

CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS - WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2025

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2025 AT 10:00

Present

Councillor N Farr – Chairperson

A R Berrow
W R Goode
E D Winstanley

E L P Caparros
M Jones

M J Evans
JC Spanswick

J Gebbie
AJ Williams

Present Virtually

D M Hughes

RL Penhale-Thomas

A Wathan

Officers:

Zoe Edwards
Mark Galvin
Angela Granville
Paul Miles
Michael Pitman
Kirsty Williams
Phil O'Brien
Wendi Ross

Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
HR Business Development Manager
Group Manager - Human Resources and Organisational Development
Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Partnership & CSP Manager
Group Manager – Transformation and Customer Services
VAWDASV Manager

59. Apologies for Absence

Decision Made	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Davies and HM Williams.
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CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS - WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2025

Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

60. Declarations of Interest

Decision Made	Councillor N Farr declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8, as a member of Unison which has put forward one of the Charters that the Council are being asked to sign. Councillor WR Goode declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as Chairperson of the MEM Community Centre, Nantymoel.
Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

61. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the minutes of the 19 February 2025 be approved as a true and accurate record. Both the Chairperson and the Deputy Leader in turn, asked Officers to note for future reference going forward, that actions raised at the meeting needed to be itemised in the minutes, in order that appropriate follow-up action could be pursued by the relevant presenting Officers. The Chairperson noted from the last Committee meeting, that in a previous item regarding Discrimination at Schools reporting forms were discussed in relation to acts of racial discrimination, however, there were other areas of discrimination where this should be extended to, for example, bullying, etc.
Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

62. Remit of Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employee Relations

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CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS - WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2025

Decision Made	The Group Manager – HR and Organisational Development presented a report, the purpose of which, was to confirm the remit of the Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employee Relations and identify items to be included on the Forward Work Programme. The approved Terms of Reference were attached at Appendix 1 to the report. Paragraph 3.6 of the report detailed, as far as it was currently known, the items that would be submitted before meetings of the Cabinet Committee in the coming municipal year Members asked the following questions in relation to the report:- • The Deputy Leader noted that in April 2024, the local authority made Care Experienced Children in the County Borough a protected characteristic. Therefore, this needed to be considered as a remit of the new Committee together with ongoing work in the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate regarding this theme, being shared with future Committees. • A member asked if what is included as future Committee items in paragraph 3.6 of the report is limited to just the items so listed, or would it be the intention that the Committee could consider wider 'equality' related items? • A member asked a question as to what data will be included in future HR and Organisational Development quarterly reports and how will this differ from previous reports considered on this area of work. She also asked, what plans were in place to review future such data in 'real time' as opposed to reviewing such data a couple of months after the cut off date for each quarter. • The member also asked if the Council conducted employee exit interviews and, if so, is there any feedback from these registered as retained data information. <u>RESOLVED:</u> (1) That the Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employee Relations. noted the information contained in this report and agree the agenda items as set out at paragraph 3.6 of the report. (2) That it be further noted that with regards to paragraph 3.6 of the report, further additional agenda items identified by Committee members, over and above that detailed in the ongoing Forward Work Programme, should be added to future meeting agendas.
Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

63. Annual Report on Equality in the Workforce (2024/2025)

Decision Made	The Group Manager – HR and Organisational Development shared a report with the Committee, in order to provide members with a summary of the equality profile for the Council's workforce as at 31 March 2025. The report attached the following appendices:- Appendix 1 – which showed a summary of protected characteristics during 2024/2025 using the total workforce as at 31 March 2025 (5,947). Appendix 2 - provided an equality profile of the Council's workforce as at 31 March 2025, with comparative data from the previous two years. Appendix 3 - further provided information on pay gaps as at 31 March 2025. Members made the following comments in respect of the report:- • What efforts are being made to invite employees comments and input to Workforce data collation, so as to ensure that data is both comprehensive in terms of its detail and up to date; • What is BCBC doing specifically to encourage people with a disability both within and outside the County Borough, to apply for vacant posts within the Council, in order to reflect that the Authority is promoting equality (in its workforce); • Further effort should be made for employees to be encouraged to complete training including non-mandatory e:learning modules, such as LGBTQ +; • Future reports should include data regarding employees gender identification, if different to that registered at birth; • It was noted from the report that BCBC are below the Wales average in terms of employees who are welsh language speakers. It was therefore considered that efforts should be made to increase this statistic; <u>RESOLVED:</u> (1) That the Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employee Relations noted the information contained in this report and within the Appendices attached thereto. (2) That Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board receive a
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CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS - WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2025

	future report on the training opportunities that are available to both members and employees within the local authority, to establish whether any changes are required to this, and to consider also, if any changes should be made to those which are considered mandatory and/or optional. (3) That further engagement should be undertaken with staff on the subject of Welfare Reform. In line with that, that further investigation be considered in relation to Personal Independence Payments and any impact this may have on our disabled workforce, particularly with regards to any potential resulting pay loss impact.
Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

64. Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

Decision Made	The Partnership and CSP Manager submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to provide an annual update to Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employers Relations on: • The services provided by the in-house Assia Domestic Abuse Service; • Information regarding the range of domestic abuse related services delivered by our third sector partners The Assia Domestic Abuse service in Bridgend is meeting the purpose of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence,(Wales) Act 2015. The officer advised that the service is delivering against national strategic aims for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region and that, the information contained in the report covered the period from April 2022, when the Assia service was established, to the end of March 2025. The report demonstrated the positive impact the service is making and the ways in which Assia are trying to engage and support a diverse range of people. The VAWDASV Manager then shared details regarding a previous case study with members for their
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CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS - WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2025

	information. Members asked a number of questions and made a number of queries on the report, which included the following:- • The Deputy Leader was pleased to note that the male perpetrator service had now developed to such an extent, that it was showing proven results; • She asked what support was provided to Officers who provide first hand support to the service and therefore are heavily involved in dealing with domestic violence and other similar cases, due to the traumatic nature associated with these cases; • The Leader wished to make it known that last year the Assia service actually achieved the Safe Lives Leading Lights accreditation and BCBC was the first local authority in Wales to receive such accreditation; • The Leader referred to paragraph 3.4 of the report and noted that there were drop-in services within various areas of the County Borough and asked, if there was such a service in the Ogmore Valley. <u>RESOLVED:</u> (1) That Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employers Relations note the content of this update report. (2) That as the Assia Suite largely relies on grant funding in order to maintain the service, the Cabinet Committee felt that it was important going forward that some further 'funding' opportunities were explored through the Council's core budget and therefore, that Officers consider this as an action to pursue further.
Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

65. Corporate Equalities Update

Decision Made	The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager gave a report, to inform the Cabinet Committee of the progress made in implementing the council's equalities and inclusion commitments during the 2024/2025 period, as outlined in the Equalities Update attached as Appendix 1 to the report. She explained that the Equalities Update 2024–2025, highlighted steps taken across the organisation to
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CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS - WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2025

	promote equality and inclusion as outlined in the Strategic Equality action plan. Key developments regarding this, were outlined in paragraph 3.1 of the report. From the list of these, a member was particularly pleased to see the launch of new Staff Network Forums including the Disability, LGBTQ+, Menopause and Menstruation Groups, and the Welsh Language Staff Forum. He felt that Cabinet representation on these forums as well as officers, would provide an added benefit to them. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That the Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employee Relations noted this internal update summarising progress to date against the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2024–2028.
Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

66. Signing of the Disability Employment Charter and Anti-Racism Charter

Decision Made	This report presented by the Group Manager – Communications and Public Affairs, sought approval for the signing of the Disability Employment Charter and the Anti-Racism Charter. These commitments formed part of the Council’s ongoing equalities agenda and align with its strategic goals, to support fair and inclusive employment practices. Each of the two Charters attached at Appendices 1 and 2 of the report respectively, provided a framework for further action in these extremely important areas. The Council would then align its internal policies and practices with the principles set out in both Charters. The commitments included actions such as inclusive recruitment, supporting employee networks, removing workplace barriers, providing targeted support and training, and setting internal accountability measures. If approved, the Council will arrange a formal signing and associated communications to promote the commitment across the organisation and wider community. The Deputy Leader asked how the success (or otherwise) of the Charters intend being measured, in order to gauge their effectiveness over time. The Group Manager – Communications and Public Affairs confirmed that the Charters aligns with and
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CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS - WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2025

	builds upon similar work the Council already does and that work is reported in the Annual Strategic Equality Plan Action Plan. Similar feedback would also be included in the Action Plan with regards to the Disability Employment and Anti-Racism Charters. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That Members approved the signing of the Disability Employment Charter and the Anti-Racism Charter and welcomed feedback on the progress of both Charters at an appropriate Committee meeting date in the future.
Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

67. Annual Welsh Standards Review

Decision Made	The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager presented a report, in order to inform Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employee Relations of the content and approach taken with the council's Welsh Language Standards, and how we continue to ensure we comply with the Welsh Language Standards for the financial year 2024/2025. The Council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2024/2025 covered the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 and this would be published on the website by 30 June 2025. The report was attached at Appendix 1 to the cover report. The report also outlines how the Council had complied with the standards during the period and also documented any progress and new compliance developments. As part of the annual report, there was a duty to report specifically on the information as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of the report. Members asked the following questions and/or made the undermentioned comments in relation to the report:- • How is the Council ensuring compliance with all 171 Welsh language Standards across departments and do we have robust sufficient enough mechanisms in place monitor these to ensure that we are fully compliant; • Are we taking steps to look to increase the number of welsh speaking, in order to detail key
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CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS - WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2025

	services bi-lingually, especially in important service delivery areas, for example, customer and other frontline services; • What efforts are being made to recruit a Welsh Language Officer and how long does it take currently, to provide any response to any queries or information requested from customers in welsh (as well as english); • In relation to paragraph 3.3 of the report, what Council documentation, correspondence and other publicity type material is mandatory in terms of making this available bi-lingually (as opposed to that which is not); • What lessons have been learnt arising from complaints and challenges relating to the Welsh Language Standards this year and how have these been used, to inform any improvement to services; • Is anything being pursued with regards to encouraging elected members to be trained to speak welsh? • The lead Officer assured members, that BCBC continues to incorporate Welsh language considerations into it's grant-awarding process by assessing the potential impact on the Welsh Language. To date there have not been any cases declined solely on the basis of negative welsh language impact, but each case is assessed carefully and efficiently, on its own merits. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employee Relations noted this report and the progress made during 2024/2025 in meeting its Welsh Language duties.
Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

68. Urgent Items

Decision Made	There were no urgent items
Date Decision Made	4 June 2025

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

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