

**CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2020**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES HELD IN REMOTELY VIA SKYPE FOR BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2020 AT 10:00**

Present

Councillor D Patel – Chairperson

SE Baldwin	TH Beedle	NA Burnett	HJ David
SK Dendy	J Gebbie	DG Howells	JE Lewis
JC Radcliffe	CE Smith	E Venables	SR Vidal
HM Williams	RE Young		

Officers:

Debra Beeke	HR & OD Manager
Nicola Bunston	Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager
Jackie Davies	Head of Adult Social Care
Julie Ellams	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Andrew Thomas	Group Manager Sports & Physical Activity

75. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor N Burnett declared a personal interest in agenda item 6, due to the fact that her parents lived Picton Gardens, Bridgend.

76. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet Committee Equalities dated the 24 August 2020, be approved as a true and accurate record.

77. ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITY IN THE WORKFORCE (2019/20)

The Group Manager – HR and Organisational Development, presented a report, the purpose of which, was to provide Cabinet Committee Equalities, with a summary of the equality profile of the Council's workforce as at 31 March 2020 and information about the requirement for Welsh language skills for vacant posts.

She confirmed that, the provision of relevant and accurate workforce information enables the Council to meet its statutory duties and obligations in relation to the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Welsh Language Standards.

The Group Manager – HR and Organisational Development advised that, Appendix 1 to the report, provided an equality profile of the Council's workforce as at 31 March 2020, with comparative data from previous years.

There was full data set available on gender and age, however, it was not mandatory for employees to disclose their sensitive personal information for equality monitoring purposes. She added, that work was ongoing and planned to encourage employees to provide and/or update such details, notwithstanding the fact that this was given voluntary by employees (and was not something that was obligatory.)

## **CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2020**

Referring to the report's Appendix, the Group Manager – HR and Organisational Development advised that BCBC had a larger proportion of female employees when compared to other local authorities, although this could not strictly be compared on a like for like basis, given that different authorities outsourced different sized services.

She confirmed that there were more people over 60 working within the authority and this had been the trend for the last 3 years. This was also consistent with other local authorities.

Data also confirmed that there had been an increase in residents of an ethnic minority within the BCB, of around 1.9% within the last few years.

In 2020, there had been a slight decrease in the percentage of workforce who had declared carer responsibilities. Although interestingly, 20% of staff who had responded to the survey (equating to 350 employees, had indicated that they had some level of caring responsibilities.

In terms of some queries raised at the last Committee regarding the Council's recruitment processes and the need for the successful candidate to be a Welsh speaker for any particular post, the Group Manager – HR and Organisational Development confirmed, that when a vacancy arises, managers must undertake an assessment of the Welsh language skills required by considering the duties and responsibilities of the individual post as well as that of the team. In relation to the post, the criteria covers, contact with the public and the expectation to be able to communicate in both English and Welsh, the extent of contact with Welsh speakers and the need to undertake internal administration in English and Welsh. From a team perspective whether another officer is available who can provide a Welsh language service.

In order to increase the number of Welsh speaking employees and improve the Welsh language service provided by the council, the current Policy on Using Welsh Language in the Workplace, sets out that all posts will be advertised with Welsh as desirable, unless the assessment identifies Welsh is essential.

She added, that these arrangements have been reviewed internally and recommendations are being developed. These will now be considered alongside the results of the Welsh Language Commissioner's 2019-20 monitoring work, which covered recruitment. The final outcomes of this may change the Council's current protocols in terms of recruiting Welsh speakers for certain posts, confirmed the Group Manager – HR and Organisational Development. One of the issues picked up by the Welsh Language Commissioner as part of their previous monitoring work within HR, was that BCBC needs to be more specific about what was required, when it advertises vacant posts and states in the job specification, that one of criteria for the position is that it would be desirable for applicants to speak Welsh. HR were presently therefore re-looking at this issue.

A Member referred to Point 5. in the Appendix to the report, where it referred that the sexual orientation of staff in terms of those who declared they were bi-sexual or lesbian etc, amounted to a total of 1.5% (ie of staff). This was below the 1.8% of staff of staff who confirmed they were of ethnic minority. He felt that a true reflection of this data could be higher than this percentage reflects and that due to this, more encouragement should be given to the Council's workforce to provide this information. This would allow for a more accurate reflection to be given in terms of the data of the Council overall, as opposed to calculating the percentage only of those providing the information.

## CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2020

The Group Manager – HR and Organisational Development confirmed that this would be looked at further, though she emphasised, that it was not mandatory for staff to provide such details.

A Member advised that whilst the Authority should encourage Welsh speakers as part of its recruitment process, it was difficult and possibly unreasonable, to have a workforce that could provide a Welsh language service in all of its service areas. He felt though that it was essential in some areas, for example, on main Reception areas at our buildings (as a first point of contact) and via any contact to the Authorities by telephone, ie to Customer Services/Contact Centres. Specifying the need for Welsh speakers in too many posts where this was strictly not essential, could also result in BCBC not recruiting the best person for that particular job, he added.

A Member felt that employees should also be encouraged to declare if they were a carer, particularly since the inception of the Covid-19 pandemic. This was essential he felt, as some of these individuals may require additional support from the Council.

The Leader concluded debate on this item, by advising that whilst the Authority could not apply pressure on its existing workforce to become Welsh speakers, there was a need where there was a demand or necessity for this, to recruit people who were able to converse in the medium of Welsh, in certain key posts within the Authority.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Committee noted the information contained in the report.

### 78. EQUALITIES WORK SUPPORTED BY WELLBEING SERVICE (INC. GIRLS NETWORK, DEMENTIA FRIENDLY SWIMMING AND OLYMPAGE GAMES)

The Head of Adult Social Care gave a brief introduction on the report, before passing onto the Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing, to expand upon this further.

The Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing, advised that the purpose of the report, was to provide information on the programmes of work of the prevention and wellbeing service and the related contribution to the BCBC strategic equalities plan.

He explained that the The Prevention and Wellbeing service had conducted an internal review of progress made during 2019-20 and collated the information in a format that can increase awareness of what is being achieved within the Directorate and broader Council, with a number of areas of this work being cross cutting.

A series of extracts from the larger report were included as appendices to the covering report, in order to further illustrate some of the work that has taken place during the year. There were 6 appendices providing examples of the work taking place within the service included as supporting information.

The Group Manager - Prevention and Wellbeing referred firstly, to the 'Our Voice' programme, which had been developed to capture the views of young people on wellbeing and to work in partnership with schools and communities to develop action plans.

He then referred to the "Girls Network."

This was an initiative operating in partnership with six secondary schools with a focus on improving health and wellbeing. The groups conduct research and analyse needs prior to developing supportive opportunities, he explained. Further information with regard to this programme, could be found at Appendix 1 to the report. This service worked in

partnership with primary and secondary schools to use extra-curricular activity, to develop active and healthy lifestyles.

The Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing confirmed that there were other programmes that indicated a growing focus on looked after children and young carers also within the annual report. During the year, 19 school delegates were supported to attend a Teacher Disability Inclusive Training (DIT) course. The service supported schools, in order to develop their wellbeing plans. Further information on this, could be located at Appendix 2 to the report.

He then went on to refer to the Ageing Well Plan for Bridgend and the development of 'age friendly' communities and where there were appropriate intergenerational opportunities.

The Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing advised, that there is a growing focus on digital exclusion and those impacted. Work has commenced with Wales Cooperative Centre on developing a 'care to cooperate' programme that targets support for 200 vulnerable people and carers to build skills and connections. Aligned to this, the service was developing a "community information champions" programme with organisations and volunteers to support information sharing with those who are not digitally connected.

He then referred to developing dementia supportive communities, a strategic objective of the Ageing Well Plan for Wales and the 'Feel Good for Life' programme, that had been developed with certain key partners. Further details on this programme were outlined in Appendix 3 to the report.

The Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing stated that there has been a growth in social prescribing work using cultural activities with Awen that have supported older adults, young people with disabilities and carers. Examples would include the 'Same As' advocacy project with parent carers, the 'Off Duty' carers choir programme, 'Cultural Olympage' programmes focused on reminiscence and the 'creative at home' resources and digital communication platform 'Stronger Together Bridgend'. Further information on this, was provided at Appendix 4 of the report.

The Olympage programme was launched in Bridgend in 2017 to support older adults to have more socialisation opportunities and to live active and healthy lives. In 2019 the Prevention and Wellbeing service was successful in securing 400k of investment via the Healthy and Active Fund to develop a regional approach across the Healthy Board footprint, he added.

The subsequent 'Super Agers' programme had also been established across Bridgend, RCT and Merthyr. The programme has been identified as a Bevan exemplar. A review of the programme and approach will be required based on regulations during 2020/21. Further information regarding this, was detailed at Appendix 5 to the report.

The Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing then highlighted, that the approach of working with community owned networks goes beyond the Girls Network identified earlier in the report. During 2019-20 an additional network, Bridgend Inclusive Network Group (BING), had been co-produced and also 'Together for Young People in Bridgend' as a network for youth organisations.

The service leads on the play sufficiency duty for BCBC, including assessment and action planning for the range of statutory matters. An example of the play and activity pods project, was shown at Appendix 6 to the report.

## **CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2020**

A total of 7,670 visits were recorded to Active for Life programmes in Summer 2019, with inclusive opportunities and 309 children were engaged on what was important to them in their communities.

The Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing, concluded his submission by referring to the report's financial implications. He confirmed that, a large number of the programmes referenced in the report, were supported by external funding, including Welsh Government, Sport Wales, and Disability Sport Wales grants. The list of external funding during the period 2019/20 could be found at Appendix 7 of the report.

The Chairperson commended the report and the expansiveness of this, in terms of the health and wellbeing initiatives that were in place for a broad spectrum of people that was also broad ranging in terms of what was available for varying age groups, between both the young and the old. She also noted from the report, that the Council were learning from previous projects that had been put in place and using these as 'best practice' for new projects ongoing/proposed.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help, advised that she was Consort to the Mayor, Councillor Baldwin, when she had the pleasure of attending last year's Olympage and Super Ages events and this had been a moving experience that reflected that individuals continue to have significant and life changing events, no matter how old (or young) you may be. The previous Mayor echoed these sentiments, adding that he too had thoroughly enjoyed the experience that the above events had given him, whilst he held the mayoral position.

As Chairperson of the Evergreen Hall, she received funding for leaflets that were forwarded to the older generation of the County Borough advising them of activities such as those mentioned in the report. She commended the intergenerational aspect of the work that was ongoing, as referenced to in the report, in order to forge closer connections between age generations.

A Member was pleased to see the diverse activities referred to in the report, where support avenues had been put in place for contrasting age groups, ranging from people with dementia to support for younger girls. He commended the support also that came from Community Co-ordinators and this was echoed by the Chairperson.

The Leader concluded debate on this item by also commending the varied amount of support that had been highlighted by other Committee Members, which he hoped could also be scaled up, particularly given the challenging times people in communities were facing, due to the ongoing pandemic.

**RESOLVED:** That the Cabinet Committee received, considered and noted the report.

### **79. USE OF THE NAME PICTON IN STREET NAMES AND BUILDINGS THROUGHOUT BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH - UPDATE REPORT**

The Chief Executive submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to provide Cabinet Committee Equalities with information on the use of the name Picton in street names and buildings across Bridgend County Borough.

An initial report was presented to Cabinet Committee Equalities on 24 August 2020 which recommended that further research be undertaken by a local historian. The report also recommended that Cabinet Committee Equalities await the outcome of the Welsh Government audit of Wales' historic monuments and statues, and the names of streets

and public buildings before further consideration is given to action needed within the county borough.

Paragraph 4.2 of the report, highlighted potential organisations who may be able to carry out further such research work, however, she was now able to update Members, that Past Lives Historical and Consultancy Services had been commissioned to do this work. In respect of this, a further outline report would be presented to the next scheduled meeting, with hopefully a more detailed outcome report then being presented before Committee at next March's meeting.

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager, reminded Members that the Welsh Government's audit into the use of the name Picton for streets and buildings as a separate piece of research work as was referred to in the report, was progressing.

Carmarthen County Borough Council were doing a similar piece of research work in respect of this matter and the Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager referred to paragraph 4.4 of the report, which gave an example of what they had asked members of the public with regard to the General Thomas Picton monument that was situated in that particular county borough.

A Member noted that there was a street name of Picton Court in Nottage, that had not been allocated through BCBC in consultation with the Post Office and the Porthcawl Town Council and this street was not included in the ongoing work. He added that this was a private Hafod Housing Association Development

The Chairperson advised that she had spoken to Hafod Housing, who had confirmed their intention to change this name.

The Cabinet Member – Communities acknowledged that whilst some place and street names within the County Borough were associated with General Picton and therefore connected to the slave trade, some were named after Richard Picton Turbeville from Ewenny Priory, who had been a Magistrate and who had also committed significantly to voluntary work and services in the local community. It was therefore important to differentiate what streets and buildings had been named after these two individuals.

**RESOLVED:** That the Cabinet Committee considered the update report and awaits research from a local historian and the outcome of the Welsh Government audit before further consideration be given to actions that may require to be taken within the BCB.

80. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS - ANNUAL REVIEW 2019/2020**

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager presented a report, in order to provide members with an annual update 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 2019/20.

By way of background, she advised that the Equality Act 2010 sets out a general duty that, as a public body in Wales, BCBC is required to have due regard in its decision making processes (including financial decisions) to three factors:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- To advance equality of opportunity, and;

## CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2020

- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

She explained that the EIA is 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. If the Council were creating a policy or making a major change to a service or function, through a report for example, to Cabinet, then an EIA should accompany the report, or if not then an EIA Screening should have been completed.

EIAs helped the council make better decisions, identify how services can be more accessible or improved and consider the nine protected characteristics as well as the impact on the Welsh language.

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager, added that the EIA toolkit will be revised in readiness for the implementation of the socio-economic duty in March 2021, to include guidance for officers on the socio-economic duty and when this needs to be considered.

The administration of the EIA processes will also be reviewed, and consideration given to an online assessment process to assist in the collation and publication of data. Currently full EIAs are linked to Cabinet reports and as such become public documents. All EIA screenings are retained by the service area.

In terms of training, the Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager confirmed that an e-learning module continued to be available for employees which provides an overview of EIAs, their role in improving services and a guide to conducting them. At the end of the module, staff have an opportunity to complete an EIA and compare this against an already completed version to assess how the module has assisted in terms of knowledge and understanding. The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager, added that to date, 225 council employees had completed the EIA e-learning module.

She added that between February 2019 and March 2020, 8 full EIAs were undertaken and accompanied Cabinet reports and these, were listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

68 EIA screenings were undertaken during this period and these were listed in Appendix 2. These screenings were referenced in the relevant Cabinet report/s and indicated that the policy/ies being assessed could either be "screened out" or would require a full EIA to be undertaken. This had compared favourably to last year, when there had been 6 full EIA's conducted and 33 EIA screenings.

The Chairperson advised that she was pleased to note that EIA had developed on-line as part of e-learning and that the number of full EIA's and EIA Screenings were increasing compared to last year.

A Member noted that an Air Pollution Control report had recently been considered by Cabinet and with this impacting upon people with breathing problems, he was surprised to see that this report had not been accompanied by an EIA document.

He also asked of the employees in management positions who had taken up EIA training to date, what proportion of this was compared to the total number of management staff the training was made available to.

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager advised that she would take the above point up with Human Resources and provide an answer to the Member, outside of the meeting.

The year before last she confirmed that the training had been face to face with an external training organisation called Red Shiny Apple. This tranche of training had identified that 60 – 65 Managers should have signed up for the training and 56 of these actually attended, so this was quite a high percentage overall.

In terms of the Air Quality Management report that had recently been considered by Cabinet, this had been an update report and due to this, had probably not necessitated it being accompanied by a full EIA.

**RESOLVED:** That the Cabinet Committee noted the progress made in the Council during 2019/2020 in the completion of Equality Impact Assessments, the progress made with training (e-learning and development of face to face training) and the review of the administration processes to support service areas.

81. **STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ACTION PLAN REPORT (UPDATE ON WORK UNDERTAKEN BY DIRECTORATES IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS)**

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager gave a report, which provided Cabinet Committee Equalities with an update on progress made in delivering the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2016 - 2020 during 2019/2020. This is the fourth and final annual review for this plan, she added.

She explained that, following public consultation the Council's SEP (2016-2020) was approved by Cabinet on 15 March 2016.

Further consultation with the public and local equality and diversity groups took place back during May and June 2016, in order to develop the action plan which would support achievement of the seven objectives in the SEP over the four year period. Key/ lead officers were consulted regarding the development of meaningful and achievable actions within their respective services. The final action plan was a live document and contained 47 actions. This was approved by Cabinet Committee Equalities in July 2016. The action plan was attached as a background document to the report (at appendix one).

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager reminded Members, that the Committee had received three updates on progress. Progress during 2016/17 was presented in the meeting in July 2017, progress during 2017/18 was presented in July 2018 and progress during 2018/19 was presented to Members in July 2019.

Referring to the present time, she referred Members to appendix 1 of the report, which detailed progress on the SEP action plan for 2019/2020 and key points regarding this were shown in bullet point format at paragraph 4.1 of the report, in respect of the areas of:

- Transportation;
- Fostering good relations and awareness training;
- Our role as an employer;
- Mental health;
- Children;
- Leisure, Arts and Culture, and
- Data initiatives



**CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2020**

A Member confirmed he was pleased with the progress being made over the last four years in the Strategic Equality Plan and the proposals of its supporting Action Plan for the last/current year. During his term as Mayor up until very recently, he had been involved in his role in a number of engagements as was reflected in the action plan, in the support of Hate Crime and other Awareness Campaigns the Council had been involved in promoting as a local authority.

He noted the support for Syrian refugees within the last four years of the SEP, but stated that he felt that this should now be rolled-out and extended to all refugees.

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager confirmed that she recognised the need for this to be taken on-board.

In terms of e:learning including on important issues such as raising Hate Crime Awareness, she added that this was also looking to be increased together with the expansion of other e:learning modules and to give e:learning a higher profile, so that staff could be encouraged to become involved in this, with the longer term view possible, of this being built into staff performance reviews.

A Member added that he felt that the Council should advocate First Aiders in mental health wellbeing and awareness, particularly in light of the Covid outbreak, which had placed a lot of added pressure on Council employees, some of which had been adversely affected by this pressure emotionally speaking.

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager confirmed that she would take this point up with Human Resources and update Members of the outcome accordingly.

A Member referred to page 103 of the report and the development of a systems School Bullying SIMS model which though having been used in-house, this had not been mandated by schools. She asked why this had not yet been used in our schools.

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager advised that she would link in with the Education Department and feedback to the Member, outside of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Cabinet Committee received, considered and noted the report and its attached appendix.

**82. URGENT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting closed at 12:10