

**CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - THURSDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2019**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 09:30**

Present

Councillor D Patel – Chairperson

TH Beedle	HJ David	J Gebbie	DG Howells
JE Lewis	CE Smith	E Venables	PJ White
HM Williams	RE Young		

Apologies for Absence

Cllr H David, JC Radcliffe

Officers:

Nicola Bunston	Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager
Judith Jones	Partnership Co-ordinator
Michael Pitman	Business Administrative Apprentice

59. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

60. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 26/03/2019 and 04/07/2019 be approved as a true and accurate record.

61. UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY COHESION SURVEY AND THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY COHESION OFFICER WITHIN BCBC.

The Partnership Co-ordinator presented a report which updated the Cabinet Committee Equalities on the Community Cohesion Survey and the role of the Community Cohesion Officer within Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC).

She explained that in December 2018 the Welsh Government issues their 'intention to fund' email to all Regional Community Cohesion Co-coordinators in Wales. They indicated that each region would be allocated £140,000 with the aim 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).

The Partnership Co-ordinator advised that a Brexit Community Cohesion Delivery Plan was developed as part of the funding application. Details of this were at Appendix 1 of the report.

She advised that one of the key objectives of the plan was the development of a mapping exercise to better understand the impacts of Brexit on communities. A total of 183 people responded to the survey and a copy of the report can be found at appendix

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2. A summary of the responses are listed at section 4.7 of the report. She added that most of the responses were from non EU nationals, with a participation percentage from non EU nationals of 2%, which was disappointing, as they had hoped to gain more responses from EU Nationals. She added that a tension monitoring system was undertaken which provided the hate crime figures

The Partnership Co-ordinator explained that a tension monitoring system was undertaken, which provided the hate crime figures for April to June and June to August 2019 and compared them with 2018. Details were listed below:

Hate crime figures April to June 2019 are as follows:-

- BCBC = 23 hate crimes
- Racial – 10
- Disability – 4
- Sex orientation – 10
- Transgender – 0

Compared to the same period last year (April to June 2018)

- BCBC = 18 hate crimes
- Racial – 13
- Religion - 1
- Disability – 2
- Sex orientation – 2

Hate crime figures June to August 2019-

- TOTAL = 34 hate crimes
- Racial – 26
- Religion – 2
- Disability – 5
- Sex orientation – 3
- Transgender – 0

Compared to the same period last year (June to August 2018)

- TOTAL = 34 hate crimes
- Racial – 19
- Religion - 2
- Disability – 5
- Sex orientation – 7
- Transgender – 1

The Partnership Co-ordinator advised that while there had not been a surge in figures, there had been a small increase in figures compared to the same time last year.

The Cabinet Member Education and Regeneration believed that the increase in hate crime may well be attributed to Brexit and the tensions surrounding this and that it could be largely underreported in Bridgend.

The Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations expressed her concern over the lack of results from the survey, as there was not enough data from enough areas of Bridgend, most of which appeared to be from the Pen Y Fai area.

The Partnership Co-ordinator explained that there was very limited local data to analyse and as there were no hotspots or problem areas identified, which made it difficult to pinpoint any particular areas of concern. She noted that there was a slight increase in Schools, particularly Maesteg Comprehensive School and Brynteg Comprehensive School.

The Partnership Co-ordinator advised that they now have a Community Cohesion Officer in post who was currently working on the EU Settlement Scheme in conjunction with the Job Centre.

A Member asked if the Community Cohesion Officer will be seen in the community face to face. The Partnership Co-Ordinator confirmed that this would be the case.

She advised that the Community Cohesion Officer would also work with families to increase their knowledge about the facilities available to EU Nationals, she was meeting with a representative from Show Racism the Red Card to help identify and tackle hate crime in the area.

The Cabinet Member Communities explained that he recently attended a Police and Crime Commissioner conference in Warwick where he was presented with figures showing how Brexit had been considered to affect hate crime. He stated that South Wales was below average compared with other areas with there being a spike during the referendum but has since dropped. The police have stated that whatever happens with Brexit, but particularly in the event that the UK remains in the EU, they believe that there will be a spike in hate crime.

The Partnership Coordinator explained that the Community Cohesion Officer will be doing work in the communities including more involvement in schools and churches etc. to see if they can get more information. She explained that when Brexit is talked about, people often shelter away from answering so this was something to consider going forward.

A Member thanked the Partnership Coordinator for the report and mentioned that many of the Members have seen examples of hate crime with relation to Brexit. He said he was concerned to see an increase in schools and asked what the most common form of hate crime was.

The Partnership Coordinator explained that the type of hate crime ranges and was not exclusive to any in particular, she added that the hate crime can be amongst English and Welsh pupils too.

A Member mentioned that hate crimes have increased in Maesteg and Brynteg but worried that issues are going on in other schools that may have gone unreported. She asked how this was going to be looked at.

The Partnership Coordinator explained that funding had been provided by Welsh Government which will be used for five different schools. A mix of schools will be targeted to ensure that a wide enough scope of work is being undertaken.

A Member mentioned that many hate crimes are reported online and asked what could be done to ensure we are getting data from social media etc. The Partnership Coordinator explained that the police have software that they use to identify issues online.

A Member said that social media apps are showing an increase in hate crime including political targeting in Maesteg area. He asked the Partnership Coordinator if she had any figures to provide for the reported incidences. The Partnership Coordinator said that she did not have those figures to hand but could look into this.

The Cabinet Member Future Generations and Wellbeing asked a question on behalf of a Member, he asked how long the funding was for.

The Partnership Coordinator explained that the funding was for a part time Officer. The Community Cohesion Officer is now full time up until April 2021 but the funding runs out after this date and there is currently no provision in place to continue the funding after this, however, the team are looking to secure more funding.

The Deputy Leader mentioned that he had seen some unpleasant comments about people online and asked how Councillors would go about reporting this behaviour

The Partnership Coordinator said that she could provide the contact details of the Community Cohesion Officer as well as our regional officer.

The Deputy Leader suggested that these details be made available to the general public so that they could also report the negative behaviour that they came across

The Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations mentioned that more promotion of the Community Safety Partnership page on the BCBC website would be beneficial to Members and the general public

**RESOLVED:** That the Cabinet Committee Equalities noted and accepted the content of the report.

62. **UPDATE REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF WELSH LANGUAGE (WALES) MEASURE 2011 AND WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS**

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager presented a report which updated the Cabinet Committee Equalities on the implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards.

She explained that the Welsh in the workplace policy had been updated and was available to staff via the Intranet. This included information on the 5 year strategy and what this meant for customers and employees.

She added that they had met with the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30 October in which they were provided information which related to their performance. Overall the feedback was positive in relation to correspondence, social media content, policies and the BCBC website. In relation to phone calls automatic language options were available for all three calls, however were unable answer any of these calls fully using the Welsh language. She added that they were still awaiting the Welsh Language Commissioner code of practice to give additional guidance on the interpretation of the Welsh Language standards which they hope to provide at the next Equalities Committee.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager provided details relating to the complaint received in July 2019 where there was an allegation that an English only letter was received from Bro Ogwr Primary School in relation to cycle lessons. The Welsh Language Commissioner discontinued the complaint as it was not an 'education course' and was satisfied that the mistake was human error.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager provided details relating to a complaint in March 2019. The complainant claimed they did not receive a full response to Welsh medium correspondence sent to the Talktous email address. The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager advised that complaints had already been received regarding this and therefore the Welsh language Commissioner decided not to pursue this particular one as the previous complaints were under investigation.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager provided details relating to a complaint in October 2019. The complainant had received an automatic response email which acknowledged receipt of a Council Tax payment to which they claimed there were Welsh language errors.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager advised that they have provided evidence to the Welsh Language Commissioner of this as this was the second complaint received of a similar nature.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager updated the Equalities committee on the previous complaints received. Details of these and the progress made was listed in section 4.1.6 of the report.

A Member asked how far we have developed in terms of overall compliance on implementing the Welsh Language.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager explained that the only areas that we have not achieved full compliance were self-service machines, for example parking machines were not yet giving the option to view in Welsh.

A Member asked with regards to the complaint about the email sent out, was this problem rectified or where do we currently stand with this.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager explained that we could not find the error in question so they have asked for clarification from the Welsh Language Commissioner on where the error is and are still awaiting a response.

A Member asked if the complainants contacted the Council directly first. The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager mentioned that complaints were not sent to the Council in most cases, complainants often go straight to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

A Member mentioned how impressed she was that the Council have managed to achieve so much and implemented so many standards in such a short time.

**RESOLVED:** That the cabinet committee Equalities noted the contents of the report.  
Noted.

63. **ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT ON PROGRESS MADE WITH MEETING THE OBJECTIVES WITHIN THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS FIVE YEAR STRATEGY**

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager presented a report which updated the cabinet committee equalities on the work undertaken to meet the objectives within the Welsh Language Standards Five Year Strategy (2016-2021) during the third year since its introduction.

She explained that the Council's final compliance notice from the Welsh language commissioner includes two standards (145 and 146) that required the Council to have produced and published a Five Year Strategy by 30 September 2016. The strategy was attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager explained that the strategy was split into two sections, one being for employees and one for the public. Details of these and the progress made since 2018 were listed below:

## **Employee developments**

### **Identify the capacity in service areas to deliver services in Welsh**

- The Welsh language assessment tool that was developed to assist managers understand the linguistic skills of their teams so that future training can be more targeted has been rolled out to customer service and Bridgend Day Centre
- Actions have been taken to monitor the demand for Welsh services in the telephone contact centre and Customer contact centre

### **Provide appropriate learning and development solutions at various levels to meet identified need within budget allocation**

- 18 employees have completed the Welsh language standards e-learning module and 32 have completed Welsh language awareness
- 10 employees are enrolled on Cwrs Mynediad year 1, 7 are enrolled in year 2 and 8 are enrolled in the foundation level year.
- 21 employees have attended welsh meet and greet training

### **Establish arrangements in recruiting to positions where Welsh language skills are essential**

- Online recruitment is available bi-lingually
- We have a range of recruitment methods including via Menter Bro Ogwr and engagement with Welsh language schools to promote apprenticeships

## **Public developments**

### **Raise the profile of the Welsh language, culture and local activities and events organised by the council and our partners in a structured way**

There is a rolling calendar of welsh language activities and events and details are shared across internal and external communication channels such as press, social media and Bridgend. Events and activities promoted during the period include:

- Shwmae Sumae day
- New Welsh medium education provision at Ysgol Calon Y Cymoedd
- Welsh Christmas Festival
- Menter Bro Ogwr Welsh Language play scheme

### **Increase promotion and awareness of the councils WESP**

- We have highlighted progress with outcome one of the WESP which demonstrated an increase in learners in Welsh medium primary schools.
- In outcome two of the WESP we are able to see that since the removal of the Welsh language short course (GCSE) from the curriculum we have seen an increase in those pupils engaged in the Welsh language as a second language full course.
- In outcome four of the WESP we can see that at 'A' level pupils completing Welsh 'A' level as a first language has remained fairly stable.
- We have made progress with the development of a booklet to promote welsh medium education which will be given to parents at the birth of their child and at the 18 month home visit.

**To explore and implement where possible any new activities which will support the use of the Welsh language more widely within the county borough**

- Since the last report we have worked in partnership and supported activities across the county borough including work with Menter Bro Ogwr, supporting 80 children in play schemes
- In partnership with the URDD we have provided opportunities at YGG Llangynwydd Maesteg and Brackla.
- We have developed the girls' network in Brackla and have supported 594 young people to access weekly clubs. 389 young people have accessed holiday provision and 103 individuals have accessed family activities and over 2500 have accessed the URDD sports provision.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager provided Members with a booklet containing information to help promote the Welsh language and encourage the public to take up the Welsh language. Members were impressed with the handout and applauded the work that the team had put in to it.

Members thanked the Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager for the handout. A Member said it gave an attractive look to the Welsh language and made a positive impression. Another member reiterated this and was pleased that it was being offered to new parents at birth so that it can be taught from a young age and also at A Level year's students.

The Cabinet Member - Wellbeing and Future Generations thanked the Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager for the report and was happy to receive the report yearly to ensure the committee can observe the progress regularly and not miss any key developments.

**RESOLVED:** That the Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the report.

64. **ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF BRIDGEND COMMUNITY COHESION AND EQUALITY FORUM.**

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager presented a report which updated the Cabinet Committee Equalities on the work of the Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum.

She explained that in 2017, discussions took place between South Wales Police and BCBC on a proposed merger of the Bridgend Equality Forum and the Community Cohesion Group. The first meeting of the Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum (BCCEF) took place on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018. She advised that the group had met quarterly since the first meeting. She advised that this was the second time the report had been presented to the Cabinet Committee Equalities on the progress of BCCEF.

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager provided details on the topics that the BCCEF had received, including presentations on:

- Promoting apprenticeships to under-represented groups including BAME, people with additional learning needs, more girls studying Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects
- EU Exit community tensions
- Update on accessible transport and taxis
- Update on "scores on the doors" in Bridgend, which encourages local businesses to promote whether they have disabled facility access in their premises

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- The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board Strategic Equality Plan consultation
- BCBC Budget Consultation 2019

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager advised that SWP also provide an update to every meeting which provides the BCCEF information on a number of key areas, such as hate crime, use of force, community tensions, violence against women and girls, and complaints raised against the police.

She added that the group actively encourage new members to join which has been successful in doing so, with a number of new memberships from the following organisations:

- BAVO;
- Cwm Taf Substance misuse services;
- Citizens Advice Bureau;
- Show Racism the Red Card ;
- Bridgend Neath Port Talbot Community Cohesion coordinator.

A Member asked who was on the group in total

The Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager explained that there were a range of organisations, including the Community Safety Partnership, Mental Health Matters Wales (MHMW), Vine Christian centre, St Mary's Church, South Wales Police, Fire and Rescue and Refuge Centre for Wales.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Committee Equalities received and considered the report.

65. URGENT ITEMS

None