

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE - EQUALITIES
5 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES
CONSULTATION IN BCBC

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the consultation work undertaken by the Council's Engagement Team.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 The Strategic Equality Plan is a statutory plan and a cross cutting issue impacting on the whole of the council. It is linked to the Customer Care Programme and supports the community cohesion agenda.

2.2 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 3:** Working with children and families to tackle problems early;
- **Priority 6:** Working together to make the best use of our resources.

3. Background

In July 2010, Cabinet Equalities Committee agreed to receive reports and presentations on topic areas relevant to their remit. This includes community representatives presenting on relevant topics for members to gain a broader understanding of issues faced in our communities.

4. Current situation / proposal.

Effective consultation and engagement forms an integral part of councils' decision making processes and, in some situations, is a statutory requirement.

4.1 Consultation is the process followed involving citizens, service users and other groups and individuals who contribute their views and suggestions as part of a review of policy, strategy and proposed budget reductions.

4.2 Engagement is a less formal and more participative process where, using a wide range of techniques, groups and individuals are able to influence and shape strategy and policy.

- 4.3 The council's Engagement Team has developed an internal toolkit which clarifies when to engage and/or consult and to understand the methods and techniques available. The toolkit is based on Participation Cymru National Principles for Engagement which comprises 10 principles including:
- Working with relevant partner organisations;
 - Using jargon free, appropriate and understandable information;
 - Making it easy for people to take part and to do so effectively;
 - Participants are told the impact of their contributions and
 - Learning and sharing lessons learned.
- 4.4 The toolkit also includes advice and guidance on the role of the equality agenda in consultation and engagement.
- 4.5 The Engagement Team has recently led on 2 high profile consultations, these being Learner Travel and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 4.6 Non effective consultation can have legal implications for the council if equality of opportunity is not afforded to every individual wishing to participate.
- 4.7 The Engagement Team and the toolkit add significant value to the council in terms of consultation, engagement and equalities.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The report has no direct effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules but is required to effectively implement the council's statutory duties in relation to equalities and human rights.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

No equality impact assessment has been carried out as this report provides the committee with information that will positively assist in the delivery of the authority's equality duties.

7. Financial Implications.

None in this report.

8. Recommendation.

- 8.1 That the Cabinet Equalities Committee receives and considers this report.

Ness Young
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Date: 12 December 2014

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Background papers: None.