

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE – EQUALITIES

16 OCTOBER 2014

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR RESOURCES

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Cabinet Committee with an update on equality and diversity learning and development for council staff, Elected Members and citizens.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1. The Strategic Equality Plan and Welsh Language Scheme are statutory and cross-cutting and impact on the work of the whole Council. They are linked to the Community Strategy and the Customer Care Programme.

This report also supports the following priorities in the Corporate Plan 2013 – 2017:

- **Priority 2:** Working together to raise ambitions and drive up educational achievement;
- **Priority 4:** Working together to help vulnerable people to stay independent;
- **Priority 6:** Working together to make the best use of our resources.

Both the Strategic Equality Plan and Welsh Language Scheme outline training objectives to ensure that the council's duties can be met and to ensure staff are aware of customers' diverse backgrounds and the impact this may have upon service need.

3. Background

- 3.1 The requirement for training is outlined in the Public Sector Equality Duty and Welsh Language Scheme. There is a clear need for managers and staff to have an awareness and understanding of equality and diversity issues when preparing EIAs and policy and when delivering frontline services. Welsh language training and awareness will be based on identified business need for front line services.

3.2 Equality and Diversity awareness has also been identified as a requirement for Elected Members and will form part of the Elected Members Development Programme.

4. Current situation / proposal

The Strategic Equality Plan and Welsh Language Scheme outline a commitment to implement, evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of equality, diversity and Welsh language training for staff covering the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation related to job roles.

4.1 A 3 year learning and development plan has been developed outlining the level and type of training, together with targeted numbers of staff (based on business needs identified by Directorate Business Managers).

4.2 The delivery of equality and diversity training will be a mix of E Learning packages, in house provision, partners (Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People, Menter Bro Ogwr and WLGA) and will comprise:

- Welsh Language Awareness / Promotion of culture;
- Welsh beginner sessions;
- Welsh Speaker and Learner Practice Sessions;
- More than just words (Shwd dych chi heddiw?);
- Welsh in the workplace;
- Equality and Diversity (basic and advanced);
- Focussed awareness training sessions;
- Equality Impact Assessments;
- Equality and diversity for elected members.

Specific, targeted training will also be considered such as British Sign Language and Mental Health Awareness, where there is a clear business case.

4.3 The council has declared an interest in Elected Members following the WLGA “Development Programme for Elected Members in relation to Equality” programme. This comprises 6 x half day sessions covering the Protected Characteristics and will form part of the Member Development Programme.

4.4 Equality and Diversity training will also inform the ongoing development of the council’s workforce plan.

4.5 It is hoped that from the information provided within this report Members are reassured that efforts are being made to work with managers to address identified gaps in staff knowledge and skills.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 As this is an information report there are no proposals requiring consideration involving changes to the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 No equality impact assessment has been carried out this report as it provides the Cabinet Committee with information which will positively assist in the delivery of the Authority's equality duties.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. Equality and Diversity training costs will be met mainly from the Engagement Team budget; however, where service areas identify a specific business need for Welsh at Work, costs will be met from Departmental budgets. Delivery of this training will help the Authority to mitigate exposure to risk over its responsibilities.

8. Recommendation

8. It is recommended that the Cabinet Equalities Committee receives and considers this progress report.

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12 September 2014

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Background documents:
None