Bridgend Channel Panel is chaired by the Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships Manager, with updates given at the Bridgend CSP meetings and at the regional Contest meeting.
- The Cohesion Officer has also been involved in securing the funding and developing the 'StreetSnap' App which is being piloted in Bridgend. This App will help identify and report hateful graffiti, stickering and images in the county borough and collect accurate data on hot spot areas and graffiti trends.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies,

strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The Community Cohesion project demonstrates the sustainable development principle by ensuring that by meeting the needs of the present we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This is evidenced through the five ways of working:

- **Long term** – community cohesion work seeks to understand and mitigate the long term implications on Bridgend residents and its diverse communities, as a result of ongoing changes to the social and political climate.
- **Prevention** – working with partners to map and understand community tensions will help prevent serious problems occurring and mitigate existing tensions.
- **Integration** – the project contributes to the national well-being goals: an Equal Wales, a Resilient Wales, and a Wales of Cohesive Communities and to the Well-being objectives of ‘Protecting our most vulnerable’, ‘Creating thriving valleys communities’, and ‘Making people feel valued, heard and part of their community’.
- **Collaboration** – the success of the role of the Co-ordinator relies on collaboration with partners across Bridgend County and the wider partnerships, such as Western Bay Community Cohesion and Bridgend Community Safety Partnership.
- **Involvement** – the consultation with partners, stakeholders, local residents, communities and elected members will inform the decision of whether to extend the PSPOs.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no Climate Change implications linked to this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 In considering how we support community cohesion, Bridgend County Borough Council is ensuring that all people living in the county borough are safe and protected.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications resulting from this information report.

9. Recommendation(s)

9.1 That Cabinet Committee Equalities note the content of this update report

Background documents



National Community
Cohesion Work Plan

- National Community Cohesion Work Plan



Hate crime figures

- Hate Crime figures, supplied by South Wales Police and Victim Support

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Meeting of:	CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES
Date of Meeting:	8 NOVEMBER 2023
Report Title:	UPDATE ON RACIAL AND/OR DISCRIMINATIVE INCIDENTS WITHIN SCHOOLS
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER - FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	ZOE EDWARDS - CONSULTATION, ENGAGEMENT AND EQUALITIES MANAGER SUSAN ROBERTS – GROUP MANAGER SCHOOL SUPPORT
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	This report provides an update on racial and/or discriminative incidents within schools.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is 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.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 18 March 2019 all schools were sent guidance on reporting racist incidents within schools.
- 2.2 Guidance included notifying the local authority of racist incidents as well as notification to the police where incidents were recorded as a hate crime.
- 2.3 Incident Report Forms are sent to the equality’s mailbox for recording purposes, and details are annually reported.
- 2.4 In Autumn 2019, Welsh Government announced several grant funded streams to deal with hate crime. Amongst these was a project to work specifically in 100 schools across Wales. Its aim is to deliver critical thinking skills and raise awareness of all aspects of hate crime in schools, with a focus on pupils at Key Stage 3. Due to the national scope of the proposals, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) were deemed to be best placed to act as a lead on the delivery of this project as local authorities are far more aware of the local and regional needs and requirement of its schools.

- 2.5 Following a Welsh Government review, and subsequent publishing of guidance relating to schools' responsibilities for bullying practice, this is now devolved to individual settings.
- 2.6 Following a series of meetings between WLGA, Community Cohesion Coordinators and preferred providers for delivering hate crime projects, a number of schools in Bridgend were identified on the basis of data on reported hate crime in the community, anti-social behaviour in the area and discussions with the school liaison police officers.
- 2.7 The five schools initially identified were:
- Brynteg School
 - Bryntirion Comprehensive School
 - Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen
 - Maesteg School
 - Pencoed Comprehensive School
- 2.8 In January 2020, WLGA commissioned Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC) as their preferred partner to deliver the project to identified schools across Wales. The aim of the project is to deliver a series of workshops to support children and young people to develop critical thinking skills which will enable them to question hateful narratives, assist them in recognising 'fake news', consider the causes of hate crime, and dissuade them from becoming perpetrators of hate crime in future.
- 2.9 The project is also aimed to equip school staff (including teachers and key support staff, such as receptionists or break time supervisors) with the skills to challenge hate crime and support victims when it occurs in school through separate train the trainer style workshops facilitated by SAPERE, the national charity supporting Philosophy for Children (P4C).
- 2.10 This report outlines the racist/discrimination incidents reported for the whole 2022-23 academic year, as well as an update on the Welsh Government project in relation to hate crime being delivered in selected secondary schools across Wales.

3. Current situation / proposal

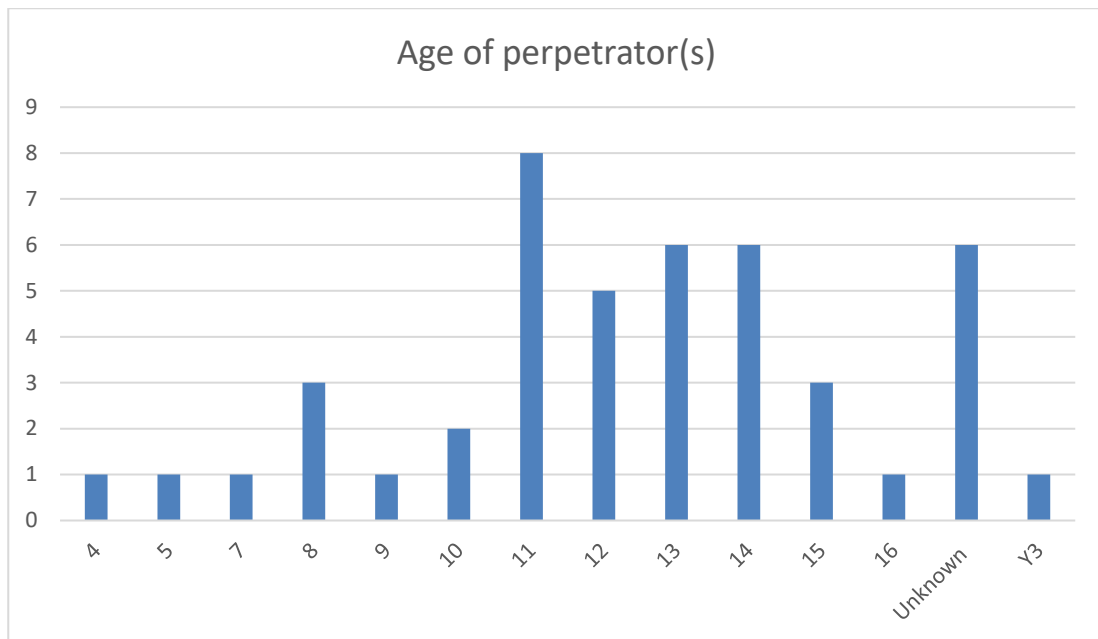
- 3.1 In the academic year **2022-23** there have been forty-three racist incidents reported by schools across the county borough. Incidents were reported by the following fifteen schools:

School	No. of incidents
Porthcawl Comprehensive School	12
Bryntirion Comprehensive School	5
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	3
Coety Primary School	4
Brynteg Comprehensive School	3
Cynffig Comprehensive School	4
Oldcastle Primary School	2
Betws Primary School	2
Nottage Primary School	2
Brackla Primary School	1
Ffaldau Primary School	1
Maesteg School	1
Porthcawl Primary School	1
West Park Primary	1
Ysgol Bryn Castell	1

3.1.1 Incidents are recorded by incident type. Incidents were recorded as:

Type	No.
Verbal abuse or insults	31
Racist comments during a discussion	4
Verbal abuse and written derogatory text	4
Name calling	1
Racial language	1
Racist graffiti	1
Verbal abuse and use of weapon	1

3.1.2 Incidents have been recorded by age of perpetrator and age of victim:



In two separate incidents, there were more than one perpetrator, where two eight-year-olds were involved with an incident. On another occasion, one four-year-old and five-year-old were involved in the same incident. On six different incidents the age of the perpetrator was unknown.



On three occasions, there were no identified victims.

3.1.3 Forty perpetrators were recorded as White British; one perpetrator was recorded as White and black African. Another perpetrator was recorded as Chinese. On one occasion the ethnicity of perpetrator was unknown.

3.1.4 Ethnicity of the victims were recorded as:

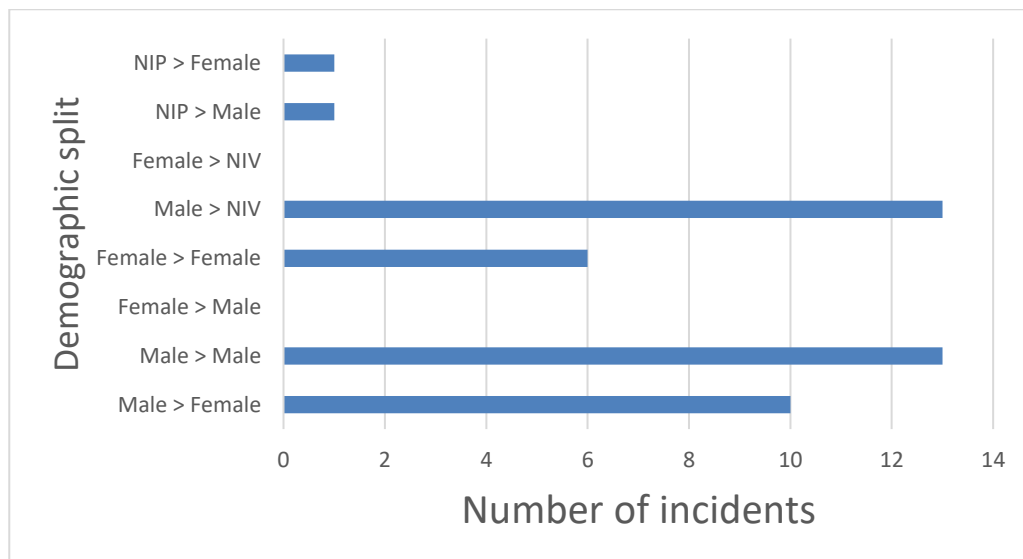
- Black African – 7
- N/A - 3
- White and black African - 1
- White Asian – 1

- White - 1
- Mixed background - 1

3.1.5 Thirty-seven of the perpetrators were recorded as male, six recorded as female and two non-identified perpetrators. The perpetrator to victim count identified the following:

- 13 male perpetrators to male victims
- 13 male perpetrators to no identified victims (NIV)
- 10 male perpetrators to female victims
- 6 female perpetrators to female victims
- 1 non-identified perpetrator (NIP) to male victim
- 1 non-identified perpetrator (NIP) to female victim
- 0 female perpetrators to male victims

Of the above count, two incidents included two male perpetrators to two male victims and another two incidents included one male perpetrator to two female victims (NIV).



3.1.6 Of the forty-three recorded incidents, a range of interventions took place, some of which had multiple interventions per incident. These included:

- Phone call home (25)
- Verbal Reprimand (21)
- Meeting with parents (14)
- Fixed period exclusion (13)
- Removal from lesson (8)
- Support plan (6)
- Letter home (6)
- Internal referral (3)
- Pre-exclusion warning (3)
- Loss of privileges (1)
- Lunch detention (1)
- Meeting with Police (1)

- 3.2 In April 2021, after discussions between representatives of Welsh Government and the WLGA, a new funding arrangement was agreed to fund the remainder of the project during the financial year 2021-2022. The agreement included an additional funding allocation which increased the scope and capacity of the project to include an additional 2 schools in each local authority.
- 3.3 Using the criteria highlighted in 3.1 of this report, the additional school was identified as:
- Porthcawl Comprehensive School
- 3.4 To date, six schools have received sessions from SRtRC via face-to-face delivery or webinars. Of the other schools identified:
- Porthcawl Comprehensive School received training on 18/01/2021,
 - Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd received training on 19/01/202.
 - Brynteg School did not participate due to issues arranging a suitable date.

3.5 Central South Consortium (CSC) Updates

- 3.5.1 In August 2021, an agreement from WLGA was made to alter the delivery model and offer the teacher training to all schools within Bridgend. This broadened the scope of the project to reach a potential 21 schools, as opposed to 3 teachers from each of the above schools attending as initially intended.
- 3.5.2 This approach has provided a more sustainable approach to dealing with the issues of hate crime in our schools, and address key recommendations set out in the recently published report by Victim Support.
- 3.5.3 The professional learning and resources developed by Central South Consortium (CSC) to support the teaching of themes relating to Black Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and 'Cynefin' are aligned to the findings and recommendations of the Welsh Government working group.
- 3.5.4 CSC provides a professional learning programme to support the teaching of themes relating to Black Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and 'cynefin'. These professional learning programmes are available to all schools.
- 3.5.5 CSC works in partnership with Diversity and Anti-Racism Professional Learning (DARPL) in ensuring high quality professional learning is available to all schools. Where schools have a particular need and require more intensive support, this can be brokered through the school improvement partner.
- 3.5.6 CSC provides resources and signposts schools to further resources that can be used by schools and practitioners to support the teaching of these themes. Equality and critical thinking certainly play an important part within curriculum design and implementation across all schools.

'Enabling excellence and equality' document offers clear approaches in supporting schools across CSC to enable excellence and equity for all learners.

3.5.7 Critical thinking and problem solving are one of the four integral skills that are developed within a wide range of teaching and learning within schools and underpin the 'Four purposes' of Curriculum for Wales.

3.5.8 CSC works in partnership with DARPL in ensuring high quality professional learning is available to all schools and unconscious bias may form part of their professional learning for school leaders.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations Implications and Connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no Climate Change Implications from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 That cabinet notes the annual update on racial and/or discriminative incidents within schools

Background documents

None

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Meeting of:	CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES
Date of Meeting:	8 NOVEMBER 2023
Report Title:	STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER, FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	ZOE EDWARDS, CONSULTATION, ENGAGEMENT AND EQUALITIES MANAGER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	All public bodies in Wales must comply with the Public Sector Equality One of the specific duties is to produce the Strategic Equality Plan

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is 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.

2. Background

- 2.1 The SEP annual report enables the Council to:

- monitor and review progress against its strategic equality objectives;
- review its objectives and processes in light of any new legislation and other new developments;
- engage with relevant stakeholders around equality objectives, providing transparency;
- include relevant updates on equality impact assessments, procurement arrangements and training.

Specifically, the report sets out:

- the steps taken to identify and collect relevant information;
- any reasons for not collecting relevant information;
- where appropriate, employment information, including information on training and pay.

- 2.2 The report will show progress made by the Council on each of its six equality objectives, which will be of interest to:

- Elected Members;

- Members of the community and community groups;
- Equality and Human Rights Commission;
- Welsh Government.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 The annual report (**Appendix 1**) covers the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The annual report must be published on the Council's website/made available by 1 April 2024.

3.2 The six strategic equalities objectives for 2020 – 2024 are:

- Education
- Work
- Living standards
- Health and wellbeing
- Safety and respect
- Participation

3.3 Some key points to note from the annual report are:

- The Council has held its status as a Disability Confident Employer, which will be reviewed in November 2023.
- Collaboration has taken place between the Council and Remploy, the UK's leading disability specialist in transforming lives through sustainable employment, on recruitment. This has involved supporting their clients to apply for vacancies in the Council and appointments have been made as a result.
- The Equality Awareness Workshop has been updated to include Unconscious Bias, Critical Thinking and Hidden Disabilities. Three workshops have been held with 24 delegates attending.
- The Council continued to make progress on appointing apprentices, with 40 employed during 2022/2023 The Council has appointed two graduates as part of its corporate graduate programme.
- There has been regular health and wellbeing employee communications which promote a wide range of physical activities to enable self-help. Some examples include:
 - Cycle to Work
 - Halo
 - Nature walks
 - World Cancer Day
 - Wellbeing Checklist to include physical activity
 - Eating disorders
 - Nutrition & Hydration week
 - World Sleep day
 - World Oral Health day
- In 2022 an online calendar of events for LGBTQI+ history month was shared via social media and internally with staff. Proud Councils also worked together this

year to create an art completion around Pride Cymru on the theme "becoming me'.

- The Council continued to work with community and equality groups within the Bridgend Community Cohesion Forum (BCCEF), representatives from across the community representing a wide range of organisations meet quarterly to share practice, receive joint briefings and training. All members are invited to share information about BCCEF with other organisations with the aim to increase membership and representation.
- The council has promoted campaigns via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and the Bridgend County Borough Council website, including:
 - International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia
 - Men's Health Week
 - Armed Forces Day
 - Samaritans Awareness Day
 - Anti-Slavery Day
 - Ramadan
 - Stress Awareness Month
 - Pride Month
 - Plastic Free July
 - National Walking Month
 - Black History Month
 - Refugee Week
 - Deaf Blind Awareness Week
 - Mental Health Awareness Week
 - Pride Month
 - #AnAntiRacistWales
 - Carers Week
 - Infant Mental Health Awareness
 - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month
 - Disability Pride Month
 - ASB Awareness Week
 - Eisteddfod
 - World Mental Health Day
 - Shwmae Sumae Day
 - #LGBTplusHM
 - Welsh
 - #RaceEqualityWeek23
 - LGBTQ+ Adoption and Fostering Week 2023.
 - International Day of the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
 - World Down Syndrome Day
 - Ramadan
 - #worldsocialworkday
 - Trans Day of Visibility

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider

the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no Climate Change Implications from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet Committee Equalities notes the update on the work completed within the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020 – 2024 for the period 2022 - 2023.

Background documents

None

Bridgend County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr



www.bridgend.gov.uk



Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2022-23

This document is also available in Welsh.

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1. Background

The authority's aim is to understand and tackle the equality barriers that people face so that everyone has a fair chance to fulfil their potential. We aim to ensure that equality is a part of everything we do and the services we deliver.

We aim to develop our services and activities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and the general duties outlined in the Equality Act 2010. This will help us to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Our aim is to mainstream equality and diversity, both internally and externally.

Following public consultation, the council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 was approved by Cabinet on 10 March 2020, with the following six strategic objectives:

Objective	What we hope to achieve/support?
Objective 1: Education	Everyone who accesses education should be free from discrimination, bullying and abuse in educational settings.
Objective 2: Work	Promote a more inclusive workforce and improve the participation, wellbeing, and opportunities for development for those with protected characteristics.
Objective 3: Living standards	Tackle poverty and support independent living by considering the impact of any policy changes or decisions under the socio-economic duty.
Objective 4: Health and wellbeing	Support and promote good mental and physical health within our communities and our workforce and provide opportunities to participate in leisure and cultural activities
Objective 5: Safety and respect	Ensure that people within our communities have access to services that support them to live without fear of violence or abuse, and to be treated with respect.
Objective 6: Participation	Encourage people and communities to participate and engage in issues that are important to them and influence the decisions that affect their lives.

Following this, we worked with a range of key managers across the authority to develop the 58 actions to underpin these six objectives.

We consulted with the public and equality groups on these actions and 647 participants shared their views with us.

Following this, we developed our action plan which was approved by our Cabinet Equalities Committee.

Heads of Service and senior service managers are responsible for ensuring the actions are achieved within their service areas. The Communications, Marketing and Engagement team (who are responsible for the equalities agenda) will ensure progress and regular updates are reported at the council's Cabinet Committee Equalities and that feedback is provided to partners, local equality and diversity groups and other key stakeholders.

2. Introduction

This is our third annual report for this strategic annual plan.

To prepare this report, we collated data gathered from service areas updating progress in achieving their respective objectives. Data provided by service areas and partners, offer a continual way of monitoring progress against our objectives and actions.

3. Progress in meeting our objectives during 2022/23

Key progress under our seven objectives can be summarised as:

3.1 Education

- Following a Welsh Government review, and subsequent publishing of guidance relating to schools' responsibilities for bullying practice, this is now devolved to individual settings. Additionally, data pertaining to racist bullying is reported direct to Equalities Team mailbox and reported to Cabinet Committee Equalities annually.
- The professional learning and resources developed by Central South Consortium (CSC) to support the teaching of themes relating to Black Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and Cynefin are aligned to the findings and recommendations of the Welsh Government working group.
- CSC provides a professional learning programme to support the teaching of themes relating to Black Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and 'cynefin'. These professional learning programmes are available to all schools.
- CSC works in partnership with Diversity and Anti-Racism Professional Learning (DARPL) in ensuring high quality professional learning is available to all schools.

- Where schools have a particular need and require more intensive support, this can be brokered through the school improvement partner.
- CSC provides resources and signposts schools to further resources that can be used by schools and practitioners to support the teaching of these themes.

3.2 Work

- Several awareness campaigns have been promoted such as autism awareness day, international women's day etc. A list of campaigns linked to protected characteristics has been developed and promotion of these will continue.
- Employees have been encouraged to provide and update their own personal equality details to assist with equality workforce monitoring. This is also encouraged when communicating on equality matters.
- The council continues to report annually on the gender pay gap, which is a statutory equality measure of the difference in average pay of men and women, irrespective of their work, across the organisation. It is different from equal pay, which compares how men and women are paid for carrying out the same or comparable roles.
- The council continued to make progress on appointing apprentices, with 29 being appointed during 2022-23. The council has also appointed 5 graduates to support with succession planning.
- The disability confident action plan has been completed, with status agreed until November 2023. Going forward to 23/24 the intention is that the status will be renewed.
- All equality related e-learning modules have been reviewed and updated.
- The Equality Awareness Workshop has been updated to include Unconscious Bias, Critical Thinking and Hidden Disabilities. Three workshops have been held with 24 delegates attending.
- During 2022-23, three Equality and Diversity awareness workshops took place with 34 delegates in attendance.
- Work continues with Stonewall to deliver LGBT+ training to staff with two workshops taking place with 12 delegates attending during 2022-23
- Referrals to and from other providers are continuing as Employability Bridgend triage clients to the best service to meet their needs from the broad range of provision across the county.

- Partnership work is productive with DWP referring 44% of all referrals: 1342 people into Employability which is testament to the strength of the relationship. There are also referrals between Employability and Working Wales and joint working to develop jobs fairs and other engagement activities. A Training Event was held in Carnegie House to promote the diversity of free training available from a range of providers operating in the county which supports people to gain skills so they can secure a job or get a better job.

3.3 Living standards

- The Equality Impact Assessment has been updated to include poverty as a protected characteristic as per the statutory duty.
- The pay increase for April 2022 positively impacted on 1,018 employees in grade 1 and grade 2, of whom 88% were female.
- In March 2022, the council became an accredited Living Wage Employer, the second local authority in Wales to have been certified by the Living Wage Foundation.
- Training on the implementation of the socio-economic duty has been completed and rolled out to staff members. There is also a dedicated page on the Intranet which staff can refer to for guidance at any time.
- The School Holiday Enrichment Programme (Food and Fun) continued to run over two sites in summer 2022 and 71 children, aged between 8 and 11 years, benefited. Of these children 51% were girls and 49% were boys. 11% of those who attended had Additional Learning Needs.

3.4 Health and wellbeing

- Health and Wellbeing has evolved over the course of the past year with the development and launch of the following resources for employees:
 - Health Hub news,
 - Improved health and wellbeing intranet page
 - Health & wellbeing resources & QR code leaflet
- Partnership work continues with CTM Health board and Public Service Board (PSB) in sharing and promoting resources.
- The menopause protocol has been approved and launched. There are leaflets available for managers and staff and Menopause training sessions are taking place.
- The refreshed version of the Health and Wellbeing protocol has been promoted through staff messages and via senior management team meetings as a source of support for staff.

- Employees have accessed a range of courses to help support and/or manage mental wellbeing: During 2022/23 a total of 27 courses were provided to 171 employees. Some were provided internally in-house including Mental Health Awareness, Mindfulness and Resilience Training whilst others were delivered in partnership through Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF) resources.
- Added resources on health and wellbeing launched during 2022/23: staff have a wealth of information and supportive resources on a varied range of health and wellbeing issues.
- Weekly staff messages continue to signpost employees to various support and resources on a varied range of health and wellbeing issues.
- The annual staff survey indicated that employees were interested in participating in networks for mental health, carers and menopause.
- A first draft of the carers protocol has been developed and this will roll forward and be prioritised in the coming year.
- Super Agers programme supports older adults to be active in the community and has developed a regional approach led by Bridgend. The programme has been recognised as a Bevan Exemplar Partnership working with Shout, the older peoples forum and a connection to Age Friendly Communities.
- Since easing of restrictions, swimming pools have performed well with free opportunities for children and young people and also those 60 plus. The Feel Good for Life programme has supported people living with dementia and carers and new carer wellbeing programmes have been developed. The Access to Leisure and Hynt schemes have both supported low cost and no cost access to leisure and culture for the more vulnerable.
- The Love to Walk programme is supporting older adults to be active close to home with volunteer led walking groups and instructor led routes.
- Disability Sport Wales programme has been supported throughout the year with a dedicated officer in place. This will change during 2023-24 as Disability Sport Wales develop a more regional approach.
- Since easing of restrictions clubs and groups have restarted and shown growth and partnership working with Bridgend Inclusive Network Group (BING) has supported an expanded range of community activities. It has also helped deliver training across the county to groups aiming to be more inclusive. Specific aquatic sessions have been developed for disabilities and also a range of youth opportunities also. A regional approach across Cwm Taff Morgannwg is developing in partnership with health to support referrals into community opportunities.

- Play sufficiency assessment and action plan have been completed during this period and approved by Cabinet. Partnership working with Town and Community Councils has continued supporting free holiday opportunities for children and young people. Specific opportunities also developed to support diverse needs including disabilities, care experienced children and young carers. Welsh Government summer of Fun investment enabled new partnership working with community groups and particularly youth groups. Holiday Playworks programmes have supported targeted interventions. Halo Leisure have supported free opportunities throughout the year and Awen have delivered library-based programmes and a range of cultural events.

3.5 Safety and respect

- Information for EU Citizens living in Bridgend with a link to the UK Government EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) is available via the Council website. The application deadline for most EU Citizens was June 2021, however applications can still be submitted in certain circumstances.
- We continue to work with key partners including South Wales Police in monitoring tensions related to Brexit, including contributing to local Community Tension Incident reports when required. Brexit related tensions have eased in recent years.
- We continue to work with community and equality groups within the Bridgend Community Cohesion Forum (BCCEF), representatives from across the community representing a wide range of organisations meet quarterly to share practice, receive joint briefings and training. All members are invited to share information about BCCEF with other organisations with the aim to increase membership and representation.
- We continue to support Pride events. Events have been attended by the Equalities officer and we have promoted the events held by other local authorities as part of our Proud-councils forum commitment. LGBTQIA+ History Month Proud Councils also worked together this year to create a 'behind the lens' online event to promote awareness.
- An information session on Hate Crime Awareness was delivered by Victim Support to external partners across the region, including to our community groups and voluntary sector. We continue to promote support pathways for victims of hate crime via social media and engagement events.
- Awareness raising tables are organised by our Community Safety Partnership (CSP) team at key locations across the county, two or three times a month, to raise awareness and encourage reporting of all CSP priorities including Hate crime.

- Engagement events were held during Hate Crime Awareness Week to raise awareness of hate crime, hate incidents and discrimination. For example, working with local partners such as Bridgend College in coordinating a film afternoon for students, promoting free material on hate crime/incidents and the support pathways available.
- We continue to share information via social media platforms to raise awareness of hate crime/incidents and how to access support via Victim Support and South Wales Police. During October 2022 Hate Crime Awareness Week, we promoted Victim Supports All Wales Hate Support Centre via social media and promoted the scheduled webinars with key partners.
- Whilst Black History Month has been promoted each year, further work is being explored to promote and raise awareness in order to increase awareness and celebrate.

3.6 Participation

- The consultation team discuss the need for youth and easy read surveys with all services and continue to work with People First Bridgend and the youth council to develop and promote youth and easy read consultations.
- A new digital engagement platform has been implemented to encourage more people to get involved in council consultations. In-person engagement events have also started to pick up following the Covid pandemic.
- A complete overview has been undertaken on how the citizen panel is managed. Work is underway to explore better ways of utilising both the digital communication and engagement platforms to manage subscriptions, production of newsletters and updates and driving up subscribers/membership.
- Information and events such as PRIDE Cymru, Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, Hate Crime awareness month and others promoted via bi-lingual corporate social media channels as well as press releases and internally via Bridgend's weekly messages.
- A new corporate Engagement and Participation Strategy is in the process of being developed to ensure all people are kept well-informed and involved in key decisions about changes that can affect them.
- BCBC have promoted campaigns via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and the BCBC website, including:
 - Foster care fortnight 2020
 - Social care jobs – wecarewales
 - Day of reflection

Appendix 1

- Woman of Wales event
- LGBT fostering – throughout year
- Youth support
- Hate hurts Wales – hate crime
- Childcare offer
- Give blood
- Community testing
- World autism week
- EU settlement
- International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia
- Men's Health Week
- Armed Forces Day
- Samaritans Awareness Day
- Anti-Slavery Day
- Ramadan
- Stress Awareness Month
- Pride Month
- Plastic Free July
- National Walking Month
- Black History Month
- Refugee Week
- Deaf Blind Awareness Week
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Pride Month
- #AnAntiRacistWales
- Carers Week
- Infant Mental Health Awareness
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month
- Disability Pride Month
- ASB Awareness Week
- Eisteddfod
- World Mental Health Day
- Shwmae Sumae Day
- #LGBTplusHM
- Welsh
- #RaceEqualityWeek23
- LGBTQ+ Adoption and Fostering Week 2023.
- International Day of the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- World Down Syndrome Day
- Ramadan
- #worldsocialworkday
- Trans Day of Visibility

4. Communication, consultation and engagement

Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023, the council carried out 12 public consultations:

PSPO
2030 Net Zero Carbon
Porthcawl Harbour Byelaws
Air Quality Action Plan – Park Street, Bridgend
Stakeholders Survey
Aging well in Bridgend
Empty Properties and Second Homes
Coety Primary School
Licensing Policy (CIP)
Annual Budget 2022
Service children
Porthcawl Welsh-Medium Seeding School

- The citizens panel continue to receive key consultations. Citizens' Panel members were sent the following surveys:
- 2030 Net Carbon Zero
- Shaping Bridgend's Future Consultation 2022

There were no Citizen Panel engagement events undertaken between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.

5. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

A total of 289 employees have completed the EIA e-learning module to date. During the period April 2022 to March 2023, 20 Council employees have completed EIA training (via e-learning). A further 13 employees have completed EIA training (via workshops)

6. Procurement arrangements

Service areas work with the procurement team to ensure that EIAs are integrated in the procurement process. The contract procedures rules require contracts which are subject to the contract procedure rules to include, as a minimum, clauses relating to equalities and human rights, Welsh language Standards and Modern Slavery. Equality issues are fully integrated into the procurement process from pre-qualification to awarding of contract. The Welsh language standards clause is included in contracts where compliance with the Welsh Language compliance notice is required.

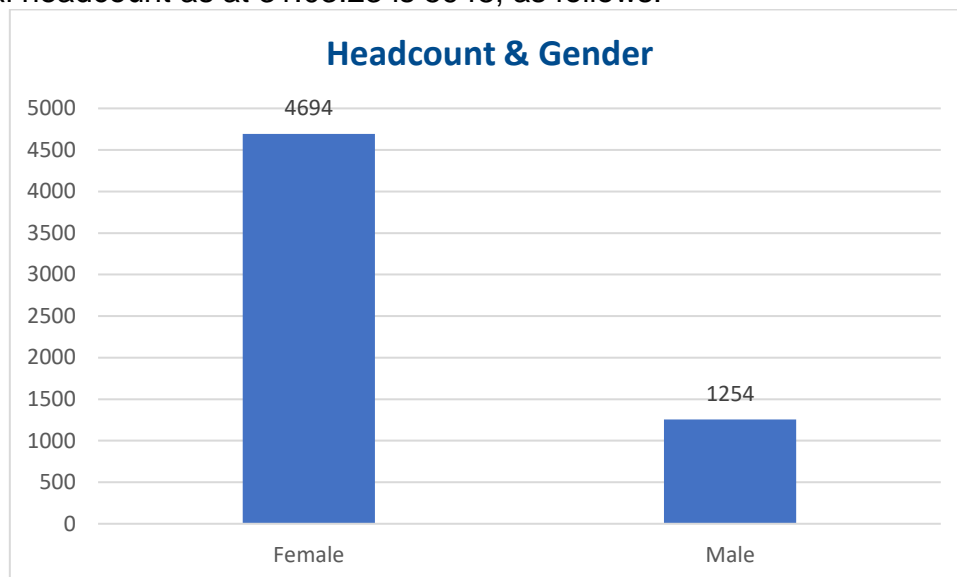
7. Employment Information

This report is based on employment information as at 31 March 2023 at which point there were 5,948 employees, including those employed in schools.

This report contains the data, where disclosed, on the protected characteristics of the workforce.

Headcount & Gender

The total headcount as at 31.03.23 is 5948, as follows:



Information within this report is voluntarily provided by employees and percentage figures reflect the information available as a percentage of the whole workforce. When comparing with data from 31.03.2022 the overall headcount has increased by 61 employees.

Figure 1 shows the workforce headcount by directorate and schools and the accompanying figure 2 informs the gender breakdown within these.

Figure 1

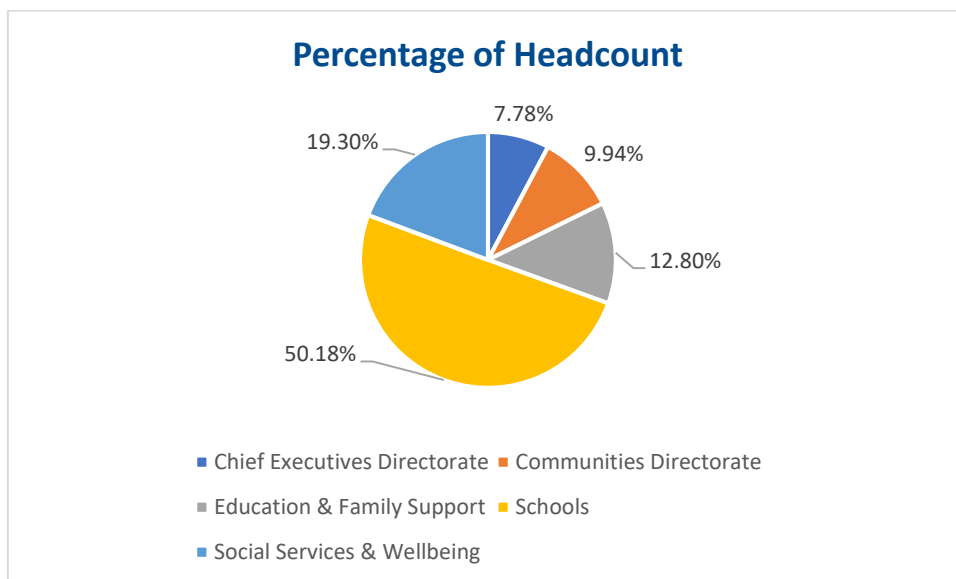
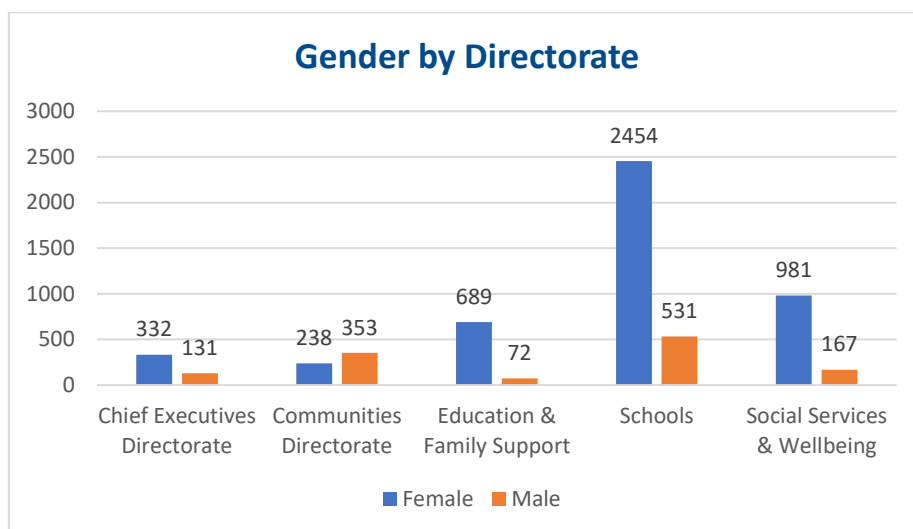


Figure 2



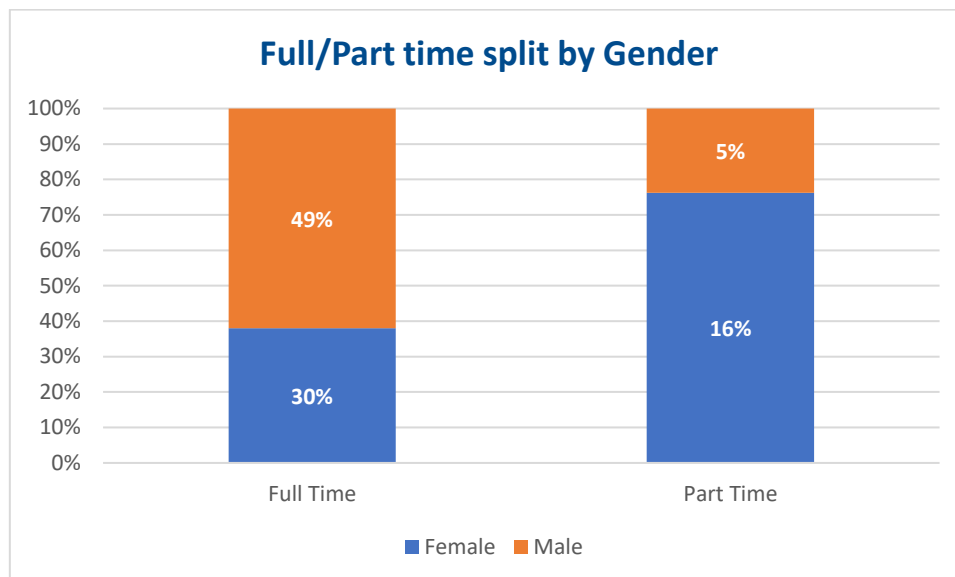
The breakdown of the workforce by full and part time working is detailed below and by gender within figure 3. (part time workers also includes casual staff).

46% 54%
 of workforce work of workforce work
 Full Time Part Time

The gender composition has remained fairly consistent over previous years. In comparison with other Local Authorities in Wales (21/22), the council continues to

have a higher percentage of female employees. However, it is inevitable that the workforce composition will vary according to the scope of in-house services.

Figure 3



Disability

4.3% of our workforce have declared that they have a disability, which represents an increase from 21/22. Over 74% of the workforce have declared that they do not have a disability with 7.2% 'preferring not to say' and 14.4% not declaring.

The council continues to maintain and promote its Disability Confident status, which is due to be renewed during 2023/24. There has been collaboration between the council and Remploy (the UK's leading disability specialist 'in transforming lives through sustainable employment'). Remploy support individuals to consider council vacancies and there have been several successful applications.

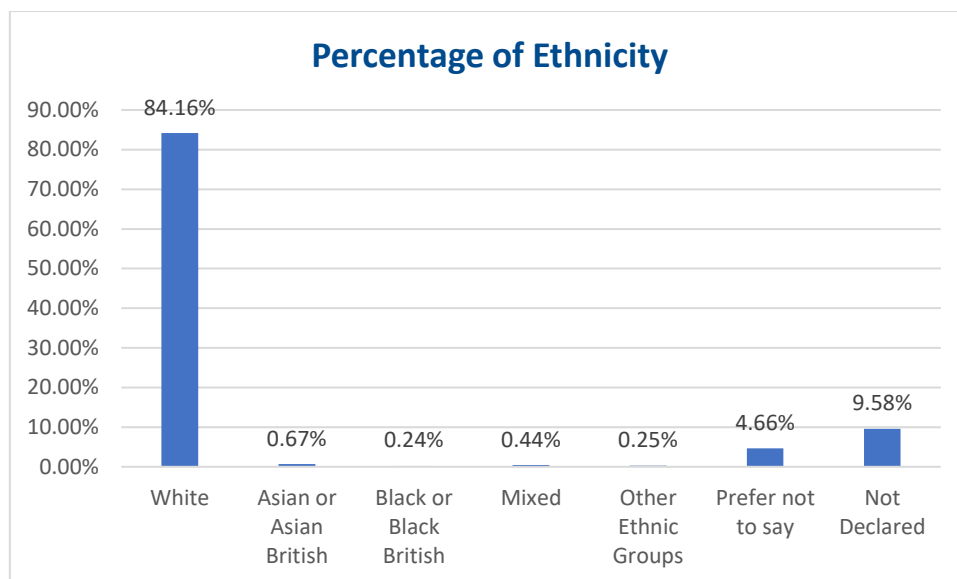
The council vacancies continue to be featured on the SCOPE (disability equality charity) website.

Ethnicity

Figure 4 shows ethnicity within the workforce which is at 1.6%. The latest population estimates from StatsWales (December 2022) indicate that 3% of the county borough residents identify themselves from an Ethnic Minority background, however, this is based on a low level of responses so would not be an accurate representation.

The 2021 Census reported that 3.3% of Bridgend's population identified themselves from an Ethnic Minority background. Based on these figures our workforce is under-represented in this area. However, over the course of the past year the council have been exploring options on how to promote being a diverse employer to ethnic minority backgrounds.

Figure 4



The council’s website has been improved by promoting the council as a good employer where diversity is welcomed. Particular attention has been given to the council’s recruitment landing page to attract applications from Ethnic Minority backgrounds as part of the council’s commitment to address under-representation across all levels of the organisation.

As a local authority we are one of 900 organisations across Wales who have signed up to the Zero Racism Wales Pledge. Thereby agreeing to take a stand against racism and promote a more inclusive and equal workplace and society that gives every individual in Wales the right to feel safe, valued and included.

The anti-racism pledge will be promoted across the council to ensure that all council employees are aware of their duties in relation to the Anti-Racist Wales action plan.

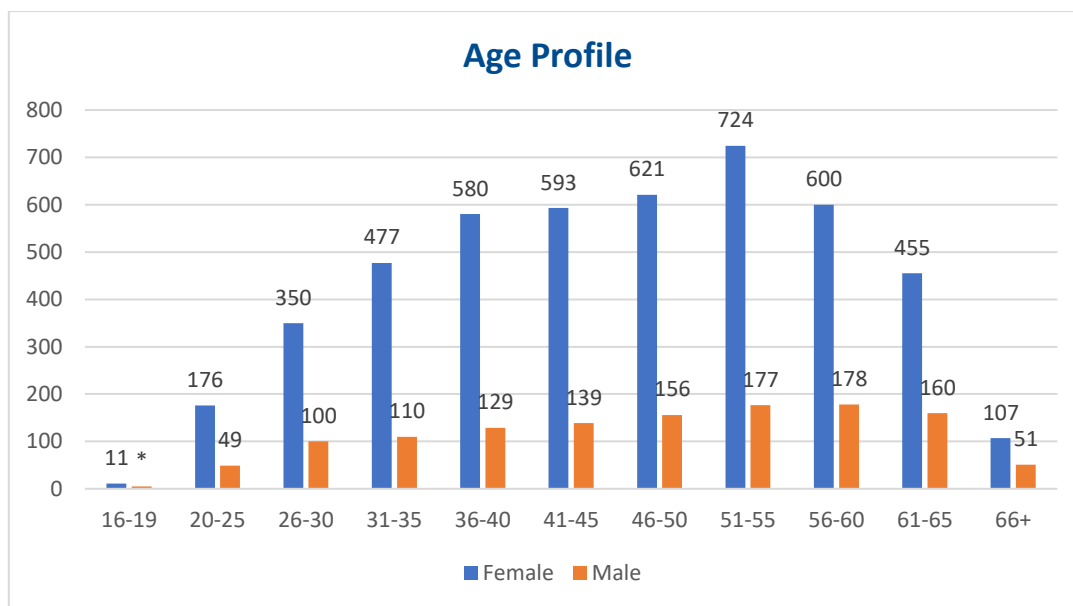
Age Profile

The average age for the council is currently at 45, with the largest number of employees (1678) being within the 46-55 age bracket.

1836 employees are aged 55+, which means that 30% of our workforce, as at 31st March 2023, are able to retire within the coming years.

Figure 5

Appendix 1



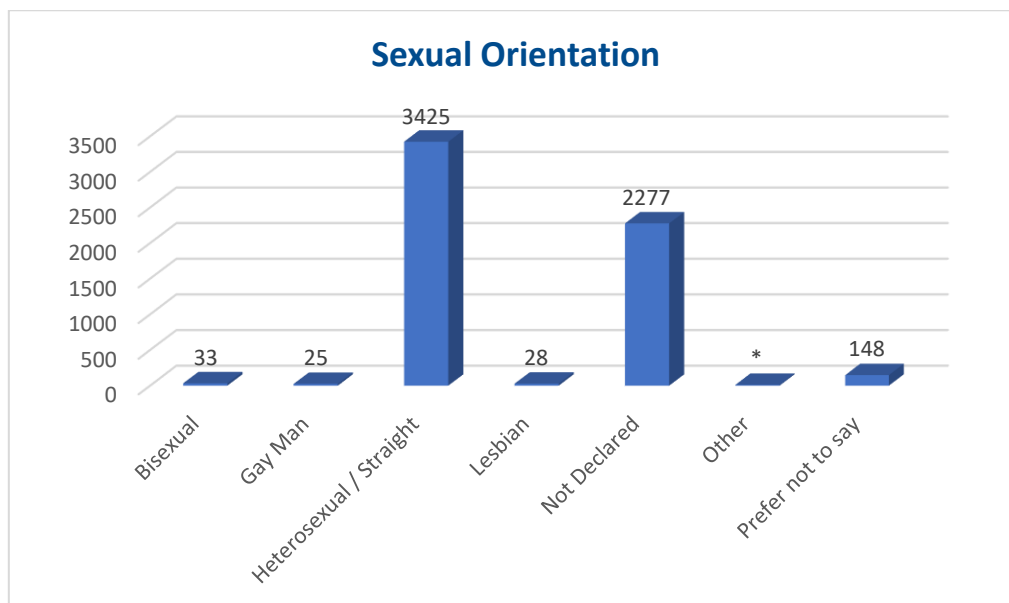
The Census 2021 confirms that the average (median) age of Bridgend has increased from 41 to 43 years of age.

The detail above shows there is an aging workforce across the council, with the age profile being comparable with other Local Authorities. Specific schemes like 'grow your own' have been a success over the last year with more investment in apprenticeship and graduate positions, promoting succession planning.

Sexuality

Figure 6 informs most employees have categorised themselves as heterosexual, with 38% of our workforce have not declared their sensitive personal information and 2.5% of employees prefer not to say. It is important to note that reporting of this information is not a mandatory requirement.

Figure 6

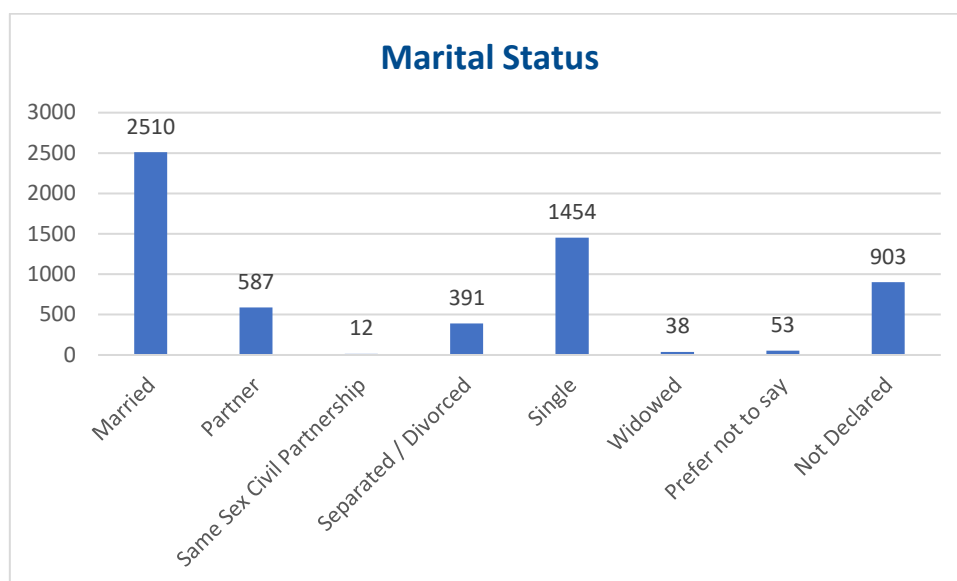


Marital Status

Appendix 1

The marital status of the council's workforce is detailed below. 84% of the workforce have declared their status. 42% of those are married, with 24% being single. This is mainly the same as previous years.

Figure 7



Religion and Belief

Table 1 below shows the different religions/beliefs of the workforce. The council's largest is Christianity – Church of Wales at 12%. However, 41% of the workforce have either not declared or prefer not to say what their religion and/or belief is.

Table 1

Religion/Belief	Number of Employees	% of Workforce
Agnostic	224	4%
Atheist	268	5%
Baha'i	*	0%
Buddhist - Hinayana	*	0%
Buddhist - Mahayana	*	0%
Christian - Anglican	38	1%
Christian - Church in England	248	4%
Christian - Church in Wales	719	12%
Christian - Orthodox	71	1%
Christian - Protestant	181	3%
Christian - Roman Catholic	250	4%
Hinduism	9	0%
Islam - Sunni	8	0%
Judaism - Reformed	*	0%
Muslim	*	0%
Taoism	*	0%

Appendix 1

Any other religion or belief	69	1%
No Religion	1391	23%
Prefer not to say	180	3%
Not Declared	2280	38%

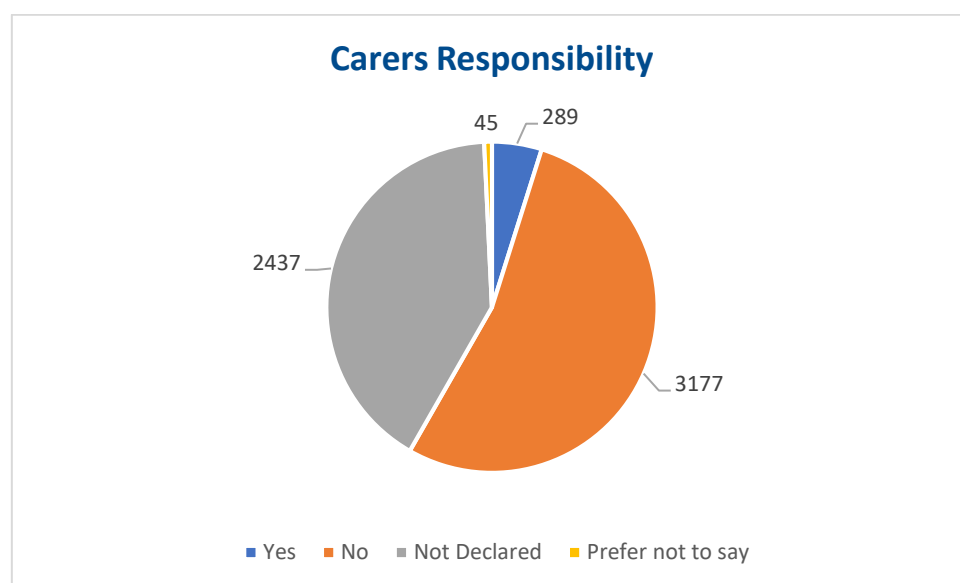
Pregnancy & Maternity

During the year 2022/23, 195 employees have had maternity leave and 26 have had paternity leave.

Caring Responsibilities

Figure 8 details the number of employees who have identified themselves as being carers.

Figure 8



The percentage of the total workforce identifying themselves as carers has slightly increased from the previous year.

During June 2022 communications were issued promoting and supporting Bridgend's Carers Wellbeing service as well as asking the workforce to update their sensitive information tab in relation to being a carer. Within September 2022 a new carers staff group was formed and one meeting has taken place. This group will support the development of a new carers policy during the coming year.

Welsh Language

Table 2 shows the number of employees that have Welsh Language skills within our workforce.

Table 2

Description	Total
Welsh Speaker	1517
'A little'	1073
'Fairly Good'	163

Description	Total
Welsh Reader	1579
'A little'	1107
'Fairly Good'	194

Description	Total
Welsh Writer	1343
'A little'	915
'Fairly Good'	169

'Fluent'	281	'Fluent'	278	'Fluent'	259
----------	-----	----------	-----	----------	-----

To put this into context:

- 18.04% of the council's workforce stated that they were able to speak Welsh 'a little'
- 2.74% stated they could speak Welsh 'fairly good'
- 4.72% stated they could speak Welsh 'fluently'
- 18.61% of the council's workforce stated that they were able to read Welsh 'a little'
- 3.26% stated they could read Welsh 'fairly good'
- 4.67% stated they could read Welsh 'fluently'
- 15.38% of the council's workforce stated that they were able to write Welsh 'a little'
- 2.84% stated they could write Welsh 'fairly good'
- 4.35% stated they could write Welsh 'a little'

The annual population survey shows the percentage of the population within Bridgend County Borough and all Wales that have Welsh language skills, for the year ending 31 December 2022.

	Welsh Speaker	Welsh Reader	Welsh Writer	Understand spoken Welsh
Bridgend	22.8%	21.6%	19.4%	25.1%
Wales	29.5%	25.7%	23.7%	33.4%

There has been an increase in all Bridgend percentages of the population survey since 31 December 2021.

All apprentices are encouraged to gain new Welsh language skills. Prentis-iath courses are for apprentices who currently have little or no Welsh language skills and highlights the importance of the Welsh language as a workplace skill.

Opportunities are also available for employees to undertake Welsh language training which includes 'Cwrs Mynediad' delivered by the University of South Wales. During this year 12 employees attended year 1 of this training, whilst 10 employees were supported to attend Welsh language courses within the community.

A number of employees (76) have also completed the council E-Learning modules on Welsh language awareness and Welsh language standards during 2022/23.

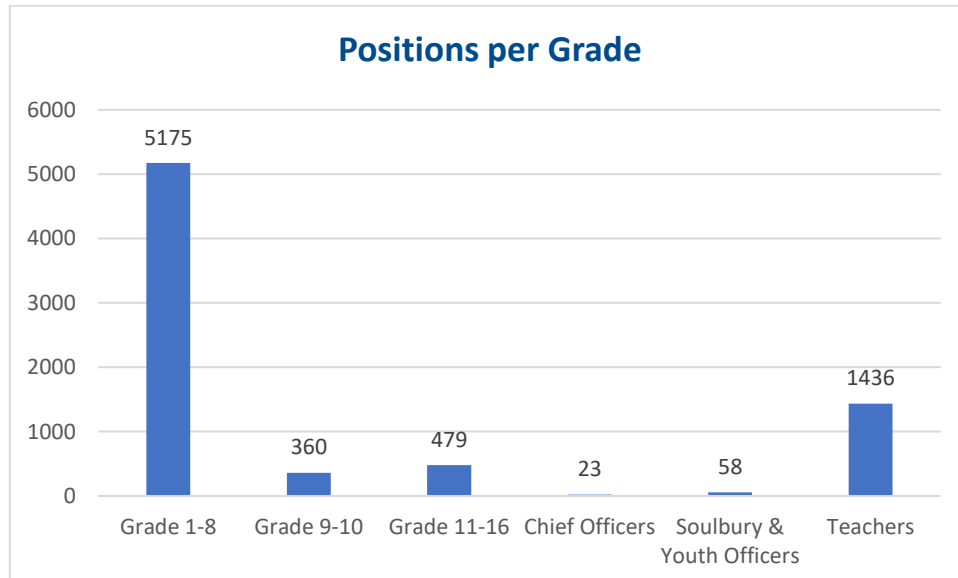
8. Employees as at 31 March 2023 by Grade

The council's pay and grading structure was implemented on 1 September 2013 and a clear and robust mechanism is in place for evaluating the relative grades of positions. This is based on roles and responsibilities as opposed to any individual factors relating to the employee.

Appendix 1

Figure 9 shows the number of positions within the council's pay and grading structure. When an employee has more than one position they will be counted for each position they hold. (As such the figures will not correlate with other totals in this report, which are based on headcount)

Figure 9



When comparing against 31.03.2022 there has been an increase in the majority of grades, with teachers taking a slight reduction.

Table 3 shows the gender within each of the grading groups.

Appendix 1

Table 3

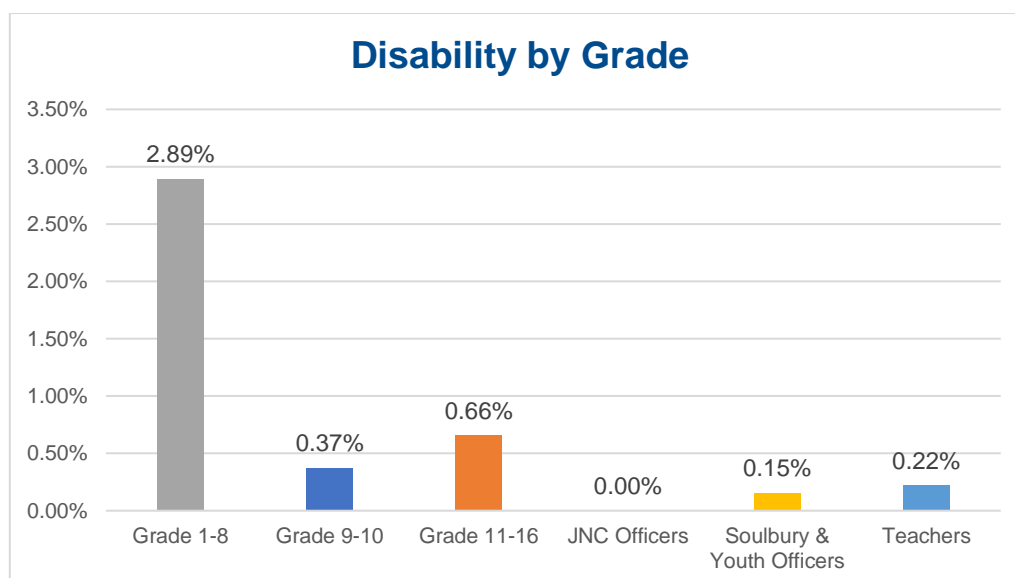
Grade	Female	Male
JE grades 1 – 8 (£20,258 - £28,371) (as at 31.03.2023)	4426	749
JE grades 9 – 10 (£30,151 - £34,723) (as at 31.03.2023)	244	116
JE grades 11 – 16 (£36,298 - £55,590) (as at 31.03.2023)	329	150
JNC Officers (£58,876 - £147,024) (as at 31.03.2023)	11	12
Soulbury & youth officers (£23,739 - £69,616) (Soulbury as at 01.09.2021 / youth as at 01.09.2022)	48	10
Unqualified teachers, Teachers, assistant head teachers, deputy, and heads (£19,412 - £127,000) (as at 01.09.2022)	1092	344

For the next part of this report the figures will correlate with the headcount and therefore staff are counted once in the highest contractual hours position.

Disability

Figure 10 provides a summary of employees with a disability by grade. It shows most of the disabled workforce are falling within grades 1-8.

Figure 10



Since the 21/22 report there has been a slight increase across all grades with JNC Officers and teachers staying the same.

Ethnicity

Appendix 1

Table 4 details the percentage of the council's workforce by ethnicity and grade. The number of employees who are of Ethnic Minority origin have been collated together due to numbers being low.

Table 4

Grade/Ethnicity	Grade 1-8	Grade 9-10	Grade 11-16	JNC Officers	Soulbury & Youth Officers	Teachers
White	53.26%	5.40%	7.36%	0.34%	0.86%	16.95%
Ethnic Groups	1.13%	*%	0.20%	*%	0.00%	0.18%
Prefer not to say	2.77%	0.22%	0.13%	*%	0.00%	1.51%
Not Declared	4.91%	0.15%	0.13%	*%	*%	4.35%

Age Profile

Table 5 shows the percentage of the council's workforce age by grade.

Table 5

Grade/Age Category	Grade 1-8	Grade 9-10	Grade 11-16	JNC Officers	Soulbury & Youth Officers	Teachers
16-25	4.19%	0.17%	*%	0.00%	0.12%	0.87%
26-35	10.29%	0.96%	1.06%	0.00%	0.22%	5.93%
36-45	12.93%	1.41%	1.88%	*%	0.17%	7.60%
46-55	16.76%	1.87%	2.62%	0.20%	0.29%	7.04%
56-65	15.50%	1.40%	2.07%	0.10%	*%	1.53%
66+	2.40%	*%	0.17%	0.00%	*%	*%

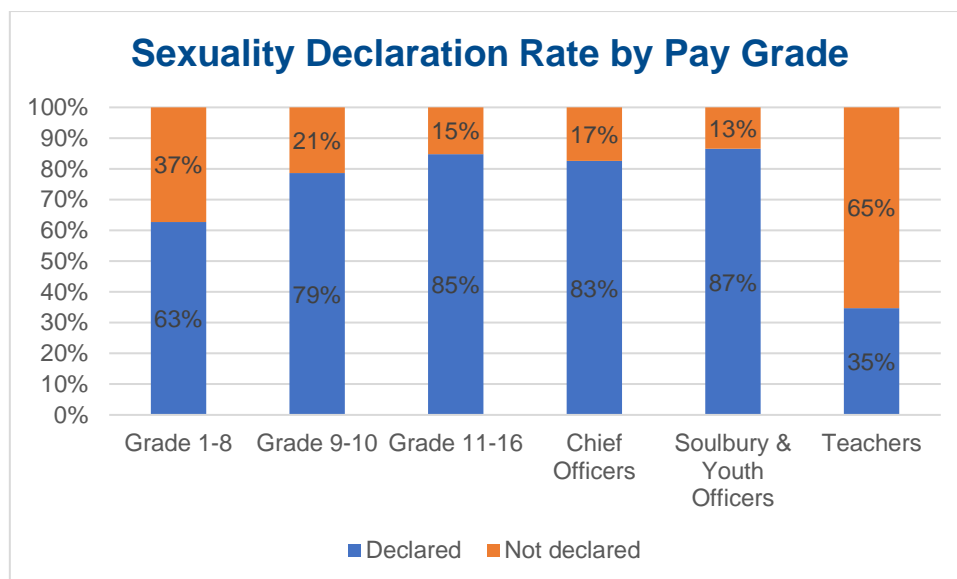
Sexuality

Table 6 is a breakdown of employees that have declared their sexual orientation.

Table 6

Grade/Sexuality	Grade 1-8	Grade 9-10	Grade 11-16	JNC Officers	Soulbury & Youth Officers	Teachers
Heterosexual / Straight	37.81%	4.56%	6.46%	0.29%	0.74%	7.73%
Bisexual	0.42%	0.00%	*%	0.00%	*%	0.10%
Gay Man	0.24%	*%	0.12%	0.00%	0.00%	*%
Lesbian	0.32%	0.00%	*%	*%	0.00%	0.10%
Other	0.15%	*%	*%	*%	0.00%	0.00%
Prefer not to say	1.53%	0.15%	0.40%	0.00%	*%	0.39%
Not Declared	21.60%	1.09%	0.79%	*%	0.10%	14.63%

Information on this protected characteristic is held on 59% of the workforce, which is an improved position than the previous year. The graph below shows the percentage of declared per grade for reference.



Marital Status

Table 7 shows the marital status of the council’s workforce by grade, with 87% declaring their marital status.

Table 7

Grade/Marital Status	Grade 1-8	Grade 9-10	Grade 11-16	JNC Officers	Soulbury & Youth Officers	Teachers
Married	26.18%	2.93%	4.59%	0.30%	0.39%	7.82%
Partner	6.84%	0.52%	0.89%	*%	0.10%	1.50%
Same Sex Civil Partnership	0.12%	0.00%	*%	0.00%	0.00%	*%
Separated / Divorced	4.89%	0.57%	0.62%	*%	*%	0.44%
Widowed	0.50%	*%	*%	0.00%	0.00%	*%
Single	14.49%	1.36%	1.31%	*%	0.34%	6.91%
Prefer not to say	0.69%	*%	*%	0.00%	0.00%	0.13%
Not Declared	8.36%	0.40%	0.27%	*%	*%	6.12%

Welsh Language

With regards to Welsh language the majority of the council’s employees who are Welsh speakers, readers and writers fall within grades 1-8.

Table 8

Grade/Welsh Speaker	Grade 1-8	Grade 9-10	Grade 11-16	JNC Officers	Soulbury & Youth Officers	Teachers
A little	10.91%	1.26%	1.61%	*%	0.22%	4.02%
Fairly Good	0.96%	0.10%	0.27%	*%	*%	1.36%
Fluent	2.20%	0.35%	0.32%	0.00%	0.08%	1.77%

Appendix 1

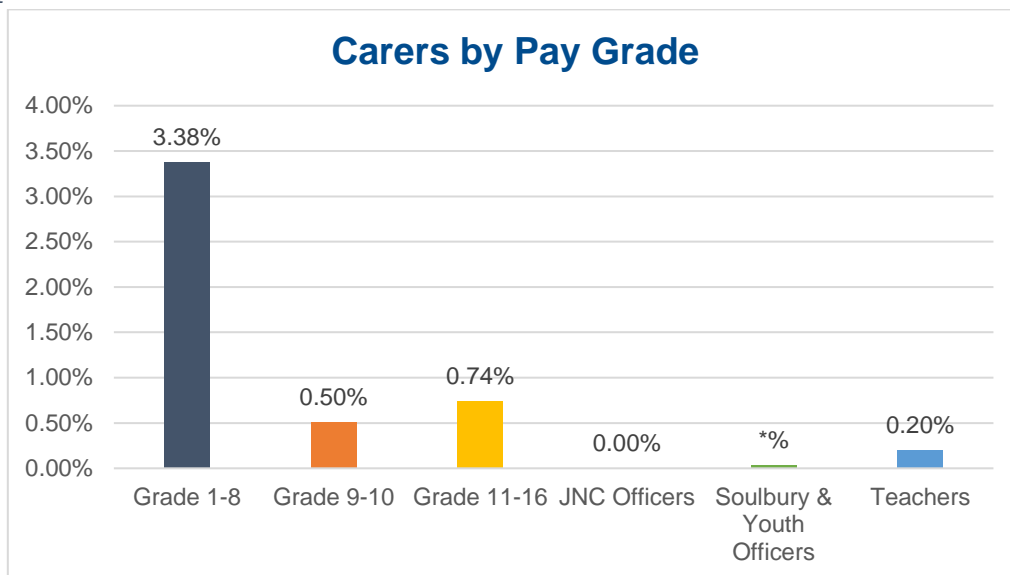
Grade/Welsh Reader	Grade 1-8	Grade 9-10	Grade 11-16	JNC Officers	Soulbury & Youth Officers	Teachers
A little	11.33%	1.26%	1.61%	*%	0.29%	4.07%
Fairly Good	1.34%	0.15%	0.30%	*%	*%	1.43%
Fluent	2.20%	0.30%	0.34%	0.00%	*%	1.75%

Grade/Welsh Writer	Grade 1-8	Grade 9-10	Grade 11-16	JNC Officers	Soulbury & Youth Officers	Teachers
A little	9.01%	0.98%	1.11%	0.00%	0.27%	4.02%
Fairly Good	1.14%	0.13%	0.32%	*%	0.00%	1.23%
Fluent	2.02%	0.30%	0.24%	0.00%	*%	1.71%

Carers Responsibility

Out of the 289 employees that have confirmed themselves as being carers, 3.38% fall within grades 1-8 as demonstrated in figure 11. This is a slightly improved position than the previous year.

Figure 11

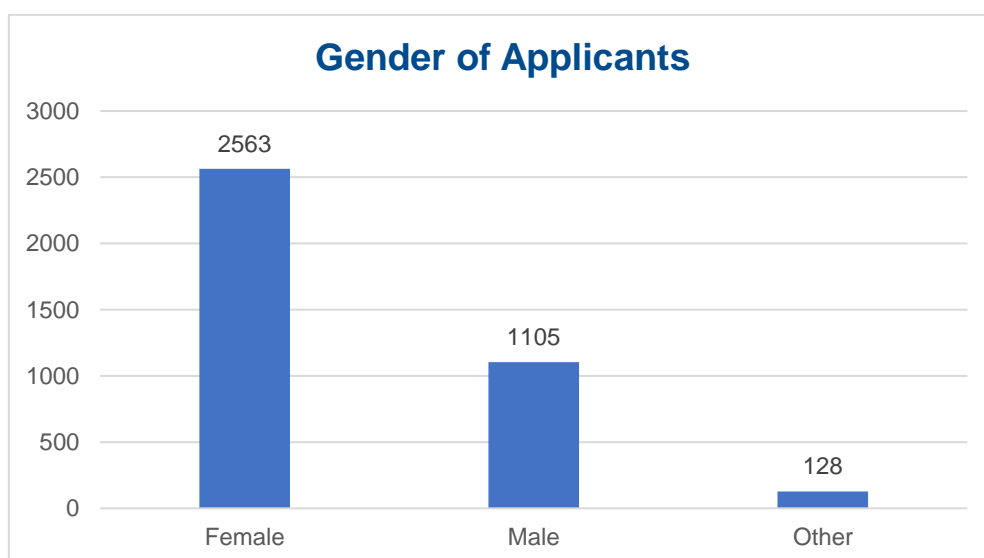


9. Job Applicants

Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023, the council received 6025 applications via the HR recruitment system, for 1545 jobs and from 3796 individuals, comprising both internal and external applications. The data does not include applications received directly by some schools. In some instances, applicants did not declare information for each protected characteristic. Where a percentage breakdown has been used this is based on the total number of applicants.

Gender

Figure 12



Disability

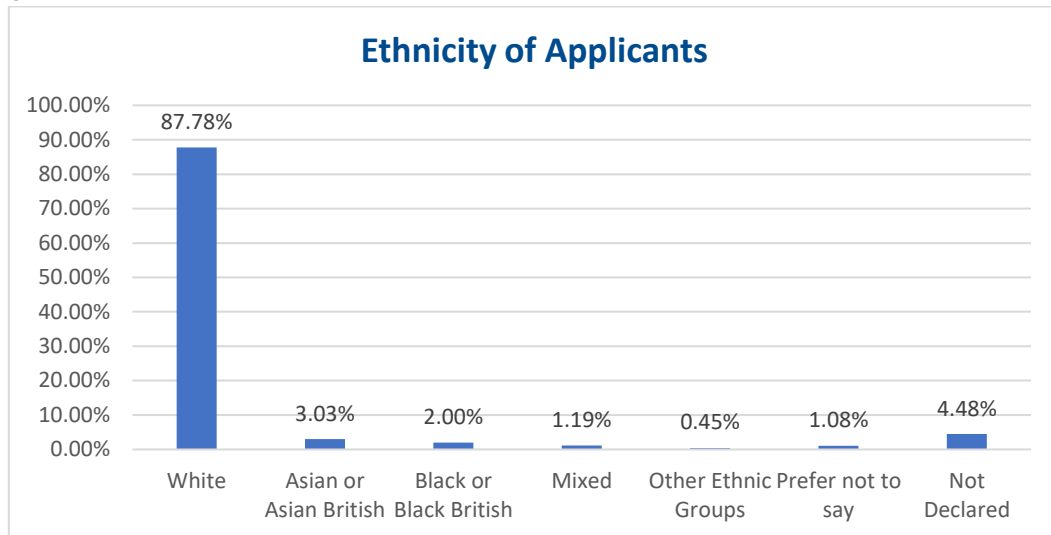
Of the applicants that applied for roles within the council 12.43% identified themselves as having a disability. 4.08% did not declare their disabled status giving a declaration rate of 92.92%.

Looking at the data for April 2022 - March 2023, there were 292 applicants who received interviews and declared they came under the disability scheme. Of these 107 were offered appointments with BCBC.

Ethnicity

94% of applicants have declared their ethnicity with 87.78% bring white. inform of their ethnicity being white. Over 5% have either preferred not to say or did not declare, which is an increase on the previous year.

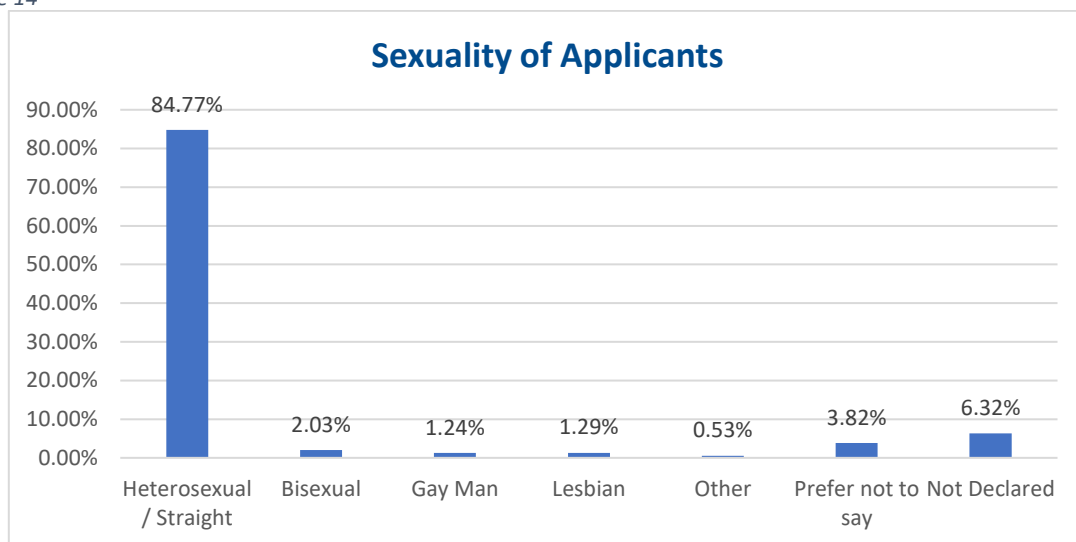
Figure 13



Sexuality

Most applicants identified as heterosexual/ straight (84.77%). Over 10% of applicants either preferred not to say or did not declare. This is an increased on the previous year.

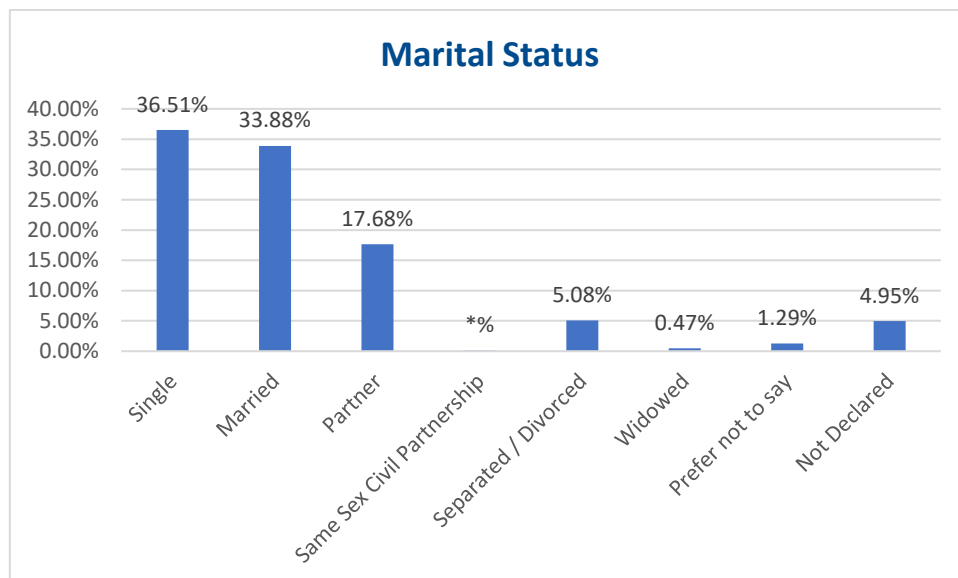
Figure 14



Marital Status

The largest group in terms of marital status was single (36.51%), followed by married at 33.88%. There are still a small number of applicants that either prefer not to say or do not declare their marital status.

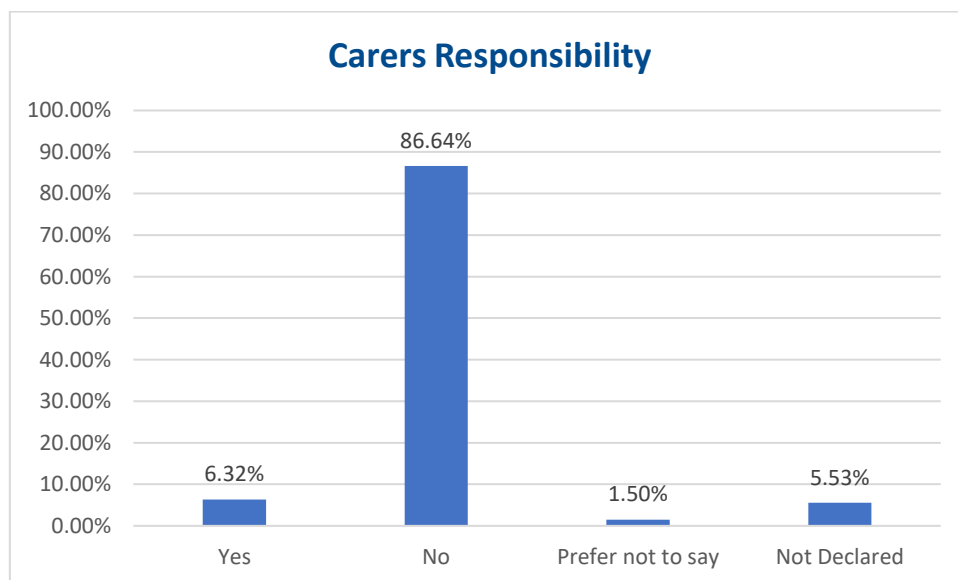
Figure 15



Carers Responsibility

6.32% of applicants declared themselves as being carers. However, there are still over 6% either preferring not to say or declaring their status.

Figure 16



Welsh Language

The below table shows how applicants identified their Welsh language skills. 6% said they can speak and write Welsh fluently, and 5.4% can read fluently.

Most applicants had no Welsh ability at all, with over 50% reporting no ability to speak, read or write in Welsh.

Table 9

Description	Total	Description	Total	Description	Total
Welsh Speaker	43.78%	Welsh Reader	36.30%	Welsh Writer	42.20%
'A little'	33.01%	'A little'	25.79%	'A little'	30.45%
'Fairly Good'	4.77%	'Fairly Good'	5.11%	'Fairly Good'	5.66%
'Fluent'	6.01%	'Fluent'	5.40%	'Fluent'	6.09%

10. Employee Training

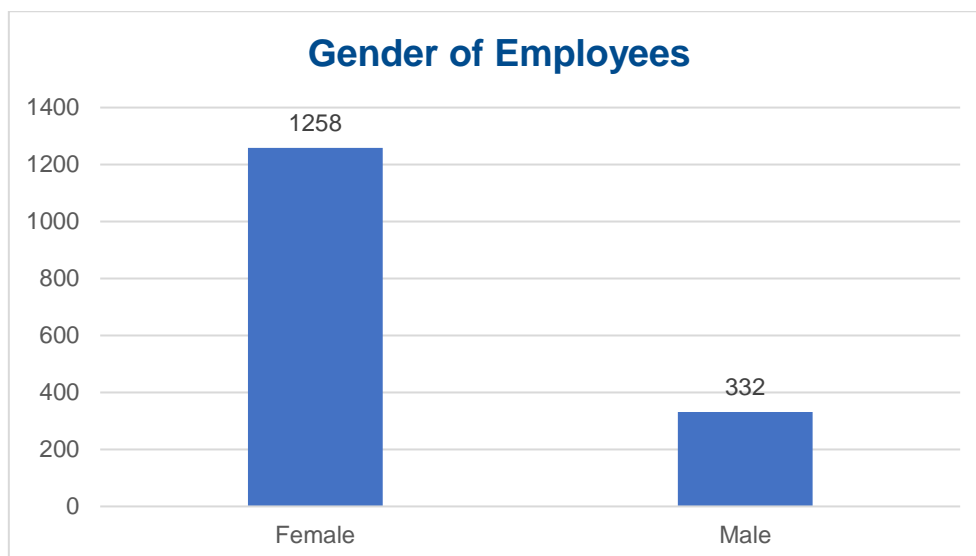
The council’s corporate staff training provision, is categorised as follows:

- **Post entry training** – service specific training is requested by employees via the post entry training policy. Only requests agreed by line managers are forwarded to human resources and so it is not possible to identify any that may have been rejected.
- **Face to face training** – the majority of face-to-face training is targeted at employees based on the nature of the role and responsibilities. As such no requests for this training have been declined.
- **E- Learning** – the majority of corporate training is provided via e-learning which in the majority of cases can be accessed directly by employees.

During 2022/2023 all training programmes were active with an extensive programme of delivery being offered online. E-learning modules were completed by 1590 employees. Where a percentage breakdown has been used this is based on the total number of employees that have undertaken e-learning (1590).

Gender

Figure 17



Disability

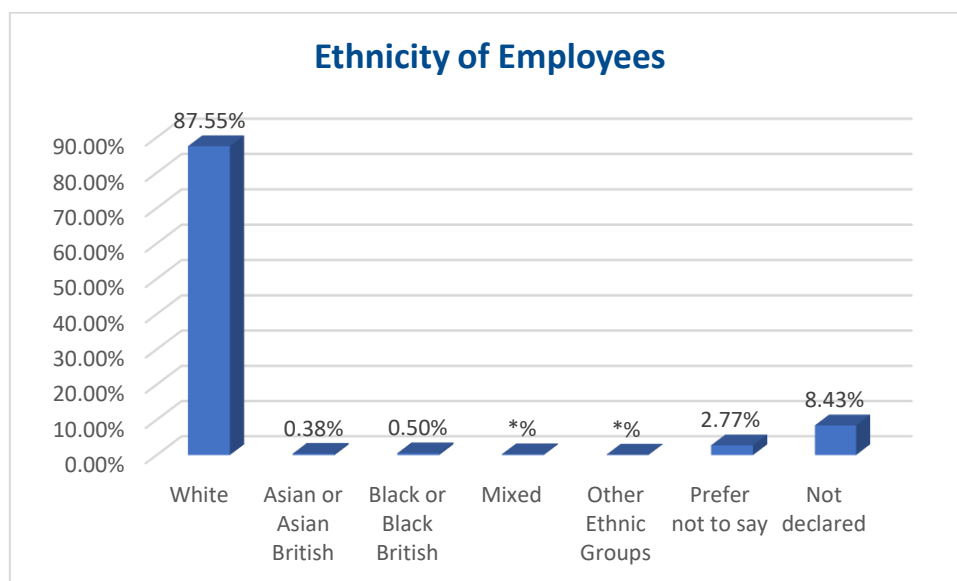
Appendix 1

Of the employees undertaking training, 4.28% (68) identified as having a disability, with 25.79% not declaring, 65.09% informing they were not disabled and 3.84% preferring not to say. Some employees (1.01%) have opted to include the option of 'not known.'

Ethnicity

The number of employees who identified as ethnic minority was 1.26%, which is lower than the previous year. Employees identifying as white is 87.55% which is 4% higher than reported last year.

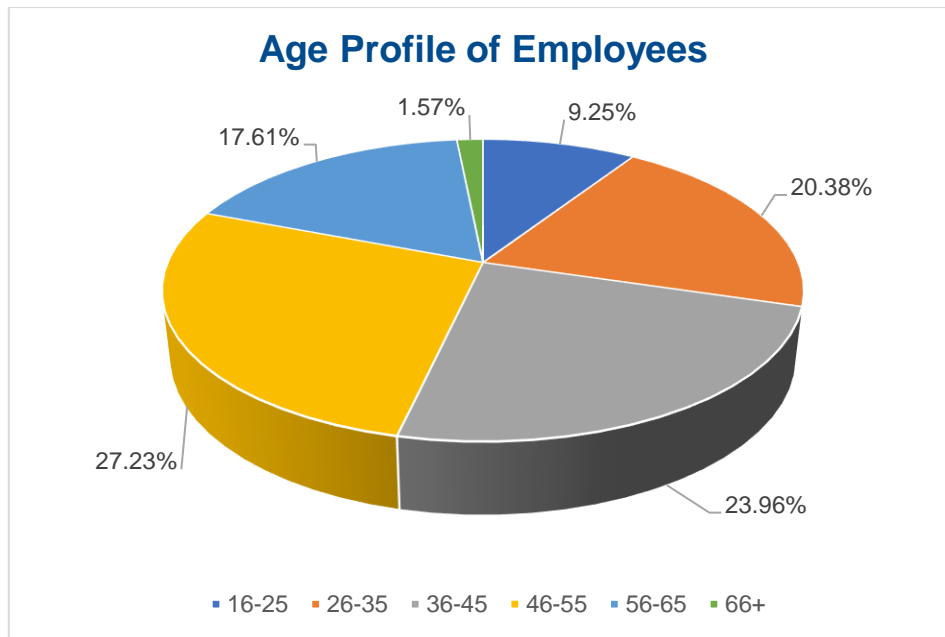
Figure 128



Age Profile

The highest percentage of employees (27.23%) that undertook e-learning were in the age range of 46-55. This informs that 25.7% of the workforce within this age range (1678) has undertaken some corporate training during the period of this report.

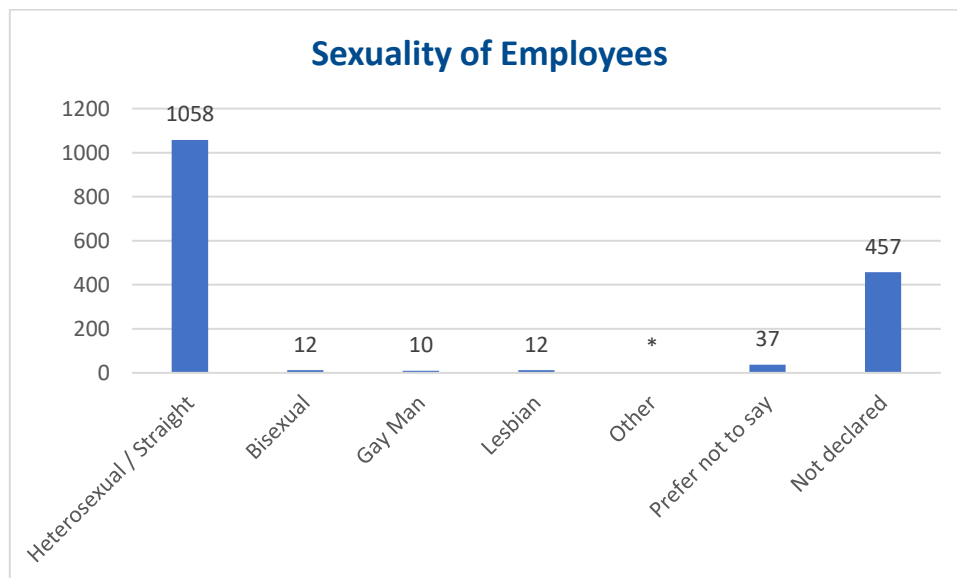
Figure 19



Sexuality

As per the current workforce detail the majority of employees fall within the Heterosexual/Straight category with a large number of delegates (28.74%) not declaring.

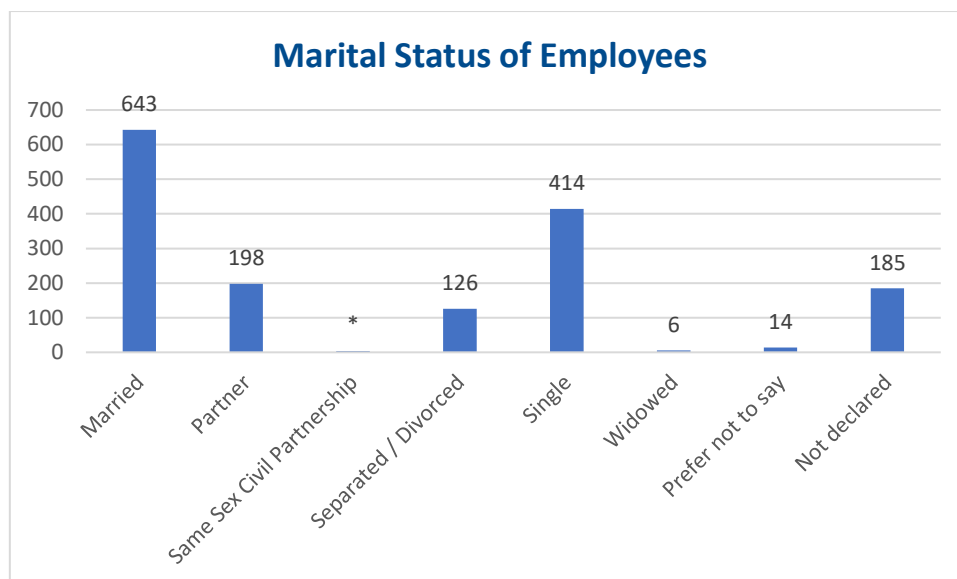
Figure 20



Marital Status

As per the workforce the majority of employees are within the married status, with 11.64% not declaring.

Figure 21



Welsh Language

Table 10 shows the Welsh Language skills of employees. Out of the 1590 employees, 4.47% stated they could speak Welsh fluently, a further 2.33% could speak Welsh fairly good and 21.64% stated they could speak Welsh a little.

Out of the 1590 employees, 4.47% stated they could read Welsh fluently, a further 3.21% could read Welsh fairly good and 22.08% stated they could read Welsh a little.

Out of the 1590 employees, 4.47% stated they could write Welsh fluently, a further 2.20% could write Welsh fairly good and 17.92% stated they could write Welsh a little.

Table 10

Welsh Speaker	Employees	Welsh Reader	Employees	Welsh Writer	Employees
A little	344	A little	351	A little	285
Fairly good	37	Fairly good	51	Fairly good	35
Fluent	71	Fluent	71	Fluent	71

Carers Responsibility

Out of the 1590 employees 6.10% confirmed they were a carer.

There are no records in HR about any employee being refused access to any type of training. No grievances have been submitted.

11. Resolution and disciplinary matters

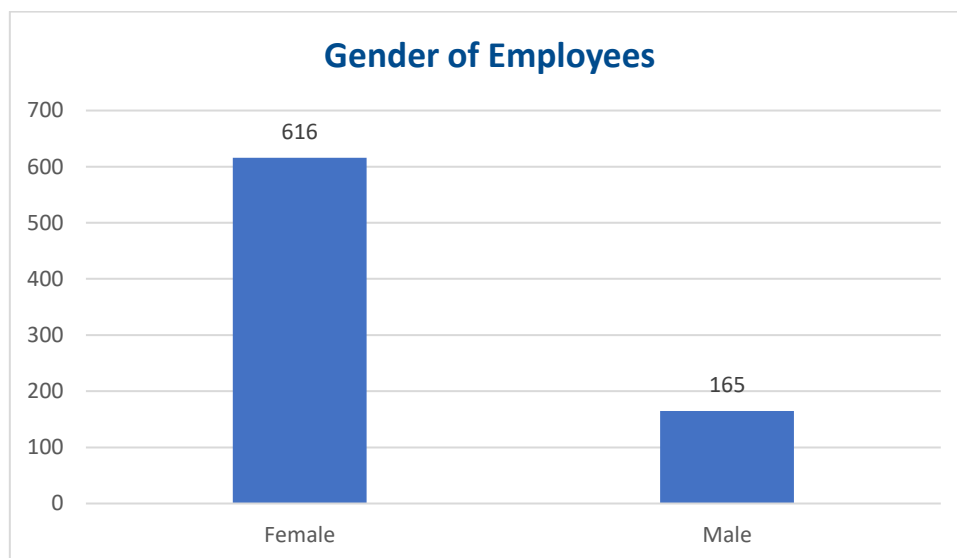
During 2022/20223 there were 19 resolution and disciplinary matters in total. We are unable to disclose the protected characteristics of these employees due to the amount of data being too small to interpret in a meaningful way. Albeit this information does not show any cause for concern.

12. Leavers

The following data summaries the protected characteristics of the 781 individuals who left the employment of the council between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. Data on protected characteristics (other than gender and age) is based upon information disclosed voluntarily by the employees.

Where a percentage breakdown has been used this is based on the total number of leavers.

Figure 22



Disability

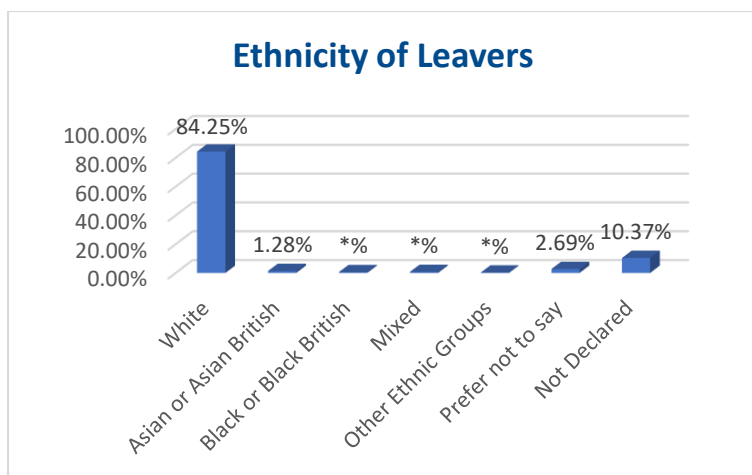
Of the employees that left the council 3.97% (31) identified as having a disability, with 13.06% not declaring, 76.95% informing they were not disabled, 4.99% preferring not to say and 1.02% choosing not known.

Ethnicity

Of those that have left the council, the majority were white, with 2.69% of staff leaving from Ethnic Minority groups.

Figure 133

Table 11

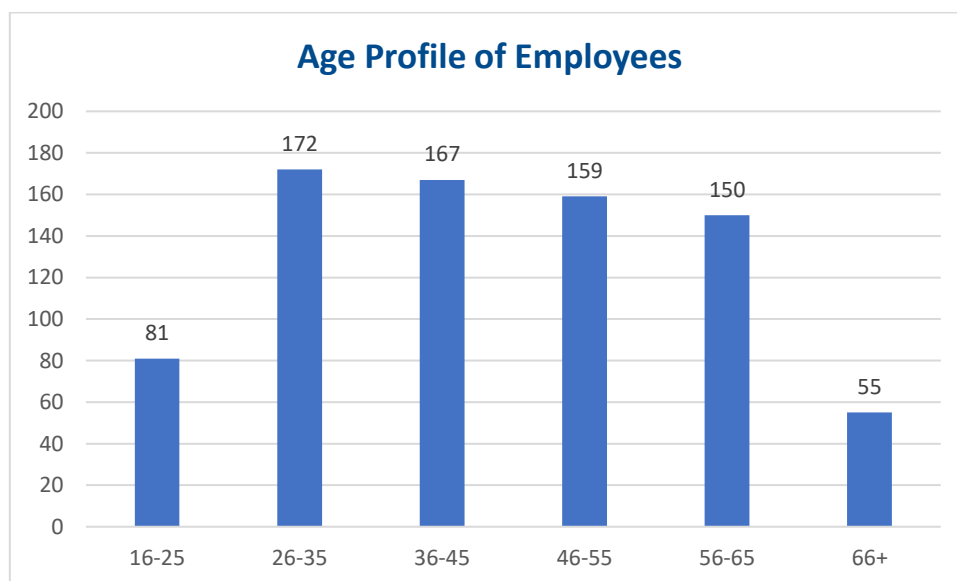


Leavers Ethnicity	
White	658
Asian or Asian British	10
Black or Black British	*
Mixed Ethnicity	*
Other Ethnic Group	*
Prefer not to say	21
Not Declared	81

Age Profile

19.21% of leavers were in the 56-65 age category, of which 55.33% of those retired, either early or at age – voluntary. 21.94% of leavers were aged between 26-35. Of these leavers 82.94% resigned from the council, and 16.47% left due to contracts coming to an end.

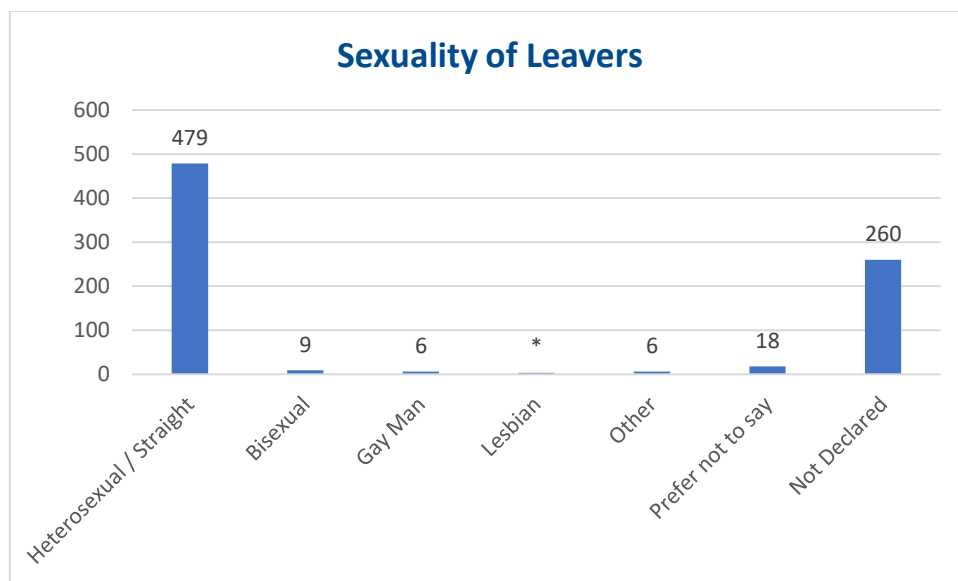
Figure 144



Sexuality

Like with other areas the vast majority of leavers were within the Heterosexual / Straight category, with 33.29% of staff not declaring their sensitive information.

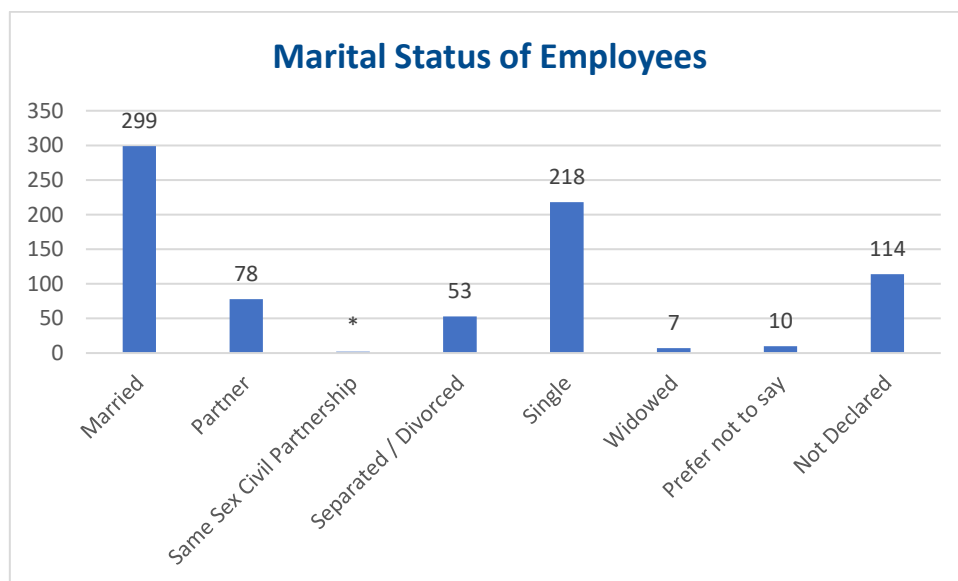
Figure 155



Marital Status

In the main the marital status of leavers was married or single with 14.60% not declaring this protected characteristic.

Figure 166



Welsh Language

Table 12 shows the Welsh Language skills of applicants. Out of the 781 leavers, 5.12% stated they could speak Welsh fluently, a further 3.07% could speak Welsh fairly good and 18.82% stated they could speak Welsh a little.

Out of the 781 leavers, 5.51% stated they could read Welsh fluently, a further 2.69% could read Welsh fairly good and 18.05% stated they could read Welsh a little.

Out of the 781 leavers, 4.35% stated they could write Welsh fluently, a further 2.82% could write Welsh fairly good and 16.39% stated they could write Welsh a little.

Appendix 1

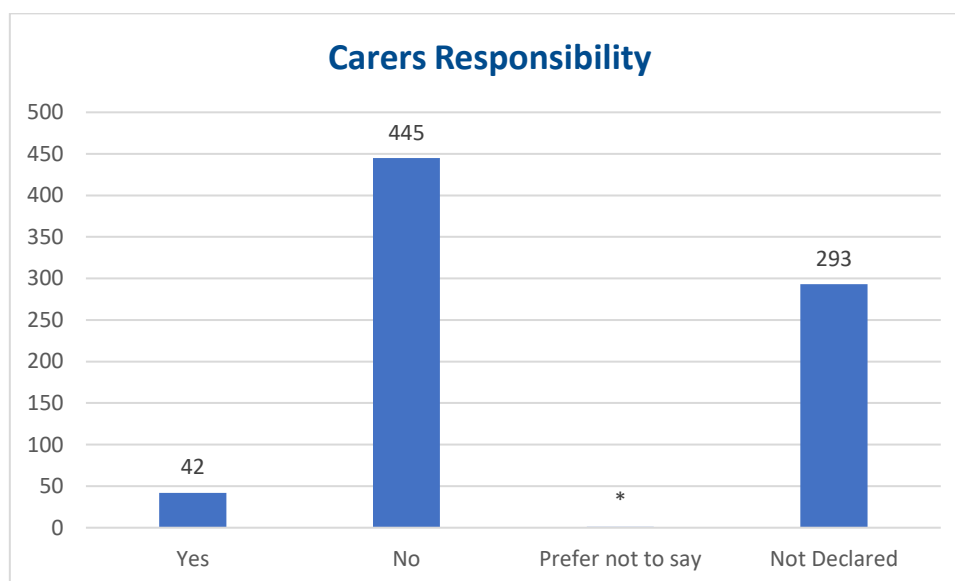
Table 12

Welsh Speaker	Leaver	Welsh Reader	Leaver	Welsh Writer	Leaver
A little	147	A little	141	A little	128
Fairly good	24	Fairly good	21	Fairly good	22
Fluent	40	Fluent	43	Fluent	34

Carers Responsibility

The number of carers that left the organisation between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 were 42.

Figure 177



Conclusion

The council continues to improve its data collection. However, this is dependent on individuals wishing to disclose their identity, which is particularly sensitive around some of the protected characteristics. Employees are offered the opportunity to state 'prefer not to say' which is useful data in its own right.

With extra promotion for employees to complete their personal and sensitive information via the council's employee self-service system it is hoped these categories of 'not declared' will decrease over the coming years.

13. Engagement and consultation

We aim to include the views of representative groups in our planning and decision making processes so we can develop accessible services for the public and our employees.

Engagement is an important part of our work so we put specific processes in place to ensure that people's needs are taken into account and that the dimensions of equality are addressed.

Employees and stakeholders who represent the protected characteristic groups are involved with the delivery, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of our objectives.

We publish consultation reports on the outcome of our engagement activity to show clearly how people have influenced planning and decision making within Bridgend County Borough Council.

14. Contact us

If you would like further information on our SEP or a copy of the plan in an alternative format, please contact us:

By email: equalities@bridgend.gov.uk

By telephone: 01656 643664

By textphone: 18001 01656 643643

By fax: 01656 668126

In writing: Bridgend County Borough Council Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB.

Our Customer Contact Centre is open from 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday

This is our [complaints procedure](#).

Meeting of:	CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES
Date of Meeting:	8 NOVEMBER 2023
Report Title:	DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2024 - 2028
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER, FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	ZOE EDWARDS, CONSULTATION, ENGAGEMENT AND EQUALITIES MANAGER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	All public bodies in Wales must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. One of the specific duties is to produce a Strategic Equality Plan.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is 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.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Equality Act outlines that all public bodies in Wales must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty which gives us general duties and specific duties. One of the specific duties is to produce the Strategic Equality Plan. Some of the other specific duties include engaging with residents and carrying out equality impact assessments and publishing employment monitoring data.

The Equality Act introduced a General Duty for public bodies to:

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

- 2.2 The Equality Act also introduced specific duties which include:

- Setting Equality Objectives and publishing a Strategic Equality Plan;
- Ensuring it engages with people who have an interest in how the Council's decisions affect them and;
- Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and publishing the results if there is a substantial impact on the Council's identified.

- 2.3 Within the Strategic Equality Plan the Council must publish equality objectives that describe how the most pressing issues for people in Bridgend will be addressed for the next 4 years.
- 2.4 Annual progress reports describing the work involved in implementing the corporate Strategic Equality Plans have been presented to Cabinet Equalities Committee since 2016.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 The equality objectives have now been proposed in order to develop a new Strategic Equality Plan for 2024 – 2028. Consultation and engagement exercises will be carried out in order to approve the equalities objectives (**Appendix 1**).

In order to produce a draft of the objectives, the following activities have been undertaken:

- Reviewed the current Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024 and action plan for this period.
- Used the council's new corporate objectives of:
 - better and more targeted use of resources,
 - One council, working well together and with partners
 - Improving communication, engagement and responsiveness
 - Supporting and empowering communities
 - protecting the services that matter to you the most
- Given further consideration to each of the nine protected characteristics covered by the three main aims of the general duty and the requirement to eliminate discrimination, harassment and other actions prohibited in the Equality Act 2010.
- Considered national and local issues.
- Assessed lessons learnt from networks and partnerships such as regional approaches to meeting the needs of domestic abuse victims, violence against women, sexual violence and hate crime.
- Looked at a number of the Council's existing plans and strategies as well as the consultations which took place to inform their development.
- Used feedback from local equality and diversity groups and via the Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum such as how accessible Council services are to provide support as well as promote and raise awareness of issues such as hate crime and LGBTQ History Month.

- 3.2 In addition staff and stakeholders have been engaged and relevant information used, including Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) reports, Welsh Government reports, internal strategies and the results of staff engagement exercises as well as community groups' engagement exercises.

- 3.3 The following objectives have been proposed in line with the findings of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EQHR) 'Is Wales Fairer?' report and with agreement from our internal equalities forum that have contributed to shaping these equality objectives:

Objective	What we hope to achieve/support?
Objective 1: Access to services	Improve the experience and outcomes for our citizens, ensuring that every resident has equity of access to the services that they need.
Objective 2: Protecting our most vulnerable	To establish comprehensive policies and procedures that effectively safeguard and support the rights and well-being of our most vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, people with disabilities, those experiencing homelessness or poverty and those that access care and support from Social Services
Objective 3: Living Standards	Tackle poverty and support independent living by considering the impact of any policy changes or decisions under the socio-economic duty. Consideration to vital services such as Housing and homelessness, cost of living and the effect adverse effects on individuals.
Objective 4: Participation & Engagement	Encourage people and communities to participate and engage in issues that are important to them and influence the decisions that affect their lives. Building and increasing quality relationships with communities to ensure a focus on what matters to them
Objective 5: Learning	To promote equal access to quality learning for all students, regardless of their socio-economic background, abilities, age or ethnic background. Support diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout.
Objective 6: Employment	Promote a more inclusive workforce that values diversity. Improve the participation, wellbeing, and opportunities for development for those with protected characteristics.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations Implications and Connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no Climate Change Implications from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet Committee Equalities note the content of this report prior to seeking Cabinet approval to commence a public consultation on the draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.

Background documents

None

Draft Strategic Equality Plan Objectives 2024-2028

Strategic Equality Plan Draft objectives consultation

Overview

This consultation is to invite views on Bridgend County Borough Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.

This consultation aims to seek the views of residents, our workforce, elected members and stakeholders on the proposed Equality Objectives for 2024-2028.

The Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 is being developed to demonstrate the Council's commitment to meeting the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, which came into force on 6 April 2011.

The equality objectives will demonstrate how the council will go about promoting equal opportunities for all and making a real difference to the lives of those living and working in Bridgend County Borough.

The Strategic Equality Plan will ensure that we have clear objectives and a set of actions to demonstrate how we will deliver our equalities commitments whilst continuing to be an inclusive and effective organisation that is representative of our community and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

The results from this consultation will be used to inform our final Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028, which will be implemented in April 2024.

How to respond

This consultation period will begin on the **xxx December 2023** and close on the **xx February 2024**. You can respond or ask further questions in the following ways:

Tel: (01656) 643 664

Email: Consultation@bridgend.gov.uk

Online: www.bridgend.gov.uk/consultation

Post: Communications, Marketing and Engagement, Bridgend County Borough local authority, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB. Alternative formats are also available upon request.

Data protection

Information provided by you on this form will be used to inform the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.

The Council will take all reasonable precautions to ensure confidentiality and to comply with data protection legislation. Your information may be shared with relevant service areas for the purposes of future policy development. Your information will be retained in accordance with the Council's Data Retention Policy.

You have a number of rights under data protection legislation. You may also withdraw your consent and ask us to delete your personal information at any time by contacting us. Further information about this is available on our website or you may contact the Data Protection Officer.

If you are dissatisfied with the manner in which we process your personal data then you have the option to make a complaint to the Data Protection Officer and the Information Commissioner's Office.

Related documents

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/wales-fairer-2018>

The Purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan

This Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 is being developed to demonstrate the Council's commitment to meeting the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, which came into force on 6 April 2011.

Building on our previous equalities work the Plan will explain to residents, our workforce, elected members and stakeholders how Bridgend County Borough Council will to deliver its equalities commitments whilst continuing to be an inclusive and effective organisation that is representative of our community and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

Within the Equality Act 2010, public bodies have an additional responsibility to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. These are outlined below:

Public Sector Equality Duty

The General Duty

When making decisions and delivering services we must have due regard to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (protected characteristics are explained later in this report).
- Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Specific Duties

The Equality Act provides a power to make regulations imposing duties on public bodies to support better performance of the general duty; these are known as the Specific Public Sector Equality Duties and are different in England, Scotland and Wales.

The Welsh Government published regulations that introduced the Specific Duties for Wales in March 2011, these set out the actions the Council must take in order to comply and include the following areas:

- Setting Equality Objectives and publishing a Strategic Equality Plan;
- Ensuring it engages with people who have an interest in how the Council's decisions affect them;
- Collecting and publishing information relevant to compliance with the General Duty;
- Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and publishing the results if there is a substantial impact on the Council's identified;
- Publish employment monitoring information annually;
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the General Duty amongst its employees and use its performance assessment procedures to identify and address the training needs of its employees in relation to the General Duties;
- Set a gender pay equality objective where a gender pay difference is identified;
- Think about including conditions relevant to the General Duty in its procurement processes.

Who is protected under the Equality Act 2010?

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their protected characteristic.

The law is designed to protect them, the protected characteristics are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Age | • Disability |
| • Gender Reassignment | • Marriage and civil partnership |
| • Pregnancy and maternity | • Race |
| • Religion or belief | • Sex |
| • Sexual orientation | |

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015 has been put in place to make sure that public bodies are doing all they can to contribute to the improvement of the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

The Act introduces seven long-term well-being goals, puts in place a sustainable development principle, and defines 5 ways of working that public bodies will need to think about to show they have applied the sustainable development principle. The diagram below shows how the seven national goals, the sustainable development and the five ways of working work together.



The Council is committed to the well-being goals and the sustainable development principle, making sure that when we make decisions we take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

Relevant information we will use

As well as listening to our residents, communities and our staff we will also use a range of equality information to support us in identifying equality objectives.

We will look at regional priorities for Bridgend, Council Priorities, Service Delivery plans and their Self Assessments and will review the progress that the Council’s services have already made in relation to the Public Sector Equality Duties.

We will review national and external sources such as reports by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Welsh Government policy and priorities, research reports and other relevant statistics.

Whilst a number of external reports and EHRC inquiries have contributed to the development of the Equality Objectives, outlined below is the key report that assisted in shaping the objectives:

Is Wales Fairer? 2018 – Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

This report addresses seven key challenges that need to be addressed in Wales. The EHRC states there are major, entrenched inequalities and human rights abuses that will require substantial efforts of public, private and third sector organisations and of individuals to reduce them.

The 7 challenges are:

- Close attainment gaps in education;
- Encourage fair recruitment, development and reward in employment;
- Improve living conditions in cohesive communities;

- Increase access to justice and encourage democratic participation;
- Improve access to mental health services and support people experiencing poor mental health;
- Prevent abuse, neglect and ill treatment in care and detention;
- Eliminate violence, abuse and harassment in the community.

This report has acted as a key driver for the development of the Council's Equality Objectives.

How we developed our Equality Objectives

In order to develop our equalities objectives we have:

- Reviewed our Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024 and our action plan for this period.
- Used the council's new corporate objectives of:
 - better and more targeted use of resources,
 - One council, working well together and with partners
 - Improving communication, engagement and responsiveness
 - Supporting and empowering communities
 - protecting the services that matter to you the most
- We have developed a consultation toolkit to support a more consistent and effective approach to consulting and engaging with our communities.
- Given further consideration to each of the nine protected characteristics covered by the three main aims of the general duty and the requirement to eliminate discrimination, harassment and other actions prohibited in the Equality Act 2010.
- Considered national and local issues.
- Assessed what we have learnt from regional networks and partnerships such as regional approaches to meeting the needs of domestic abuse affected families, domestic violence, sexual violence and hate crime
- Looked at a number of the council's existing plans and strategies as well as the consultations which took place to inform their development,
- Used feedback that we regularly get from local equality and diversity groups and via the Internal Corporate Equalities Forum such as how accessible our services are and how we can help support, promote and raise awareness of issues such as an Anti-racist Wales action plan.

Our Equality objectives

To develop the equality objectives, we will engage with residents, staff, elected members and stakeholders and use relevant information, including EHRC reports, Welsh Government reports, internal strategies and the results of staff engagement exercises as well as community groups' engagement exercises.

We have set our overarching objectives in line with the findings of the EHRC Is Wales Fairer report, as detailed below:

Access to services

Improve the experience and outcomes for our citizens, ensuring that every resident has equity of access to the services that they need.

Protecting our most vulnerable

To establish comprehensive policies and procedures that effectively safeguard and support the rights and well-being of our most vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, people with disabilities, those experiencing homelessness or poverty and those that access care and support from Social Services.

Living Standards

Tackle poverty and support independent living by considering the impact of any policy changes or decisions under the socio-economic duty. Consideration to vital services such as Housing and homelessness, cost of living and the effect adverse effects on individuals.

Participation & Engagement

Encourage people and communities to participate and engage in issues that are important to them and influence the decisions that affect their lives. Building and increasing quality relationships with communities to ensure a focus on what matters to them.

Learning

To promote equal access to quality learning for all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, abilities, age or ethnic background. Support diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout.

Employment

Promote a more inclusive workplace that values diversity. Improve the participation, wellbeing, and opportunities for development for those with protected characteristics

Process

The purpose of this consultation document is to outline the overarching objectives which will then enable us to develop an action plan to support our objectives. This document has been prepared to provide information about the objectives in order to allow residents, our workforce, stakeholders and elected members the opportunity to have their say.

Following the conclusion of the consultation period all comments received will be presented to the local authority's Cabinet and all views expressed will be taken into account in the compilation of the Strategic Equality Plan for 2024-2028.

The table below sets out the timetable for the consultation:

What	When
Consultation begins	Xx December 2023
Consultation ends	Xx February 2024
Publication of Strategic Equality Plan	1 April 2024

Who is being consulted

This consultation aims to seek the views of residents, staff, elected members and stakeholders on the proposed Equality Objectives for 2024-2028. The Consultation and Engagement Team will visit Equality Groups within the County Borough to ensure that the views of members of equality groups are fully considered.

Community Engagement Workshops

Venue	Time	Date
Maesteg Library	4pm-6pm	January 2024
Pencoed Library	11am-1pm	January 2024
Bridgend Life Centre	6pm-8pm	January 2024
Porthcawl Library	9.30am-1pm	February 2024