



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**8<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2019**

**STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2019-2022**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN DISCUSSIONS  
WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER CLLR M WEBBER, DEPUTY  
LEADER**

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

This report provides information on the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2019-2022.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

2.1 The Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) is agreed and published.

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 The SEP has been developed so that the Council can set out how it aims to meet its commitment to equality and how it will meet its legal obligations contained within the Equality Act 2010.

3.2 A comprehensive engagement process took place to involve as many people as possible on the draft Equality Objectives and to give an opportunity for suggestions for additional or alternative objectives. An engagement report has been produced.

3.3 Feedback on the engagement process was very positive and as a result the Equality Objectives included in the SEP are:

- To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive.
- To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities.
- To promote safe communities.

- To reduce the gender pay gap.
  - To create an inclusive workforce.
- 3.4 The Gender Pay objective is a requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duties.
- 3.5 An action plan has been developed which will be embedded within the Council's Performance Management arrangements.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

The Public Sector Equality Duties in Wales came in to force on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2011 and included a requirement for public authorities to develop and publish a Strategic Equality Plan every four years.

#### **5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Equality Act 2010 introduced a general equality duty and a specific public sector equality duty that is applicable to Councils. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Single Equality Duty) requires public authorities to demonstrate that they have paid 'due regard' in their decision-making process to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- 5.2 The Council must have due regard to the impact of any proposals on those with a protected characteristic. The Council has a specific duty to publish information to demonstrate how it has paid due regard to the aims above as part of its decision-making. Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment screening exercise (and if necessary a full Equality Impact Assessment) would be evidence that the Council has considered its legal obligations in making the decision on the recommendations in this report.
- 5.3 The equality objectives provide a positive impact on all groups with protected characteristics. An Equality Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken. It was noted that the engagement exercise failed to effectively engage with residents who are black and minority ethnic

(BAME). This is particularly concerning as we are aware there are no support / advocacy groups in the borough representing the needs of BAME residents. As a result, actions within the equality objectives will ensure efforts are made to develop communication and engagement routes with BAME residents.

## **6 CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

An 8 week public consultation ran from 10 September to 2 November 2018. The consultation exercise involved a number of drop in events and targeted sessions. An online survey was created and placed on the Council's website and forwarded to relevant organisations representing protected groups. The full engagement report is available alongside the Strategic Equality Plan.

## **7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

## **8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

The SEP has been developed to meet legislation requirements contained in the Equality Act 2010.

## **9 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

The development of the Strategic Equality Plan contributes to the 5 ways of working within the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

## **10 CONCLUSION**

10.1 The Council's Annual Equality Report has been developed in line with legislative requirements and guidance produced by the Equality & Human Rights Commission.

10.2 The Annual Equality Report has to be published by 31 March 2019 in order to comply with legal requirements.



# Equality Objectives Engagement Report

January 2019



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of the engagement exercise held to identify the Council's equality objectives for 2019-2022. Within the Equality Act 2010 a public body must identify and set out its equality objectives in a Strategic Equality Plan. The public body must undertake engagement to identify the equality objectives.

- 1.1 Section 2 outlines some brief background.
- 1.2 Section 3 details the methodology.
- 1.3 Section 4 presents the results from the questionnaire and the respondents' profile.
- 1.4 Section 5 outlines the engagement process with managers.
- 1.5 Appendix 1 provides the full list of all responses.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### The Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is for the Council to adopt the following 3 equality objectives:

#### **Objective 1**

To better understand the needs of communities and our workforce and understand the barriers they face to thrive.

#### **Objective 2**

To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities and the workforce.

#### **Objective 3**

To promote safe communities and workplace.

- 2.2 In addition to the above objectives the Council has a duty to set a gender pay objective. This objective was not part of the public consultation as the existing gender pay objective contained within the current Strategic Equality Plan will be continued.

### Background

- 2.3 The Council is committed to providing equality of opportunity to its residents and employees. This engagement exercise supports the Council in meeting obligations to develop equality objectives which will

be published in its Strategic Equality Plan 2019-22 and meeting its duties included in the Public Sector Equality duties.

- 2.4 In developing the proposed objectives, a mapping exercise was undertaken of Council priorities contained in the Corporate Plan, Service Area Self Evaluations and Service Area Delivery Plans.
- 2.5 The principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 have been adopted in the development of the proposed equality objectives.
- 2.6 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) report 'Is Wales Fairer?' 2015 and 2018 have been key drivers in the development of the proposed equality objectives.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 A public engagement exercise ran for 8 weeks, from the 10 September 2018 to the 2 November 2018.
- 3.2 The aim of the engagement exercise was to gather the views on the proposed objectives but also give an opportunity for respondents to:
  - Indicate the extent they agreed with the proposed equality objectives.
  - Have an opportunity to provide their ideas on what the Council should do to achieve each objective.
  - Invite ideas for different equality objectives.
- 3.3 The following methods were used to consult with stakeholders;
  - An online questionnaire:
    - Forwarded to Council employees via a global email
    - Forwarded to members of staff networks
    - Available to the public on the Council's website
    - Forwarded to all Headteachers of RCT schools
    - Forwarded to all RCT Councillors
    - Forwarded to Members of the Citizens Panel
    - Forwarded to RCT Carers Project.

The questionnaire is available [here](#). The questionnaire was also available in Welsh and Easy Read.

- 3 public drop in engagement sessions were held at Aberdare, Pontypridd and Treorchy Libraries.
- Targeted face to face engagement sessions were held with:

- Pontypridd Deaf Club – 2 BSL interpreters were available at this session
  - Proud Valleys
  - Treforest Day Centre
  - Older People’s Advisory Group
  - Young People’s Group at Treorchy Library
  - Project Unity
  - Disability Forum.
- An email including the questionnaire was sent to organisations representing all protected characteristics including:

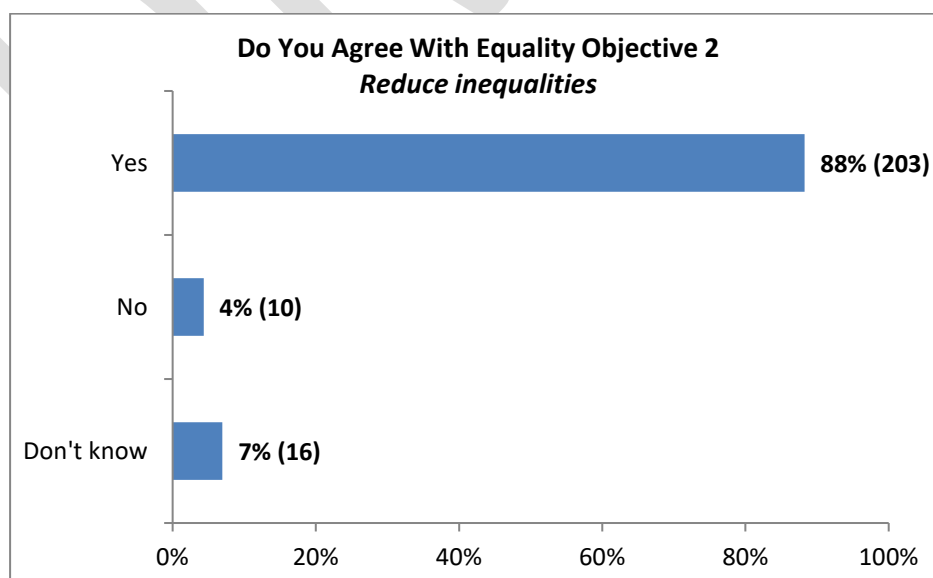
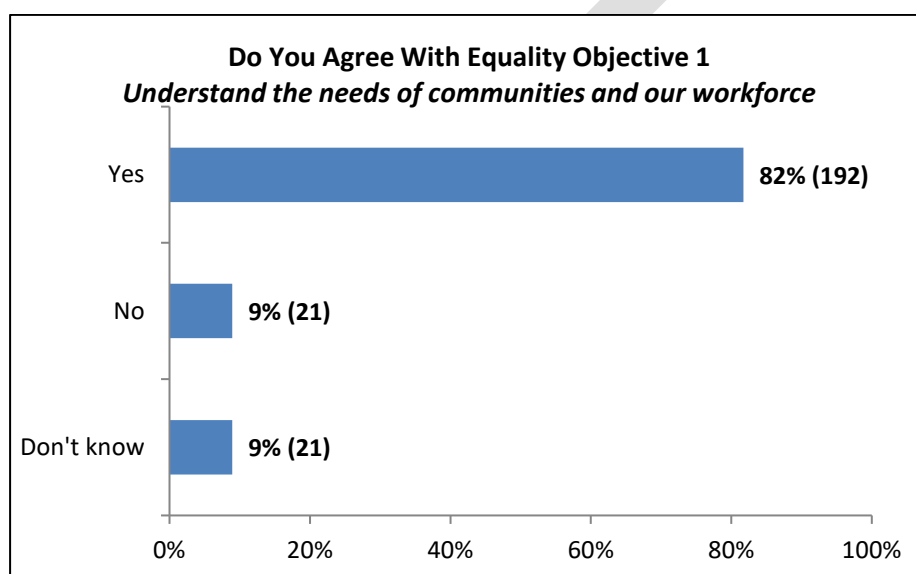
<b>Age</b>	<b>Disability</b>	<b>Gender Reassignment</b>
-RCT Youth Forum -Older Peoples Advisory Group	-Disability Wales -Accessible Wales -People First -RNIB	-Transform Cymru
<b>Race</b>	<b>Religion</b>	<b>Sex</b>
-Show Racism the Red Card -Diverse Cymru -Race Council Cymru -Race Equality First	-The Islamic Centre, Aberdare -St Catherine’s Church, Pontypridd -The Church in Wales -Shree Swaminarayan, Cardiff -Cymru Institute for Contemporary Christianity	-Women’s Aid RCT -Men in Sheds -Women’s Equality Network -Chwarae Teg
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>		
-Stonewall Cymru -Umbrella Cymru		

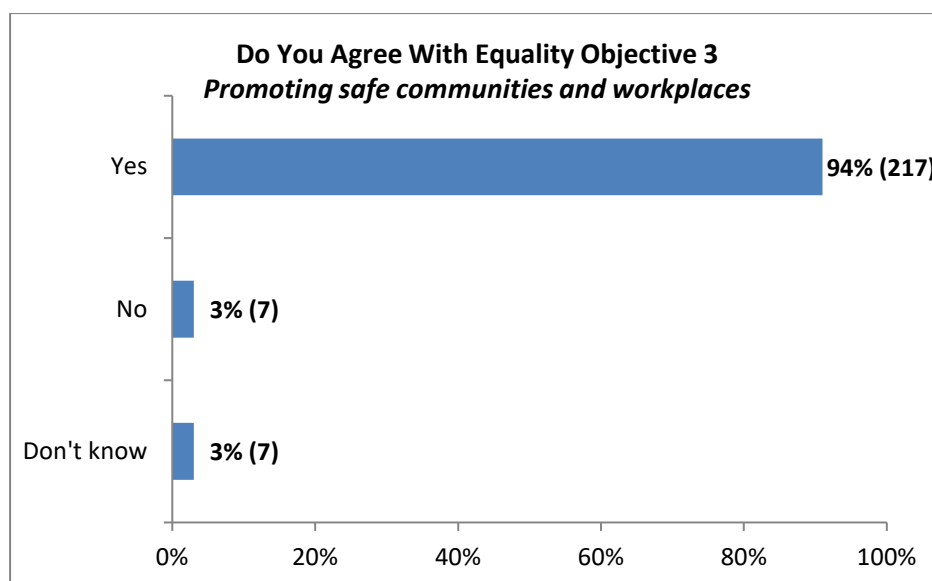
- An email and questionnaire was sent to Interlink for distribution to third sector organisations.
  - An email and questionnaire was sent to collaborative partners including the Cwm Taf Community Cohesion Group, Trade Unions, Coleg Y Cymoedd, the University of South Wales and the Citizens Advice Bureau.
  - Posters were used to advertise the events.
  - Promotion through the Council’s social media sites.
  - 240 questionnaires were returned.
- A dedicated email address ([equality@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rctcbc.gov.uk)) and freepost address for any postal correspondence.



## 4 Questionnaire Results

- 4.1 240 responses were received to the survey, however not all respondents completed all questions.
- 4.2 Respondents were asked the extent they agreed or disagreed with each equality objective.
- 4.3 For all 3 objectives, the responses were overwhelmingly in support of the objectives, with Objective 3 'to promote safe communities and workplaces' being the most supported.



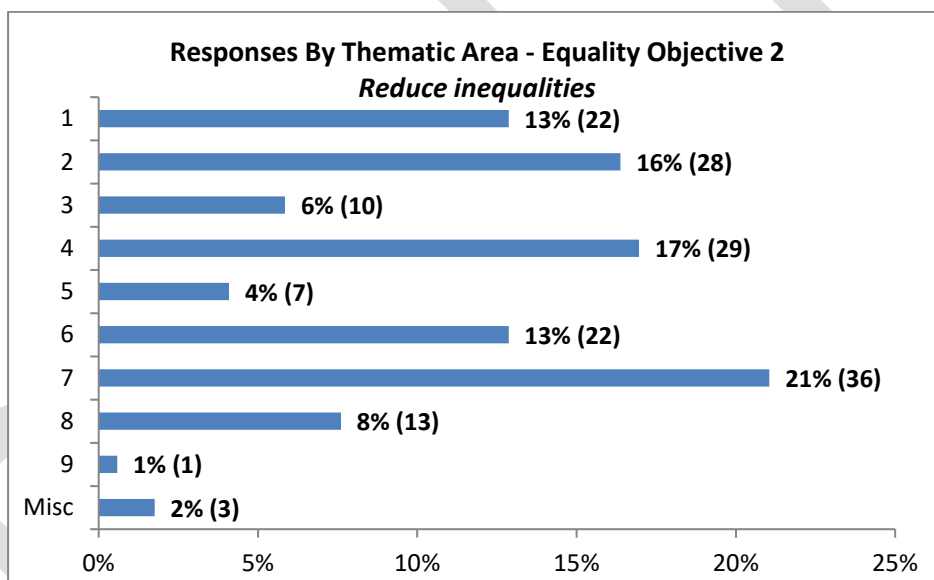
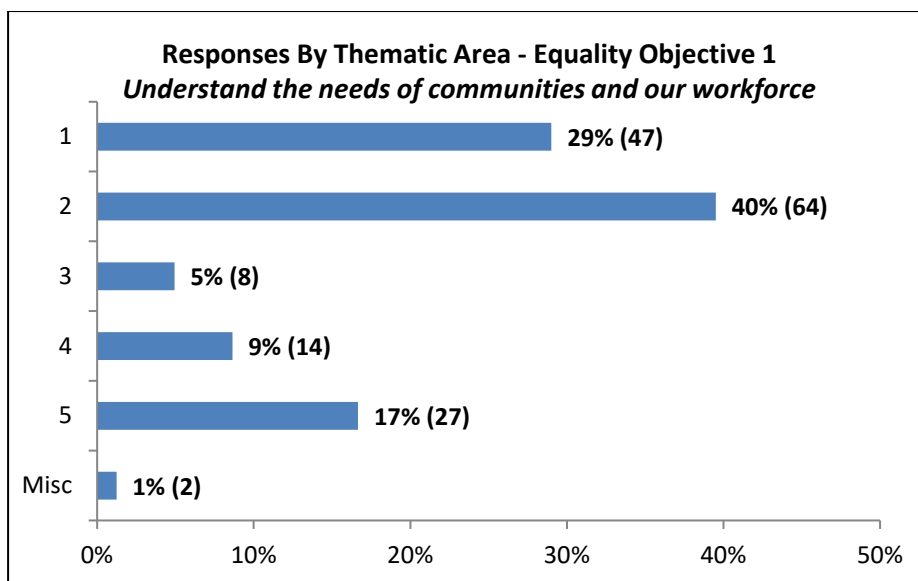


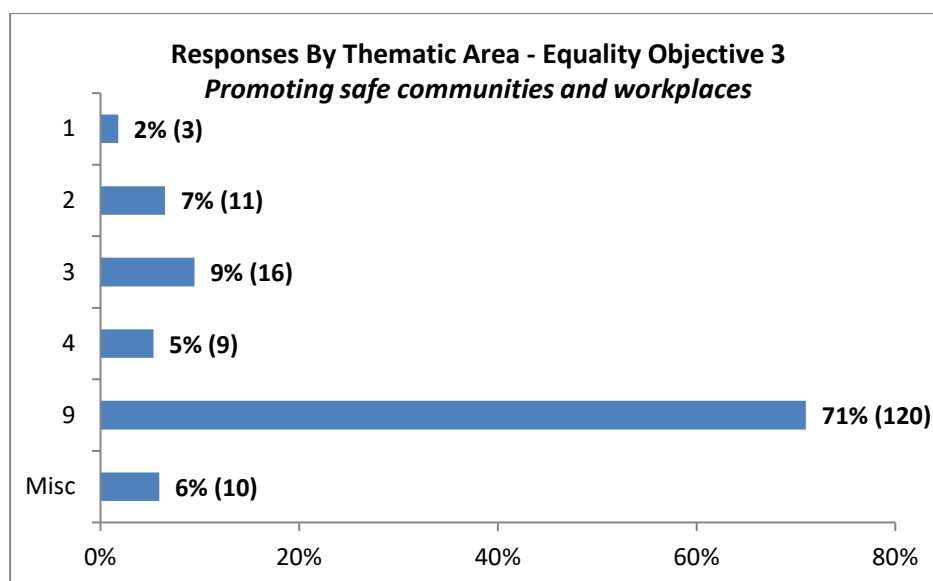
4.4 Respondents were also asked to provide ideas on what the Council should do to achieve the objectives. Respondents provided considerable detail about what the equality objective should achieve and cover. These comments have been used to further develop the actions contained within each equality objective and have aided discussions with service managers.

Respondent comments have been summarised into the following 9 thematic areas.

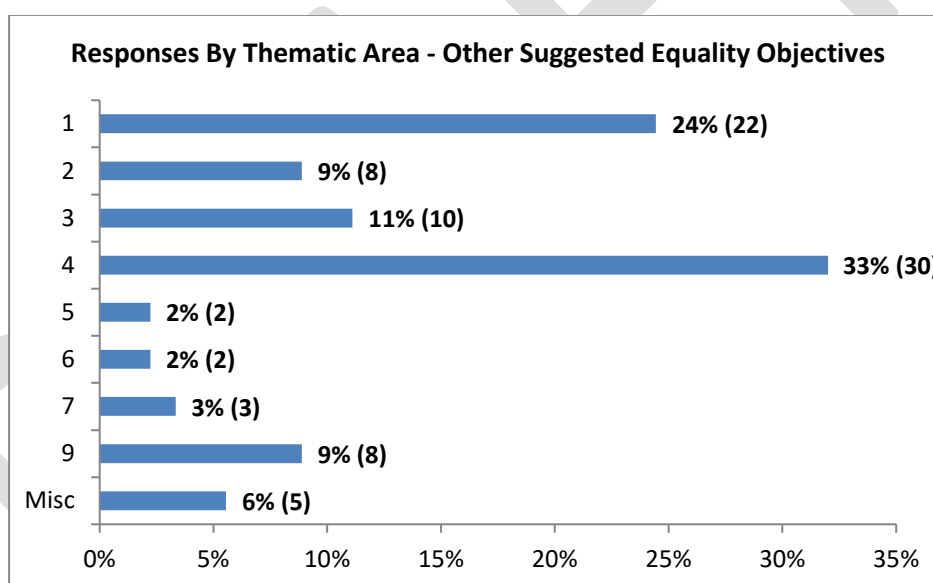
1	Access to services and facilities
2	Engagement, information and awareness
3	Training, support and processes
4	Inequalities and recognising diversity
5	Equality Monitoring
6	Housing
7	Employment
8	Poverty
9	Bullying, hate crime and sexual harassment

4.5 The graph below indicates the thematic responses to each of the objectives.





4.6 Respondents were also invited to give suggestions for additional equality objectives. Again these have been summarised into the 9 thematic areas.



4.7 The individual comments for each objective and the additional suggestions are shown in Appendix 1. On analysis, the additional suggestions can form part of the proposed objectives.

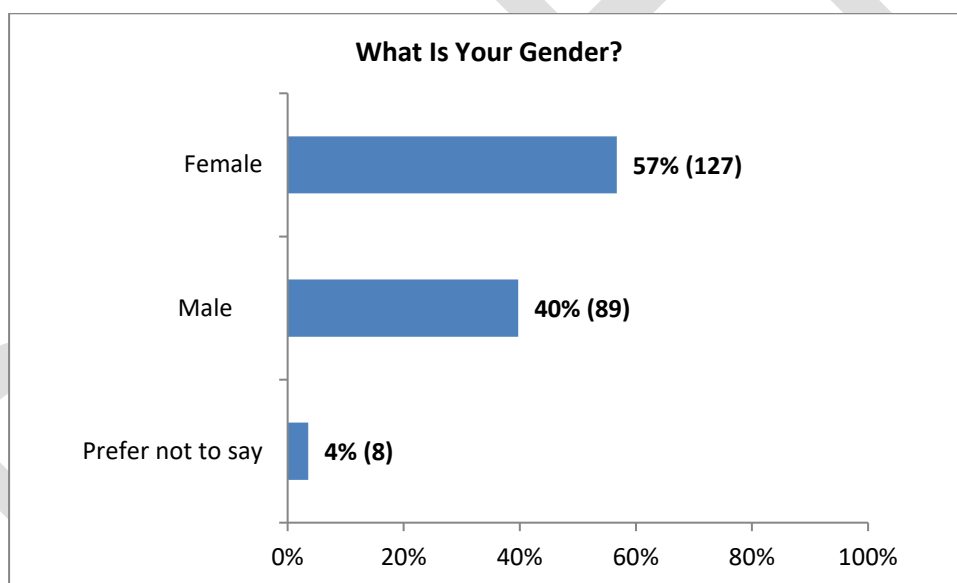
4.8 In summary the information we learned from the engagement responses was:

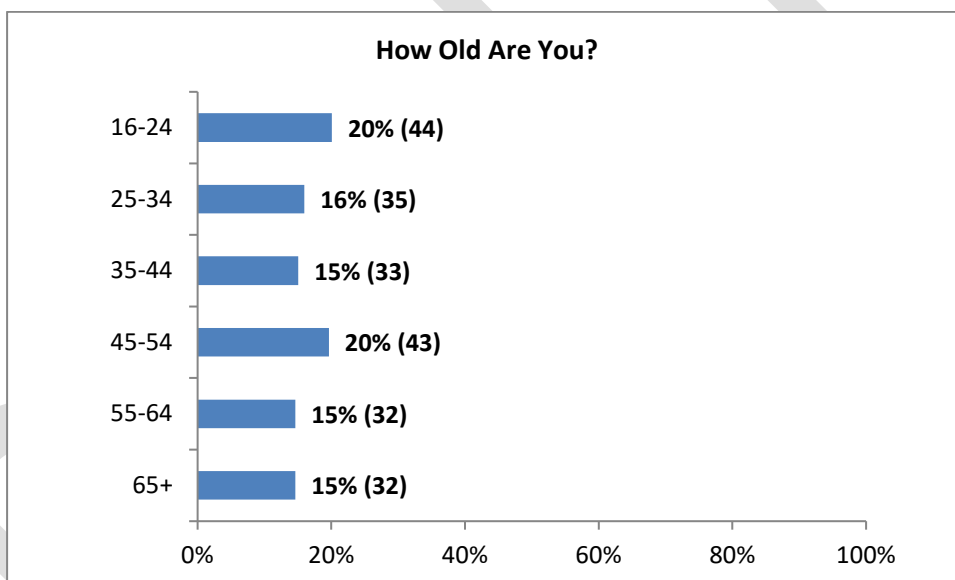
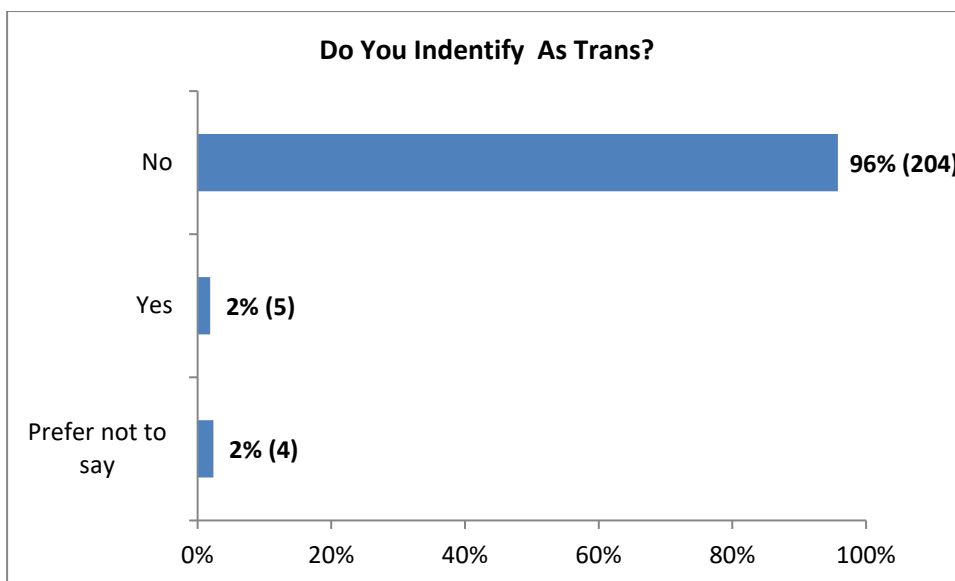
- People want the Council services and buildings to be more accessible and recognise that digital options are not suitable for everyone.
- Communities want to be involved more and want us to work closely with community representatives.

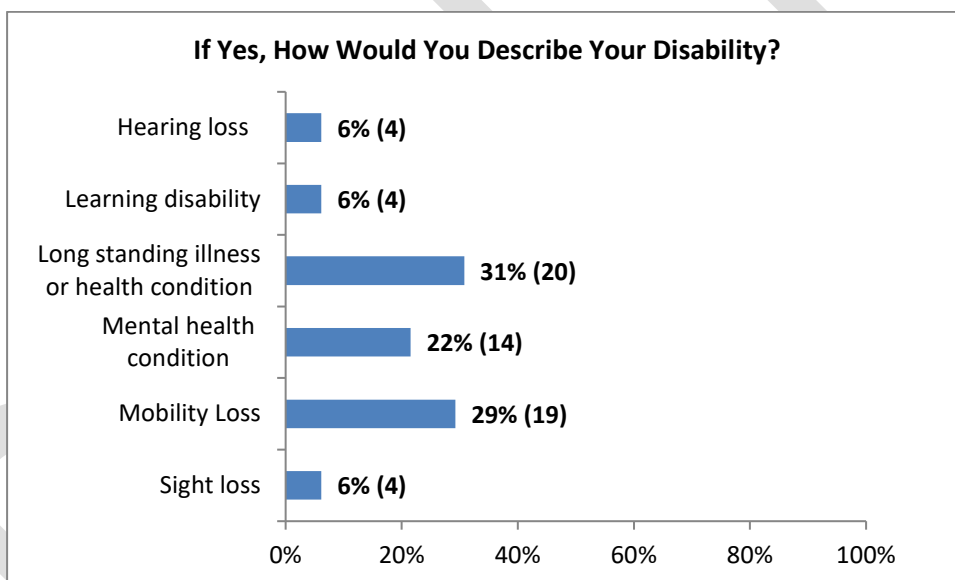
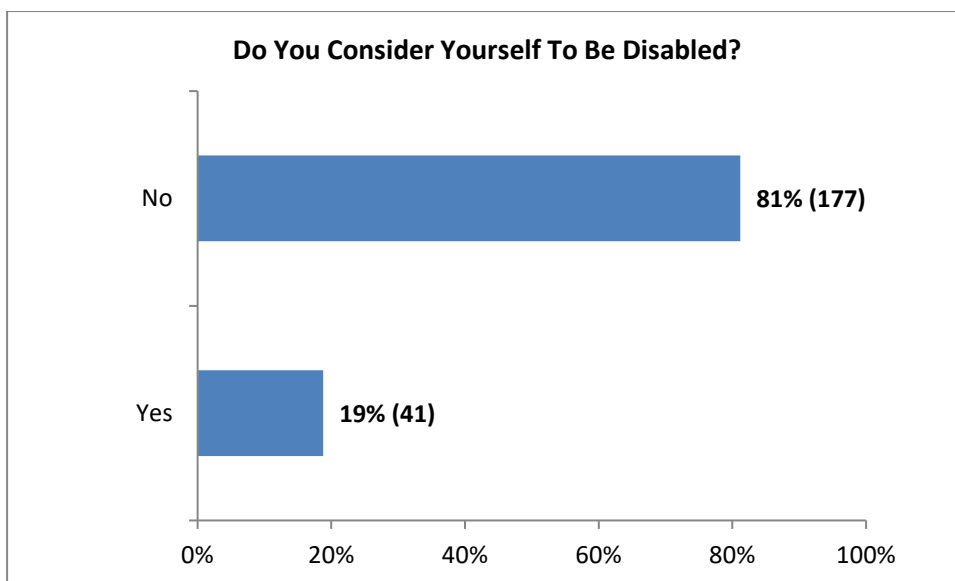
- Mostly people are happy with equality monitoring questions being asked but more thought needs to be given about how they will be used.
- People want to see and hear more about equality and diversity topics.
- Council employees should have equality and diversity training.
- Community spaces and towns should be more accessible.
- Young people want opportunities to be heard.
- People want employment opportunities.
- There need to be a reduction in the stigma around free school meals.
- People want us to work more closely with schools on anti-bullying initiatives.
- The Councils should raise more awareness about reporting bullying, harassment and hate crime.

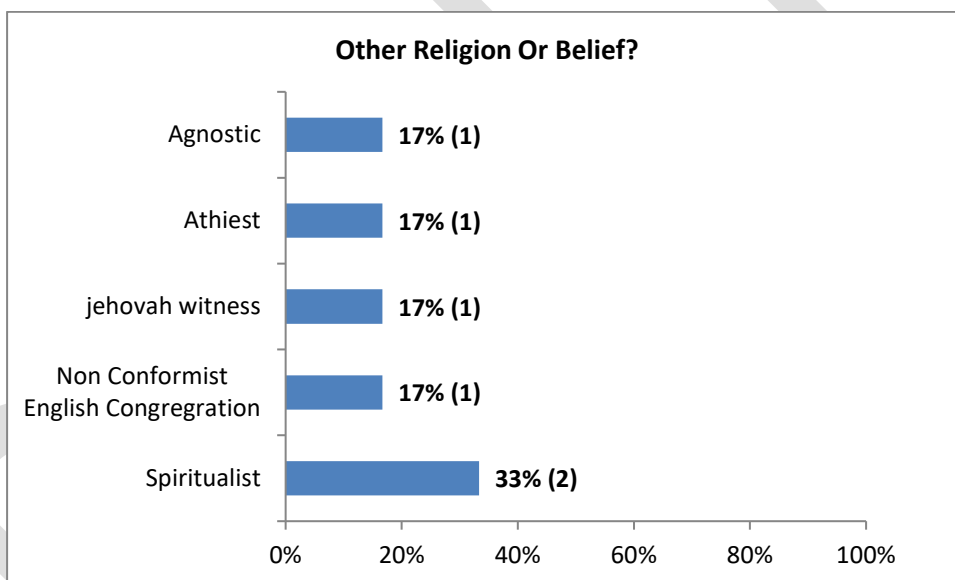
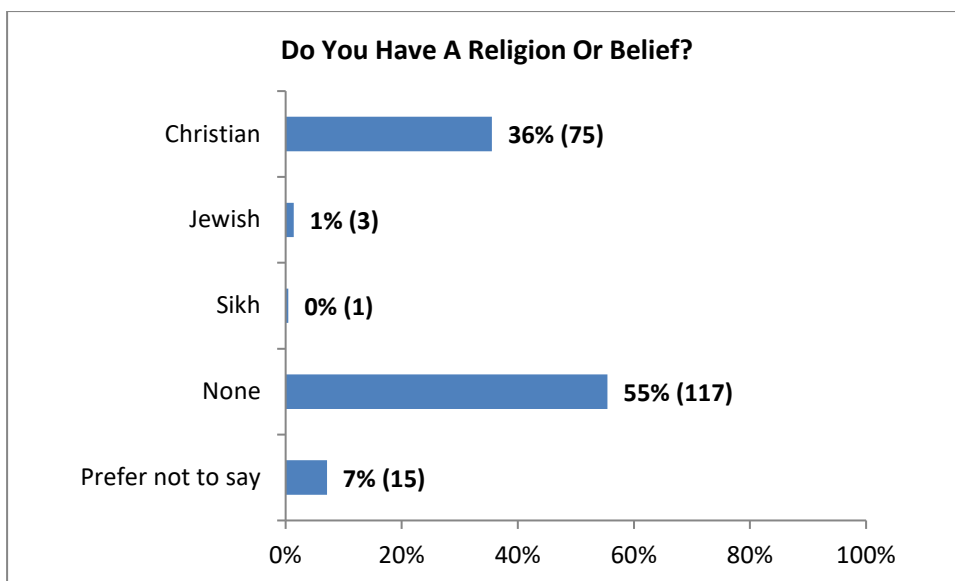
**Respondent Profile**

4.8 The tables below show the profile of respondents by protected characteristic.

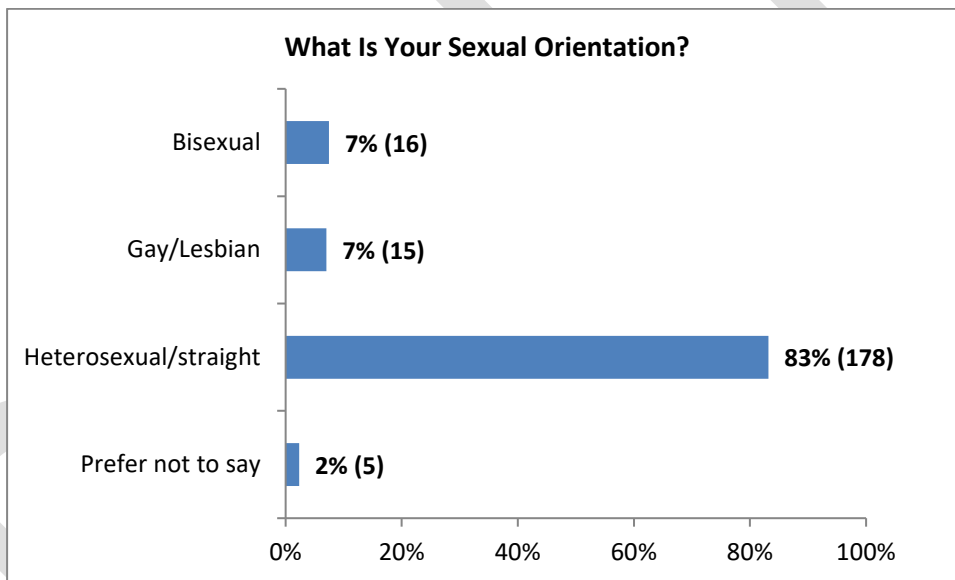
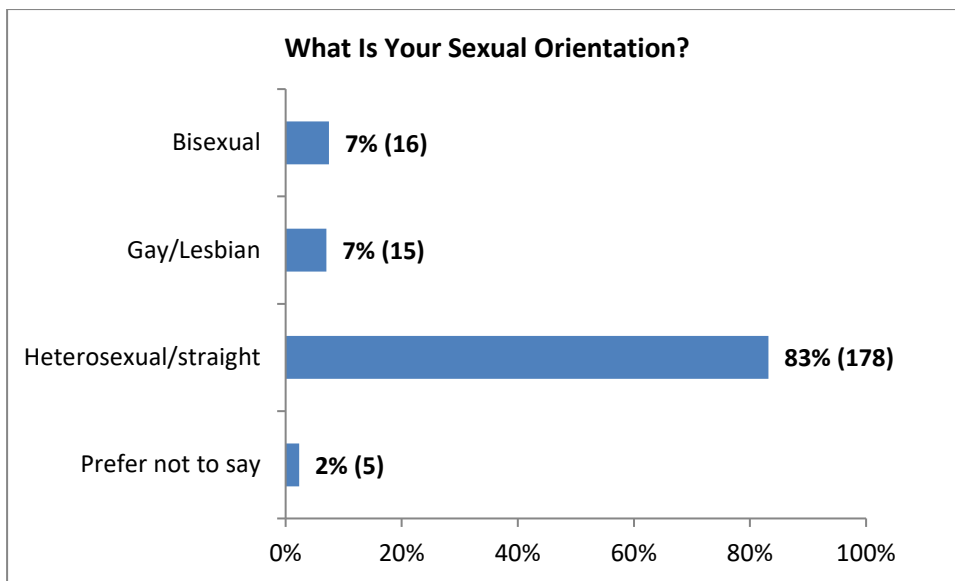


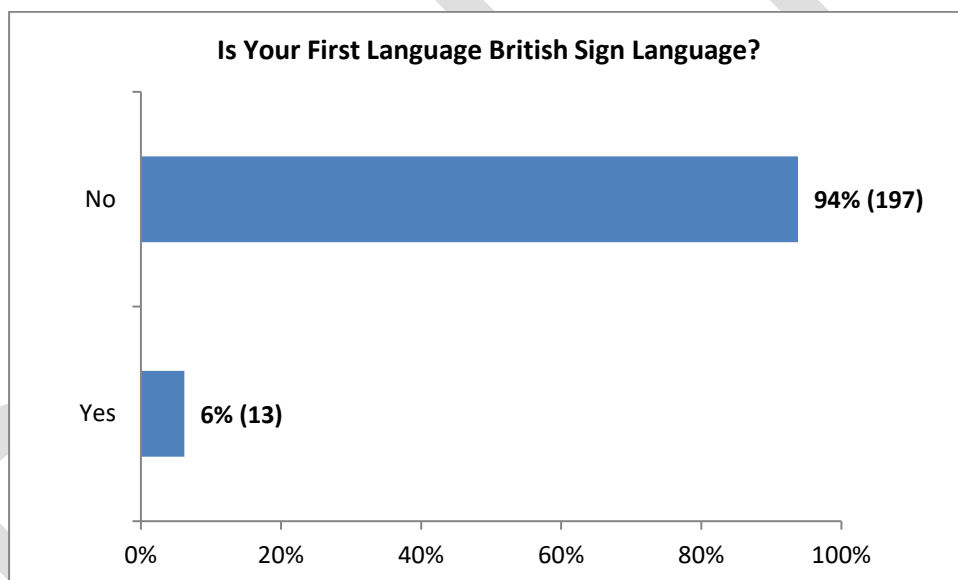
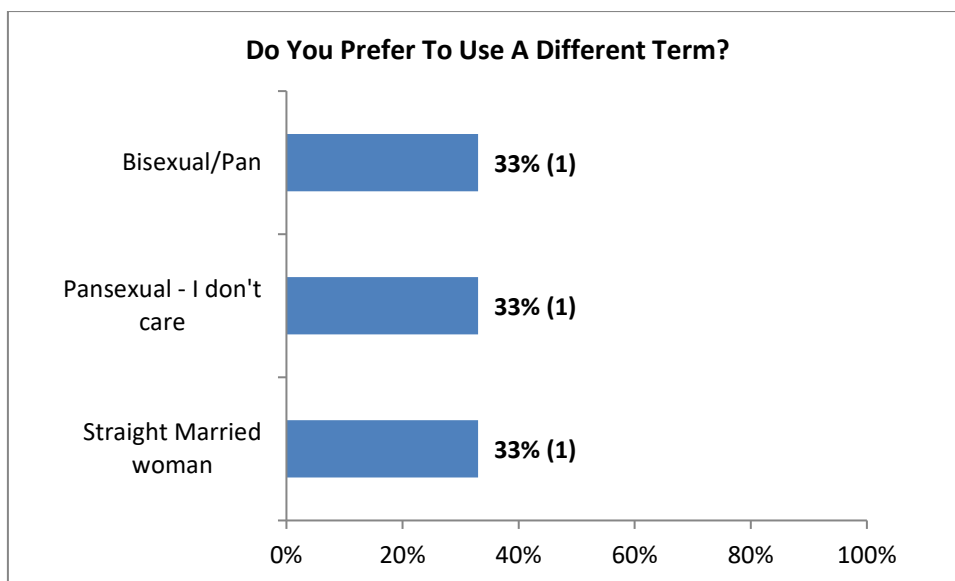


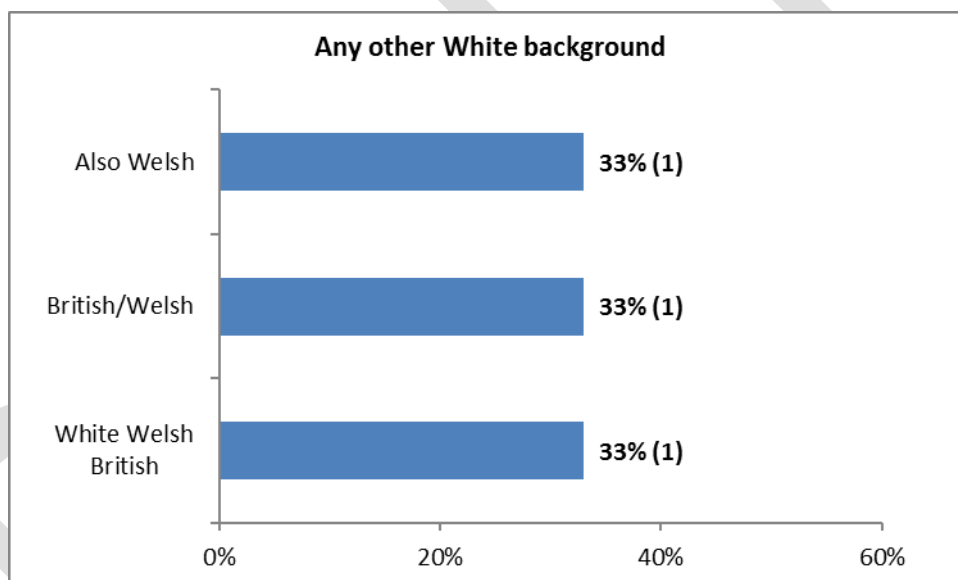
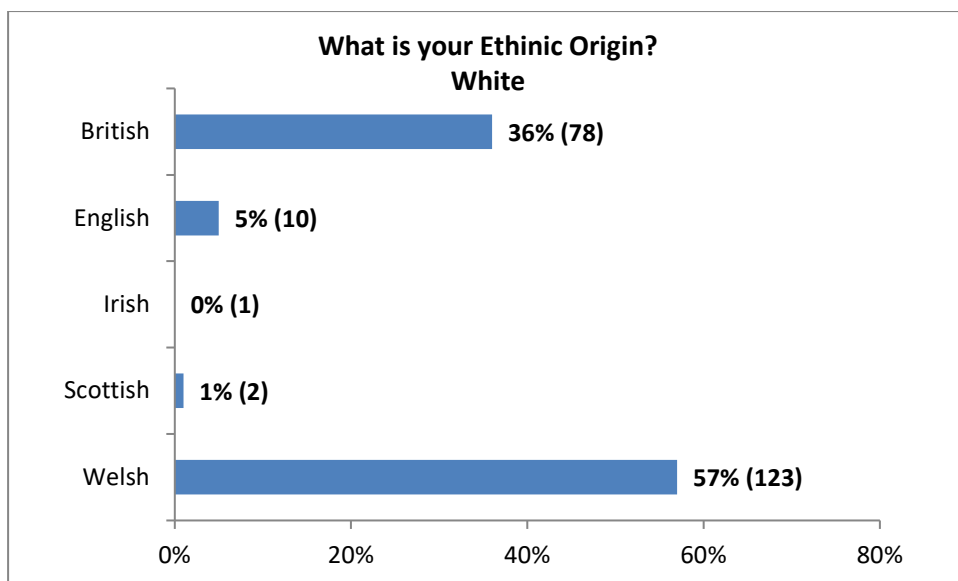


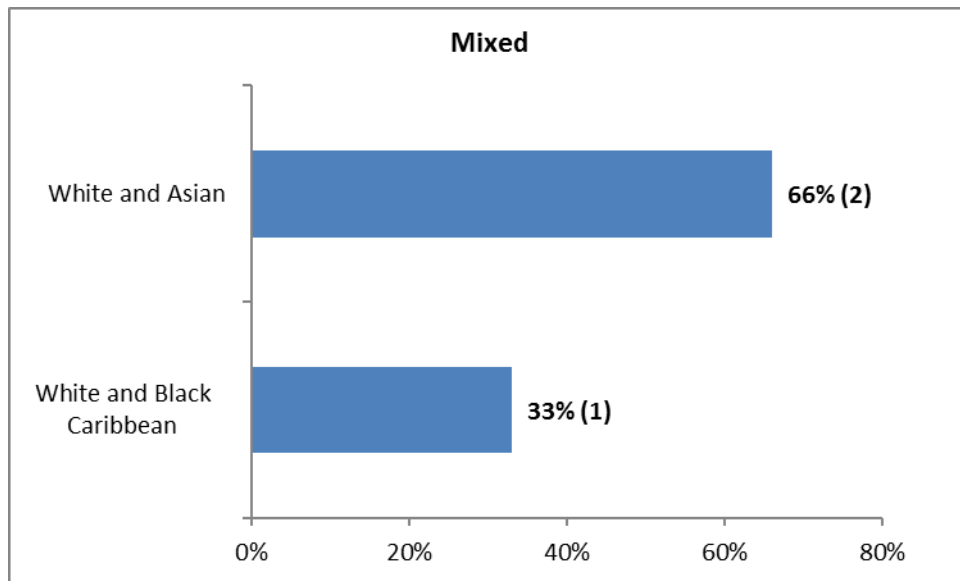




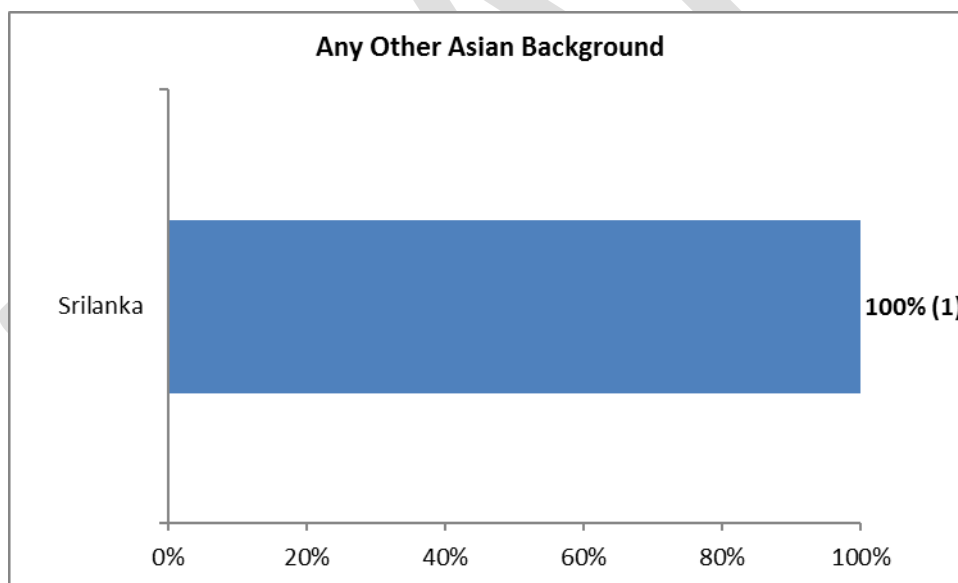
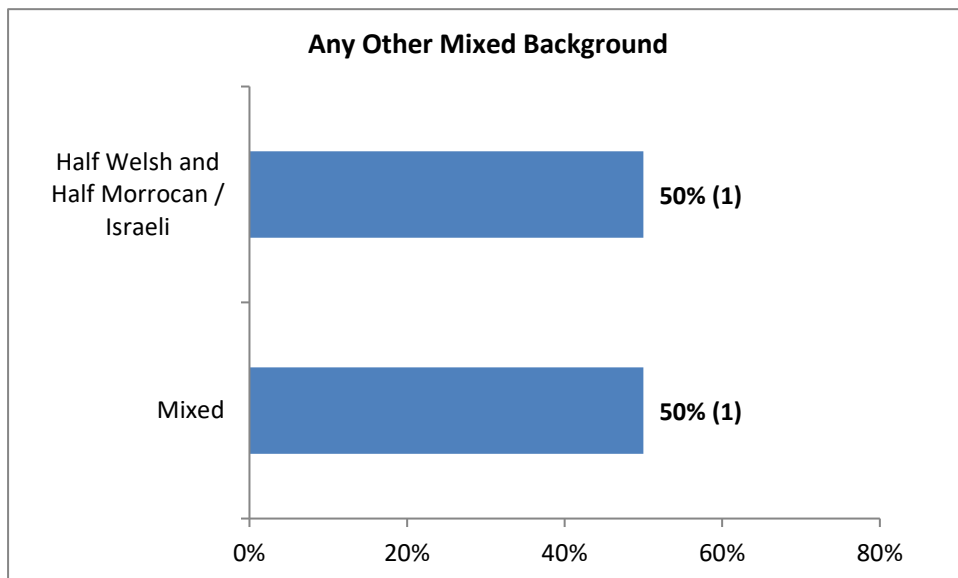


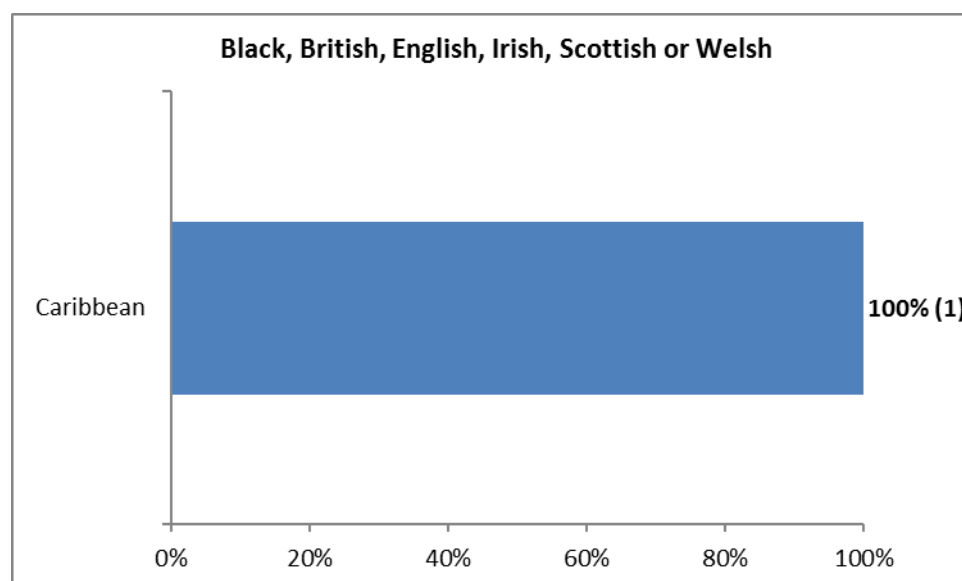






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- 4.9 Whilst overall the responses reflect the diversity of the community in Rhondda Cynon Taf it is apparent that diversity is not reflected within ethnic origin. The majority of respondents were White Welsh or White British. It is an area of concern that we have been unable to effectively engage with people from ethnic minorities and this will be reflected in the equality objectives.

## 5 Engagement with Service Managers

- 5.1 Prior to meeting with service managers a mapping exercise was undertaken on Service Area Delivery Plans and Self Service Evaluation to identify potential gaps in delivery which related to the EHRC 'Is Wales Fairer? 2015 challenges.
- 5.2 Meetings have been held since October 2018 with service managers across the Council to explore the proposed equality objectives and actions they could undertake.

## 6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The findings of the engagement report will inform the ongoing development of the equality objectives which will be outlined in the Strategic Equality Plan 2019-2022.

## Appendix 1

### Proposed Equality Objective 1

To better understand the needs of communities and our workforce and understand the barriers they face to thrive.

#### **Theme 1 – Access to services and facilities**

A public campaign to find out whether people have ever had issues accessing services provided by the Council because of their ethnicity, disability, gender and/or sexual orientation and what could have been done differently to have enabled them to receive the service.
Access to services difficult to communicate with council. Needs to have awareness for deaf people.
All council premises should have disabled parking arrangements and disabled toilets available.
Allow people to take up services from personal contact with authorities other than via the internet particularly the elderly
Always room for improvement. Rely on family for lifts can never get a taxi because they are tied up on school contracts.
Bus journey to long and difficult as I have 2 walking sticks
Communication with the council is bad so puts off reporting issues as hard for deaf people to contact
Create safe spaces for the LGBTQ COMMUNITY
Elderly people find problems with toilets.
Email council but they never get back. Bank are bad - No Reply. Direct text number be good.
Ensure that all premises that the public are required to visit are accessible and have disabled parking and toilet facilities available. For example One For All Sardis House, Pontypridd. Limited parking and no visitor toilets.
Few problems travelling can be a problem not easy. Expensive
For autistic people, offer quiet hours where possible
-Front line staff need to be able to sign & communicate. -Sometimes staff don't respect our needs i.e writing down
Further online facilities and access
Have an outreach post in local venues which are on a bus / train route. This could be monthly. The one for all centres were too strict and formal. Have a drop in for queries.
Have to wait on the phone for ages in the council. It costs me money.
Hospital no one qualified to do home dialysis. Public transport is difficult to get back and fro
If people are facing barriers to services they need to know who to contact, this information is not well shared with people.
Invite people to register their preference with you with regards to services provided in e.g. Other languages or how they are addressed

It is recognised that more could be done to identify people who face barriers to accessing our offices and buildings. It is not obvious that not being accessible will result in people not accessing the services in the first place. All council premises should be accessible.
Lights not always working where I live the parade Pontypridd it's dark river side
Make sure it's easy to access.
More access for young people to services in small villages
Needs awareness that letters sent out not easy to understand.
No internet. I ring. Depending who you want to speak to the service can differ
Not all buildings got ramps
Not assume everyone has access to a computer / Internet. My husband has NEVER used a computer or smartphone and has no wish to.
Not easily accessible, have to ask for interpreter
Not enough toilets in the area for older people.
Offer more support such as sign language interpreters or text talk service
Poorer people have older phones and can't select the options that call centres have. We should make sure that there is a default if there is no button pressed.
Promote equality though homes/ by post
Public toilets for those with illnesses. Needs to be more toilets in RCT buildings and it needs to be accessible.
Recognise the full impacts of poverty in a meaningful way - realise that all citizens are assets and your current systems may be a barrier not a help
Relay service then to use it NGT. - The council didn't respond to do. Next Generation Technology.
Relies on wife to interpret. Wouldn't know how to get in touch with the council.
Set up a forum of people to regularly evaluate council premises with a points system similar to that of a hygiene rating.
Simple sign at 1st point at contact
Staff records of when public or staff struggle to manage - eg Pontypridd Register Office should record the daily struggle of disabled people to use the front door and the embarrassment caused by having to ask for help.
The trees need to be cut. Leaves can cause falls.
Train have stopped renewing toilets. Affects independence not able travel.
Walk in clinics so people can talk in confidence about the issues they face.
Website - More icons/symbols. No easy read provision.
wheel chair accessible buildings (Bronwydd House, main block does not have wheelchair ramps for example)
When accessing services in rct
Work with other agencies, for example care, 'meals on wheels' to give to people who are house bound.

## Theme 2 – Engagement, information and awareness

Annual surveys with rewards for those taking part.
Approach local councillors to get them involved
Ask service users to answer anonymous questions.



be more proactive in promoting why we use equality and diversity monitoring forms and how we process the information
Change attitudes
Come down to grass roots levels
Communication issues are a big thing.
community / workforce engagement
Could ask for the information on line .
Could use survey questions. But if so ensure questions about gender are done in inclusive way. Eg always offer more than two genders if presented in a list (as well as have a free text box to type your own). See guidance - <a href="https://www.hrc.org/resources/collecting-transgender-inclusive-gender-data-in-workplace-and-other-surveys">https://www.hrc.org/resources/collecting-transgender-inclusive-gender-data-in-workplace-and-other-surveys</a>
Draw service users in as advisers to the project?
Educate the public on what is happening and how it is affecting some people and what can be done to help
Encourage a safe space for staff to create groups e.g. black members group, if they wish.
Give everyone the opportunity to report their views regardless of their circumstances
Go into communities and do more work with certain groups. Churches, youth groups, social and community groups.
Good questions to ask for all communities
Hold meetings in the community for public.
I think to encourage open conversation about the issues. Many people feel a little intimidated and a little in fear of saying the wrong things which can be simply overcome by people understanding the challenges more.
I would add that such information gathered should be "none identifying" to individuals (i.e. gather in confidence). Whilst I understand the important of gathering diversity information, it must be clear that under equality that people are not singled out.
If you need to identify specific issues or barriers that may prevent people accessing your services or engaging with the Council then ask them what the barriers are not their ethnicity etc.
Information can be shared through the council in the post so people fill it in but needs to explain the reason we gather this information.
It may be worth asking for this information anonymously - so linked only to the area they live in as some people may not want to disclose this information, or ask first if they are happy to be asked about this.
Job centres can be frustrating, no cooperation at all. Found it difficult to get back into work. Doesn't help at all.
Know the make-up of your communities and make sure the voices are represented. Where are the gaps between the communities and your workforce make up, be aware of these barriers and have open conversations about how to mitigate circumstances and 'Foster good relations'
Listen to people's views and try and act on it

Long term objective to improve that neighbourhood. Promote neighbourhood precipitation. And result is that they might take up pride up in the neighbourhood and 'police' themselves.
Look into different goals, shops and communities to find out what diversities people have.
More advertising, ie. Inform, Council's website, posters around Council office buildings
More community groups in RCT
More ground work needed i.e 'face to face' contact with the public to find out what services they use, how effective they think they are and if not, why not? What do they want? How easy is it to access them?
More information on services in libraries. Putting up information on where people go.
More leaflets through post and other methods.
More publicity to make people aware that this is available
Open day to enough get people to contact the Council.
Polls, surveys and questionnaires via post, internet, targeting areas e.g Library
Poster of Maureen Webber for Deaf Club with accessible contact details + photo.
Practice what you preach.
Proactively offer call-backs or home visits via social media, council website in some service areas for people who face mental or physical health issues which prevent them from attending offices and buildings
Promote diversity
Promote equality using social media
Provide funding to celebrate diversity in the community
Public meetings in the community for people to fill in the forms and to get a better understanding of the diversity and set up of our areas.
Publish the stats in an informative and accessible way so that people can see what you do with the information and highlight how you're using the info to ensure that the services you provide are inclusive and take account of everyone equally.
Questionnaires and going to meet people face to face to gather information so you know who they are.
Raising awareness on stigma around filling equality questions in on job applications etc
Routinely ask what support individuals require in order to engage via other sources
Rubbish being dumped around homes. Complained a few times. Problems starting again. Sometimes I get a response. Ongoing issue.
Set up a voluntary equalities panel that help steer the council and remind it of it's duties according to the equality act 2010.
Set up areas like coffee bars where groups can go and you can capture who is attending.
Speak directly to those already identified as vulnerable people regarding how best they would like to access services

Speak to individuals who are affected.
Spend money on educating (especially children) about the diversity in our community
Suggestions and feedback on services should come from these specific communities.
Talk to children in schools about their ideas
Talk to people and pupils at school about the need to know information and give knowledge about certain topics e.g mental health
Talk to the community, work harder to try and understand the people around the community.
Try to survey as many people in the borough about the barriers they face when trying to improve their lives.
Use community representatives to ensure that job adverts are seen by a wider range of people.
Want a neighbourhood representative to access the broader needs of the neighbourhood. Impact of building, work and cutting down of trees. Street parking and neighbourhood nuisances in general.
We need to speak to people at face value. Not assume that they are in a minority just because they are in a wheelchair, Trans or not white. A disabled person can be employed to answer a phone at a call centre where an abled bodied person may be deaf.
Work together to solve the problems
You need to know what their disability is to provide a service for them. Eg they can't read or write so any on line services are no good to them. A lot of people are embarrassed to say they can't read and right.

### **Theme 3 – Training, support and processes**

Council staff should learn sign language
Ensure Team Managers have the skills and knowledge to deal with issues surrounding this, maybe training on the Council's RCT Source
Give all employees Equality Act training.
Give all employees training on the effects of stereotyping, discrimination, victimisation etc.
Give support to people who can't get back into work.
Increased Equality training, particularly in areas precluding to awareness and sensitive surrounding all areas.
It is paramount for all staff to undertake active training on understanding diversity and equality and being able to apply this to their working roles.
Offer equality and diversity training not to just staff but the community. It's one of their rights to live as they wish but if they're not aware they have protected characteristics they can't demand them. 'You and your rights day.....

**Theme 4 – Inequalities and recognising diversity**

All govt agencies the same. My pay is based on performance. Not the same for council staff and govt staff. Performance is poor I pay taxes. Not allowed for an appointment. Have to wait until God knows. I'm losing pay. Leaving housing office in a worse situation than when I come in.
Assist people if they have difficulties getting to work e.g pool cars or a car pool scheme
Be more inclusive
Diversity SHOULD NOT be a tool used to divide people. Identity politics is absolute poison.
Ensure that older members of the workforce are given consideration
Equality means just that. NO group should be more equal than others.
Everyone is different. Sometimes we right people off
If working unable to get help or support for housing. I'm in a situation I'm going to lose a day's pay because housing officer couldn't wait for 5 mins. No support if you've got a job. No help organising an appointment. No help, no able to make an appointment. How do you manage if you a working. Cost 120 pound. I've come here for housing help and now I've cost me. If I was treated like this because I'm trans then it would all ok k off. Coz I'm in my 30s white and male nobody cares.
People have different needs. What might be important to you might not be important to your next door neighbour. Talk to each household individually. A lot people cannot get out and are not aware of what facilities are available. Applies to those who are disabled and equally to those who are working.
Reduce poverty by paying a living wage. I myself have to have 2 jobs to pay my gas bill and run a car. As I am a single person there is never any assistance available to me. I get a letter every year from the Inland Revenue telling me I am poor and that I qualify for tax credits. Amount of tax credit awarded? Zero.
Stop bullying by managers. If one person gets flexi in the department then all should have it. The case should be - you get flexible working unless the manager states a solid business case as to why NOT.
The council staff need training who gets to know how to use a relay service. - Preferred method is txt. - NGT is a last resort. Email ok but not good in an emergency.
Try to ensure this is about equality & not positive discrimination as i think there's a fine line to be drawn.

**Theme 5 – Equality monitoring information**

Any applications to ask the questions at the end.
Ask about History
Ask employees about their background and issues they face in terms of applying for work or promotions.
Could you add something into the census for people to fill in? Or the voting register?
Ensure people know the benefit of sharing the information about themselves
Ensure that disclosure continues to be an option and not mandatory
Forms you fill can be made mandatory and not optional but explain why you ask.

Give people the option to do it quietly or on their own privately.
I agree in part, when someone's disability or ability affects access to a service this should be addressed, I don't however see the relevance of someone's, assigned sex, sex identification, ethnicity or sexuality. Sometimes barriers are seen or created which do not exist.
I would suggest considering expanding the specific equality areas to specifically include the following: Age, Religious affiliation, Nationality of origin and Sub-Cultural association (the last one is often left of equality surveys but often experiences discrimination and persecution within society).
If someone fills in an online form or reports something, they could be asked afterwards to answer a few questions
Include an equalities monitoring form either at the start or at the closure of involvement with a Council service area. This would need to be an optional questionnaire for users to complete.
It's not about the information being asked it's the environment its being asked and knowing where that information is going.
Make sure the people answering the questions understand where the information is going and what it's needed for.
Monitor protected characteristics. Ensure people who declare a disability are followed up in employment even if they do not need reasonable adjustments for interview (I wasn't followed up).
Need to ensure the information is collected centrally and not continuously asked by different agencies or sectors in the council. This will put people off from completing.
Not ask people in schools their sexuality.
Not in schools.
Not pressuring people to do the survey
Promote equality questionnaires via competitions in order to attract more people to complete them (ie 3 months free Leisure for Life membership drawn at random from completed entries)
Questionnaires by mail
Send questionnaires
Use schools or workplaces to gather the information so people feel like that have to fill it in and see the importance of it.
With other service areas, such as the Welsh Language Team, undertake a Council-wide employee census every xx years to capture the vital information about the workforce and the changing nature of it over time. Even long term employees may answer differently today as to what they would have answered when they first started with the Council.
Work with schools and colleges and get families and pupils to fill in.
Remember that there is an objective to increase the use of Welsh in all areas. I don't understand why there is mention here about getting more information when people use council services. Is the objective to ask someone calling the contact center a number of questions about their gender, ethnicity etc? Why? What is the service to do with that data? Inclusive services should be offered to everyone - whatever the exact demographics of the audience who usually use it.

Raising the status of such things within our whole community is important if not relevant to the person using the service at the time.
--

**Misc.**

Make sure the infrastructure is there to deal with this.
--

Money is wasted high salaries. Are people really worth that? An old boy's network run things. Pensions different scheme no equality.
--

**Proposed Equality Objective 2**

To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities and the workforce.

**Theme 1 – Access to services and facilities**

Communication. Need to book interpreters. Not when you need appointment.
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Could book interpreters. Council use jargon in letters. Difficult to understand. These questions and objectives are too long to read.
---

I use a scooter. The pavements are not good the town centre in Pontypridd is a problem. I fell by Iceland. There's a small kerb and I didn't know it was there.
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Mental health _ barriers. Things can get in the way of trying to do this. Problems ringing trying to speak to someone. Lots of paperwork
--

More can be done in education. Teaching support allocated to disabled children should be used for that purpose and nothing else. Care plans should be understood by head teachers and this should be checked to ensure that this is so, Accessible schools is a must.
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More learning objectives, even if only in use of computers. Not all have access or want to deal with machines. Some of the older generation rely on "talking to a real person", may be their only contact. More frontline staff, calls can take an age to answer.
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More street ramps for the disabled.
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No one should be allowed to see each other or her each other and all communication must be via text through a intermediary to ensure its standardised?
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No support in Job Centre for deaf people. No additional support for CVs. Job hunt, internet - not able to get support they need. (In Porth)
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Not enough toilets in Pontypridd,
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Offering support for people to access services, for example adult education for single mums, but after child care offer.
--

Pavement can be lethal. More dropped kerbs
--

Pontypridd no good for wheelchair and scooter access.
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Possibly mobile vehicle for one step shop advice/queries
--

Problems with my daughter's bus pass she is disabled. One for all centre not sorted it. I've had to made trips to sort it, always form filling. Always battling for her entitlements. Always have.
--

Promote good opportunities for employment to a diverse groups - extend reach
--



Sometimes problems access school. I email sometimes I need to ask a friend to contact. If my daughter is ill, I need to email school. If daughter is ill, they have to text not school contact me. Not able to text school.
Support for young people outside of school
Support with completion of application forms
Timing of services/courses that are appropriate for people to access.
Working to address the barriers to transport especially for young people to access services, education and employment.

## Theme 2 – Engagement, information and awareness

Able to attend PACT meeting. Good support for older people.
Again speak to individuals
Better link up with schools and community
Better publicity to make people aware of what is on offer and where they can obtain more information.
Closer links between families and youth workers / organisations
Education dept. should work with the public, outside of schools e.g in libraries, cafes, museums, places people visit – shops
Encourage young people to bring ideas forward to the council.
Encourage youngsters to engage with these measures
Engage with mental health services and bring them on board as a partner to achieve diverse housing and support. Evidence would suggest there is a need for more community care around mental health.
Giving more knowledge To professionals, need more multi-agency and promoting it in the council.
Importance of educating school pupils and families
Increasing awareness and challenging fear and lack of understanding.
Knowledge, some people are unsure of what is available or what's available for them the access and what they are entitled to access.
Leaflets or call and chat to certain group and could have community groups set up in public areas to discuss barriers to services and speak to councillors of the ward to help this.
Maybe asking the parents and young people what would benefit them. Making it easier to access the support.
More support for those educational issues
Organise a fun and educational workshop for young people with lots of advice
Pay attention to the already existing strategies. I have had some experience in my employment that this isn't always the case.
Share information through inductions and information packs were possible. To give knowledge on services provided.
Start at the root cause - look at parents, environment factors. How are parents being helped/challenged to positively change their approach/environment/work ethic
Talk to employers try and get them on board.
Talk to them face to face.

There is very little in way of youth voluntary activities such as Prince Trust Volunteers that runs through RCT. There are large gangs of youth who hang around on the streets for lack of any appealing activities to the youth that would also help them develop, leading to a culture that does not promote the individuals to strive to advance themselves. More can be done to engage the youth and provide them with engaging activities and past times that will benefit them.

To embed such strategies across all Council service areas' business plans and subsequently in their operational tasks. For example, if each service area was encouraging the uptake of free school meals, there may be more incentive for families to do so, rather than only hearing it from Education services where relationships may not be the most positive to begin with.

Work with Citizens Advice to ensure that services available for residents are fit for purpose

Work with third sector

**Theme 3 – Training, support and processes**

Better procedures in place regarding staff reporting neglect of a pupil

Better training for teachers

Councillors - awareness of contacting an interpreter. How to contact a councillor.

Increase Pastoral support and raise awareness amongst pupils

More deaf awareness

More multi agency working to support families and young people.

Provide awareness training in council around the "Protected categories" under Equalities Act.

Work closer with third sector and charity organisations to gather this information needed.

Workshops or training experience to young people to access to gain the experience needed.

**Theme 4 – Inequalities and recognising diversity**

Adults with learning disabilities are often sent to day centre when they are ill and they should have stayed at home. Adults with learning disabilities want more opportunities for work or volunteering for example in older people's homes or in shops. They never have the opportunities to discuss this with anyone.

Adults with learning disabilities in supporting living have all activities planned. They can't make an ad hoc decision e.g. to go to the cinema. Everything has to be planned in around staff. Also adults with learning disabilities are not involved in the interviews for the staff that are appointed to their homes - they have no say. Adults with learning disabilities miss out on social activities e.g. group Xmas parties as there is no staff to support them to attend or they have to leave early. Adults with learning disabilities in supported living are not always consulted with on things that affect them such as changes to eating plan. This can be very upsetting.

All jobs should be in pay bands so that male and female employees will get the same rate of pay for that band. Certain jobs can be gender specific and so it would seem there are more male or female employees in that role but that's just an anomaly.



Always an inequalities towards deaf people
Ask over 60's to give option of given their bus passes to young people who need the transport to access these services.
Barriers such as in housing and employment can be multiple where a person has multiple marginal identities. Recognise that this needs specific strategies & work with orgs that understand these strategies. Eg look at the research Shelter Cymru is doing about LGBT youth and homelessness
BEING WHITE and male in this society is a disability.
Embrace diversity in all its forms
Ensure the benefits of working are equal for younger people ie minimum wage isn't aged based.
Everyone should treat the way that person wants to be treated
Fit the product to meet the demand. Very often in the past strategies have been put in place in the hope that people will take up the opportunity.
Having fixed rates of pay for business support staff and incremental pay scales for senior managers exacerbates the gender pay gap issue. As the ratio of women working in business support compared to men working in senior leadership is so imbalanced you are effectively paying women less.
Help young people struggling by giving them bus passes
Identify that the correct people receive help, don't employ a blanket approach. If necessary means test to ensure abuse of system isn't an issue.
Identifying individuals with particular needs can be difficult if they do not self-identify. Exploring more effective working relationships with other organisations who support specific groups and sharing information legally and effectively is one way to target services.
Keep an open mind.
LGBT should be expressed all around our community.
Listening and trusting in what people with a disability say. Don't appear to patronize, show empathy not superiority.
Look into the backgrounds and difficulties faced within families and the culture within that family. Too often strategies look for a 'one size fits all' concept, this misses the fact that families and members within families are individuals. All families within a community are different.
Need to stop seeing young people as second class citizens and take their views as equal to adults.
Not sufficient for disabled people, particularly learning difficulties. People with parents and nowhere else to care apart from emergency care. People living with people who they don't like. More options need to be available. Make more use of good properties and invest.
Provide more opportunities for disadvantaged people.
Remove RCT's bigoted views for persons with spent convictions and give them a chance rather than judge them!
Stop gender pay gap.
Target areas and give funding e.g mental health services.
Woman + man should work just as hard and get paid the same.

Work with organisations like Bay Citizens Community Jobs Compact to ensure that the councils processes are fostering good relations between citizens of different characteristics

Better support for schools to be able to support children with additional learning needs - the education support service has been cut so much that nothing is worth anything. Many "advice for school" but what is needed is more staff to work with these children. School budgets have reduced due to efficiency savings which means that staff are being lost

### Theme 5 – Equality monitoring information

Equality officers should be visiting departments and analysing the current set up. They should report observed inequality to head of services.

Firstly assess you methods for measuring inequalities, for example in schools what evidence do we have of the experience minority groups (BAME pupils) and the effect this may have on achievements. Once we know the scale of an issue, it's only then we can diagnose is and begin to do something about it.

I would like transparent data regarding pay of council employees.

Look at an holistic approach and look deeply into the needs of individuals and families.

Look at vulnerability profiling wider than just YEPS service to include those who come into contact with Supporting People and Housing Solutions. Potential to move toward one ICT system for all instead of different departments recording on separate systems (e.g. use of Capita One, WICCS etc).

Need to find a way of identifying the people who are vulnerable.

Reviewing information of who is getting the services, no bad practice.

### Theme 6 - Housing

Abroad there are lots of flats. Good idea cheaper rates etc.

Adaptations made to home grab rails. A good service. Husband passed away. It was a no for the council to collected the adaptations,

Barrier for people who just come of work housing an issue. Trying to pay rent to house is so expensive. Impossible to manage. Huge stress. Better understanding from people. You have a house just deal with it, empathy needed.

Consider providing younger person hostel accommodation where they have own space but can get support from a trained warden.

Could offer single living in local areas for older people.

Council should do more by using empty houses to make homeless shelters.

Disabled facilities grant means tested - shocking to say the least. If you're in employment the chances are you will not get support.

Empty houses need to be turned around quicker to support families who need homes. You can't find a job if you have no-where to live!

Getting the adaptations right at the right time. Get it right the first time saves repeats

Housing - older people living in supporting housing for council house not in their local area.

Housing - renting is very expensive for young people. Hard to access support.

I've had good experience with aids in my house.
Look to increase grant funding for renovating existing private sector housing and reduce threshold for qualification to bring existing stocks and empty properties up to a higher standard of living and thereby creating further employment opportunities in the building sector in RCT
More council housing being disabled friendly
More support for people who do work when it comes to housing support, renting or buying.
On the housing front, if a family takes on a child as foster care or SGO/Adoption then they should be given privilege over other people. We need to support the family in this case and not just pay them and expect them to get along
Our Supporting People and Housing Solutions Service already aim to ensure appropriate access to sustainable housing options for all groups in society. Great if you're unemployed and disabled. Closed doors if you're disabled and working.
Property adaptations for disabled people are means tested. This puts them at a disadvantage when working in that they are expected to be able to contribute silly amounts towards the works. Focus on income only and not outgoing i.e. childcare. Better off not working.
Should be actually live or lived in an area to get as much consideration to people who have moved in the area.
Targeted services for age eye when it comes to housing and supported housing.
Young people housing. Helping to get life back on track. Housing have been helpful. No support re employment.

**Theme 7 - Employment**

A strategy to reduce the volume of recruitment agencies in all areas intercepting jobs. It creates an unstable workforce where money for wages is diluted instead of directed to the public purse. For example supply teachers, their wage is drastically reduced by the profit margin of supply companies that profit could remain in the education budget if a centralised register was created. Thus providing meaningful employment and more wage certainty.
Apprenticeships for young people not opportunity for older people
As a teacher I know children in school will never reach their potential if they see nothing to strive for in their local community. There needs to be clear pathways to employment.
Award jobs based on a points system of inequalities and not merit. The more "inequalities" you have the more points you have and if they can't do the actual job hire helpers to do it for them.
Aware of various projects inspire to work. Continue with those and advertise more
Better advertisements of jobs locally and more accessible for young people so on sites friendly for young people.
Better opportunities for young people to gain part time employment for school pupils.
Bus fare & train fare is expensive and puts young people off

Does the staff know the path for promotion? We should be aim to invest and push our staff to be better.
Employment for older people
Employment for young people is still really low within my age group. People ask for experience and we can't get that without opportunity so council could ensure that you don't have to have experience so more young people could access jobs.
Encourage more girls to study for courses in IT and engineering and not only gender specific employment
Encourage young people to have a good experience of work employment to improve confidence to work
Flexible approach to recruitment in terms of application process
Had a problem finding employment, Problems with communication between job centre and job places.
Jobs could be targeted to young people so companies can advertise in schools or colleges on their school websites or emails.
look at attracting businesses through grant funding into RCT to create more employment opportunities
Lots of kids don't aim for anything. Benefits system too accessible for people.
Make compulsory work experience (schools) and voluntary placements (for people with protected characteristics particularly disabilities) in all areas of the Authority. A proactive offer where managers would need to Opt Out with reason rather than the current model which relies too heavily on management to Opt In to offer placements.
Make Council job applications simpler and available in more formats for people with disabilities e.g. video interviews, work tasters. Written competency based applications can immediately deter people with disabilities and/or low levels of literacy.
More apprentice/graduate placements,
More employment opportunities for disabled people
More employment opportunities for young people so they can gain the experience that many organisations ask for.
More jobs for people without previous experience.
More opportunities for employers, employments support for older people who efind themselves looking for job
More volunteering opportunities for teenagers because it's hard to get your first paid job without experience.
Need to up skill and educate young people how to impress at work placements.
Never going to create a perfect workplace but working near nature could help with mental health.
Older people getting jobs. Doesn't matter how much. I job search I have a feeling it's my age that prevents me getting jobs.
Poor jobs (poor services) should have less pay. Compare to private sector.
Provide alternatives to experiences for young people who may not have worked before.

Put the right people in the right jobs. To break down barriers for people, call on the expertise of someone in the minority - maybe have a group or panel of people that can be the voice of the people?
Reduce the amount of casual jobs offered, as a council almost all of the posts you advertise are temporary and most people need permanent posts to , apply for mortgages or pay child care.
Struggle to find jobs because deaf. Deaf people can find work.
The lack of employment of opportunity for young people and other groups is partially connected to the larger issue of a lack of employment opportunities in RCT. Any opportunities that do exist in the area are quickly absorbed by experienced and over-experienced people living in the area, cutting out more vulnerable groups like young persons. Much more must be done to promote new businesses to come into RCT (Pontypridd for example can be promoted as a "Mini-Cardiff" - Close enough to the capital to reap the benefits but more cost effective for larger firms). Also, a considerable investment into transport links is essential, both with roads but also with public transport (which is current, quite dire) so that businesses benefit in the region and also young people etc... have opportunity to commute to other regions to maximise the pool of places they seek employment from. In particular, focus needs to be placed with the forth coming TfW improvements on the rail network, but RCT could also benefit from stronger transport links too Swansea as well.
To work with employers to make more effective apprenticeships which might enable children from low income homes to widen employment choices

### Theme 8 - Poverty

Encourage the uptake of free meals. How about encouraging people to prioritise and be self-sufficient. Be bold.
Free school meal for everybody not means tested
Free/cheaper school uniform
Funding available for any welfare issues, for example transport for young carers and childcare for young mums. Hardship support for financial support.
further develop a system for payment of school meals where all pupils use the same payment method eg smart cards which can be pre-loaded for pupils of FSM. this will help to overcome stigma
Get rid of the stigma of receiving free meals
More help for working families. Childcare is a big barrier costing working parents a lot.
People should be encouraged to take up free school meals
promote the school uniform grants
Reduce any stigma attached to free school meals by using discreet methods of identifying those receiving them.
Roll out of SHEP over all holidays and for a longer period rather than a few days, development of breakfast club and food in after school clubs
Support for families suffering in work poverty

There is a lack of information within RCT about what training and education opportunity exists in the authority. There is a particular problem that economically poorer families are unlikely to be able to afford many of the adult training and development courses, thus would also discriminate against these families from increasing their potential for better employment. Access, especially for vulnerable groups, to reduced cost or free training would help bring balance to otherwise disadvantaged area of society.

**Theme 9 – Bullying, hate crime and sexual harassment**

Make more effort to prevent bullying, indoctrination and hate issues

**Misc.**

At the moment the information beneath the objective feels too broad and non-specific.  
 Ensure they are sustainable  
 Make priority for schools  
 Not at school as it's none of their business.  
 Re-open youth clubs in the area.  
 Schools could have pay you go mobile. Personal text to school would be much easier. Have wiped scoop. Too much info.

**Proposed Equality Objective 3**

To promote safe communities and workplace.

**Theme 1 – Access to services and facilities**

Information on school / council intranet about deaf awareness and book interpreters.  
 More councillors  
 Parking is terrible in Trallwn. Work has been done but it has just made the situation worse the problem has just moved.

**Theme 2 – Engagement, information and awareness**

Be supportive of each other in the work place - equally.  
 Continue to hold equality workshops with children and young people.  
 Make children aware at an early age that there are children who may be different to them in terms of looks and abilities and that this is normal  
 Raise awareness of support offered  
 Safety awareness needed  
 Such policies should be in place....society and social media should be focused on..  
 Talk to them independently  
 Use more publicly  
 Use the significant expertise in the third sector - your statement only supports your systems and not the lived reality of many people in RCT



Wider promotion of the work undertaken and support that exists across the county borough

### Theme 3 – Training, support and processes

Continue work with schools + colleges to raise awareness
Develop an annual workshop on the topic that all school based staff must attend
Discrimination is learnt behaviour so work with families and parents to educate
Educate all residents of RCT on respect for themselves and others
Educate you people in schools in Deaf awareness.
Go into primary schools more often to give talks. It's often too late at age 11 etc.
Go into schools and workplaces to teach them anti-bullying policies.
Having strategies to help victims of hate crimes domestic abuse is important, but education to stop future abuse is more important
Health and Safety needs only to be thought and understood.
More help to provide domestic abuse services and a straight on staff.
Policy alone want change much.
School based officers to take on this vote
Schools need more knowledge and to educate pupils from a young age on equality.
Teachers already council students most of the day, however, in over to retrain to meet this need there is no funding available. Surely it would be cheaper to fast track teachers who have lots of experience and increase the amount of counsellors in the shortest time frame. it would be cheaper than paying for a 3 year degree for someone who may not choose to practise with children and families.
Use more agencies or other organisations to teach about services and why we shouldn't bully or victimised people.
You could place teachers who assign up to the scheme in schools and communities more cheaply on a training wage like they do with social workers. Thus getting more professionals on the ground quickly and cheaply.

### Theme 4 – Inequalities and recognising diversity

A more youth clubs. Old social values have gone. Nowhere for kids to go.
As before recognise the intersections. Eg the stats on bullying of trans youth in schools is appalling. Look at how this can be addressed. (Note: also consider what other councils are doing on this.)
As stated there is a recognition that anyone can be a victim of hate crime and domestic violence, this should be reflected as often, even at council events I have attended there has been a bias towards women as victims and men as perpetrators from many of those attending.
Education of the responsibilities Public sector Equality duty and Equality act 2010 and how this looks like in practise. Many are aware of their responsibility to eliminate discrimination however few are aware of what constitutes discrimination and the need to foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics.

Focus on gender and orientation hate crime. What about disabled hate crime which is well documented. This group is vulnerable and should have equal rights and attention.
From a male perspective, there are days within the calendar and events to 'end violence against women' but nothing to my knowledge specifically for men. This should be looked at in the interest of promoting equality.
more should be done to promote the wellbeing of hate crimes especially in the workforce , when a colleague is accused of something , as far as people are concerned he's guilty instead of speaking to the accused to hear his side and why he's being targeted,
On the subject of #MeToo, whilst the majority of cases highlighted were related to the abuse that women receive emphasizing that the majority of the work was needed on reducing these incidents for women, it was also highlighted that a number of men have also suffered. Often when men tried to speak up, they were shouted down as if their abuse was drawing attention from abuse on woman or faced with comments like "man up". This kind of attitude is the kind that is responsible for why abuse against men is often under reported. Abuse against anyone, regardless of the gender initiating or receiving the abuse must be highlighted to be unacceptable in society but care needs to be taken to consider the differences the way society views abuse towards any gender and should be written into any framework.
Somewhere for kids. Used to be YMCA's and clubs. Could be based at sports centre.

**Theme 9 – Bullying, hate crime and sexual harassment**

Abuse can affect mental health and putting a mental health personal in every department will make it easier for people to speak up.
Adult with learning disabilities would like more information about Hate Crime and would like to meet the police and other groups more regularly.
Aim at promoting support for same sex couples as these can also be abusive relationships. Although women suffer abuse more than males, it should be noted that there are women that suffer abuse at the hands of other women and not just men and vice versa.
Always bullying out at night in Pontypridd. Always risk we will be targeted because we are deaf.
An RCT Hate crime form?
Anti-bullying. Youth suicides with social media.
Better police force. Police has been cut.
Bring in people who are willing to talk about their experiences
Buddy systems in schools where children are paired up with others who may be different to them but it's on a rotation system so can change every few weeks / quarter or term so everyone gets a new partner / buddy to get to know.
Bullying and discrimination amongst staff and in particular management is prevalent and focus should be on this as well as schools
Bullying has increased to frightening levels in schools over the last 10 years and so has mental health disorders. Schools and communities need faster access to mental health clinics.



Bullying in the armed forces.
Bullying is all about power and is cynical. These who were bullied are more likely to bully if the opportunity arises. It is important to make sure this does not happen. This has to be done sensitively. I was bullied and know how tempting the concept of "pay back" can be. I also know how self-defeating this can be, having seen others behave badly.
bullying is an issue in all schools including social media need to adopt a zero tolerance
Bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviour also happen in the workplace. RCT needs to also support adults, especially within their workforce. People need to know where to go for advice, whom to contact and to feel confident that their disclosures will be confidential and acted upon.
Check that schools are taking bullying seriously.
Children are protective of parents because we (parents) are deaf.
Communities support me, I feel safe in my area
Community officers to be more visible in the community so people know they are safe.
Consider exterior bullying officers and services to step in as schools are consistently inefficient.
Currently only deal with Mel if issue so needs to be more staff who can support and let us know about support available
Daughter has been bullied. Affected health. School not dealt with it properly ... mildly. More about being fair to Go bully than my daughter. Didn't know where to go. The victim is segregated and ostracized not the bullying. Caused lots of problems and others. Allowed back in 6th form why.
Develop courses for YEPS around bullying and get people in to talk about how to stand up to them without the use of violence.
Disabled people need to see how the council can stop that happening.
Educate all young people about the expectations and obligations in a healthy relationship.
Educate how bad hate crime is in primary and secondary schools.
Educate parents and family members through the avenue of the schools and start teaching about diversity and equality from primary school.
Educate younger people about hate crime to show that it is not acceptable
Encourage reporting of abuse.
Enshrine "fairness" as an assumed aspiration that is shared by everyone across RCT. Maintain work in different streams of equality and diversity to tackle hate crime but wrap this all together in a programme of general inclusivity where everyone matters. The recent campaign by Scottish Government and Police Scotland is a good example of framing the perpetrators of hate crime as the "outsiders" - see their messages posted in prominent public spaces here <a href="https://twitter.com/theleith/status/1044996613998092288?s=21">https://twitter.com/theleith/status/1044996613998092288?s=21</a>
Experienced stigma in the workplace. People put barriers in the way. Assumptions you can't do it.
Feel safe in community.

<p>first of all, the evidence suggesting women are more likely to be victim of domestic violence makes it harder for men to admit the fact they they are victims of domestic abuse. Men are just as vulnerable to become victims of emotional/domestic abuse.</p>
<p>Focus on school policies - schools are notoriously bad at dealing with bullying. No-one wants to report to schools and often are discouraged from it by other students with bad experience.</p>
<p>Getting the basics right first before the complex social issues.</p>
<p>Give examples of council staff who may have been bullied in school and what they have achieved despite what bullies have said/done.</p>
<p>Good idea especially problems people targeting young girls, phones under people's skirts. A worry for young girls.</p>
<p>Have a "buddy" in the school where children can confide in and talk about bullying</p>
<p>Have links with other schools and organise a rally/workshop to show children that there are others being bullied and recognise that it still arises in schools</p>
<p>Have posters around the school with a telephone number for children to phone for a confidential chat</p>
<p>Have talks in schools/work to tell people.</p>
<p>Help a colleague if you think they are not included within their work place.</p>
<p>Helplines for adults of bullied children.</p>
<p>Helplines/more information for victims of domestic abuse/harassment</p>
<p>Hold schools more accountable for bullying.</p>
<p>Impact has ripped the family apart</p>
<p>Improve access to the appropriate counselling for children subject to bullying at school as parents are unable to intervene.</p>
<p>In schools don't just give detention to people for bullying or retaliating, need to understand why they do it and give knowledge.</p>
<p>Inform advertisement and campaign around sexual harassment - what constitutes harassment, how to report it, who is available to talk to/support any report</p>
<p>Introduce stiffer disciplinary measure against pupils carrying out bullying in schools.</p>
<p>Invest more into police</p>
<p>Invite parents, not just children, to uniform and educate.</p>
<p>It starts in the home, so more work needs to be done to tackle discrimination with pupils.</p>
<p>It's very unnerving to walk down the road and people shout next to you. Sometimes it's for fun and sometimes it's to yell to mates across the road. Young people don't seem to understand what anti-social behaviour is so more work needs to be done at a younger age to promote good social skills. We don't have them anymore. American and French children have this as part of their schooling. It could also cover things like domestic abuse - many adults and children don't understand what domestic abuse is, they think of there is no serious violence then it's not abuse. Teenage girls are already accepting abuse in their relationships because they don't have sufficient understanding.</p>

Lack of confidential help especially for up.
Lack of policing. Anti-social behaviour. Police not bothered.
Lessons in schools about hate crime and its effects
Make known the support that's on offer and where/how to access it
Make schools more accountable especially when bullying is concerned.
Make sure that when it's reported something is done to stop it
Making sure people know how to report issues, in different formats. Eg, not everyone checks on line they don't have internet, maybe advertise in a free paper. Educating children in school. Not sure how people who can't read and right would know unless someone tells them maybe if they have learning difficulties they could nominate someone to have the information on their behalf who could let them know about policies and how to report any issues.
Hate crime and bullying reporting
More anonymity for those report on bullying
More education for children in schools about bullying and domestic abuse. Both physical and mental abuse. Especially mental abuse since you can't see it.
More hate crime officer in RCT.
More pastoral support staff in schools with responsibility and matching salary to be able to support pupils and their families.
More police needed on the streets. No police station. 1 police officer for 1 area. Burglaries not a priority crime number given no police response.
More serious repercussions for the 'bully'
More supervision at break time
More support and education for younger children about bullying and hate crime so bullying is less in secondary schools.
Need more visibility of enforcement officers and get ore ifef needed
Need to educate young people accept diversity and don't bully.
Need to improve this area and need more awareness for deaf people. Councils don't think enough about minorities.
Older people feel unsafe to go outside in the dark - more safety in the nights
One good thing the council has done is the anti-drinking laws in towns.
Parents need to take more responsibility for their child's behaviour. More too be done to support the one who is bullied. To me the bully should be dealt with more severely especially repeat offenders.
People need to know where to go to report hate crimes. Need a dedicated team of people the victim can report to. More public awareness of what the council has got in their facilities. More awareness of support. Sometimes a (temporary) place of refuge so that the victim can be taken out of the situation (recharge their batteries).
People shout to me. Swearing. Anti-social behaviour. Problems with neighbours.
People still feel unsafe in communities or where they live because they lack trust in services. If hate crime offices could do more with schools so we know who they are and other services work closely with communities.
Perhaps the police to explain to children how they can effectively report their concerns.
Police are prompt on catching criminals.

Police doesn't have resources to fight hate crime
Policies strategies are good but teachers need to be taught how to deal with bullies and what the consequences are.
Poster campaign to encourage reporting hate crime.
Pressurise the courts to impose stiffer sentences on anyone found guilty of an offence.
Problems with noise from pub in Trallwn. Reported for last few years to Council nothing changes. Same year on year. Council says things will change but it doesn't.
Promote Anti-Bullying Policies through Post & Social Media
Properly monitor schools, with children in secondary school I know bullying is rife, one of my children has had a breakdown as a direct link to this antisocial behaviour and the school is not interested in admitting there is any issue or blame so therefore how can they take action to rectify
Provide support groups and networks for staff and pupils to access for informal help.
Raising awareness on anti-bullying and hate crime for staff and pupils.
Rare to have support officers/PCSO's in the evenings/nights watch on weekends.
Reiterate and further support Youth community centres, employ skilled staff to deal with these issues and implement pro-active policies and activities
School bullying, take information, home to family and parents to educate.
Schools may have policies, but not all know how to implement, this should be rolled out and ALL staff made aware, but perhaps ALL schools need to have specific officers who are trained- probably 2 to ensure that someone is on site at all times.
Schools need more than just a policy they need to change their way of dealing with bullies. Not just detention and a telling off or sent to unit. They need to be educated not to bully in the first place.
Set up a base where people can visit/meet up to discuss issues.
Set up a today that parents can access if they don't feel schools are addressing their concerns
Show films etc about the effect of bullying on individuals
Show people on how and who to report hate crimes to.
Show there is support out there if you are bullied. Be pro activated in promoting this in workplace.
Some schools do not tackle bullying appropriately still making the bullied person schools instead of tackling the bully. They need support from the Council to have the powers they need to support the bully and the bullied person.
Somewhere people can report hate crime anonymously or safely and make sure people are aware of this process.
Specific orgs to come to school from anti bullying campaign.
Stricter rules for abusers
Strongly agree. Need to address how children behave in the parks. How communities react with each other.
support the bullies out campaign

The #MeToo movement shows that more does indeed to be done in regards to sexual and domestic abuse. This has to begin with education at school level, but if it is really to be tackled, it needs to be reinforced and repeated throughout people's lives. Advice lines, shelters, sympathetic police forces and councillors will help victims, but these are all attempts to "cure" the problem. A pinch of prevention is worth a pound of cure. There should be campaigns in place to really make this kind of activity a pariah to society, to show would be abusers that it is unacceptable. In addition, it is important as a society we understand why abusers become like they do, what turns them into these destructive behavioural patterns and work towards eliminating and preventing them turning that way so no one else becomes a victim. Lack of employment, general unhappiness in their lives (which can turn to drug and alcohol abuse), anger management issues etc... have all be identified as some root courses and further work invested into identifying individuals susceptible to this behaviour and providing resources (like anger management courses) to stop it happening in the first place should be considered a priority.

The change in these attitudes need to come from the top down as often these style of prejudices are mimicked from what the young see from adults. Engage with charities like the S.O.P.H.I.E. Lancaster foundation will help all elements from teachers to social workers to understand these kind of pressures and bullying and how to improve things (which is NOT limited to the young... at nearly 40 I still get abuse at random on the streets of RCT when travelling too and from work because I am a male with long hair.. including having hot cups of coffee thrown out of moving cars at me and being attacked on more than one occasion). The Alternative community (to give it a tag) do not report hate report because they really do not think the authorities take them seriously and they have become so used to dealing with it, they just see it as part of a way of life by the time you get past your "youthful stage." It would also benefit to have South Wales Police Force examine what police forces like Manchester are doing to tackle this issue, as they have proven far more forward thinking in this region.

The importance Recording and reporting of bullying by type in schools. This needs to be enforced as there is a current culture of reporting looks bad.

The Newport Police Action in advising schools where children live in homes where they see domestic violence at home.

There is no standard definition of bullying in schools. It is difficult to get a consensus on what constitutes bullying. Agreeing a basic threshold would be a good start to identify the prevalence in the first instance, and then develop awareness and mitigation strategies to tackle the most common and most severe forms.

This needs to be included in the workspace. Bullying is evident yet gets overlooked.

Tougher Action imposed on the bullies, rather than segregate the victim.

Very good. Young people need help for abuse and bullying. Need to help young people. Not enough out there to support young people. More place for young people to go in communities and have eye to eye air one to one. Will help keep people out of trouble.

Where are the parents



Will always have hate crime people will be targeted by difference. Not enough discipline.
Work closely with hate crime officers to do work in schools and colleges to educate people on what a hate crime is.
Work closer with police
Work closer with schools. Not enough support for victims of bullying.
Working closer with colleges on their policies and strategies. Sharing good practice with schools and colleges.
Ensure Anti-bullying campaigns or hate crime reporting etc. There are not enough visual signs indicating where to go for help at this stage. That is, more obvious posters with a clear message.
But resources must be distributed in a more specific way. Bullying in schools is still a problem, so is the fact that many people in the community are reluctant to realise that people think differently from the Labour Party and rugby, which is tiring, and which leads to many other problems.

**Misc**

Aren't there areas where resources are invested in this already?
Ban mobile phones in school
Budget constrained - need more money for projects on this.
Excellent very good.
Funding money for more services
Need money/resources to tackle this
Not lucky enough for that.
This should of been done 60 years ago.
Too many lorries. Lorries are so big can be dangerous
You shouldn't take health and safety so serious that it restrict people from doing normal things.

**Suggestions for Additional Equality Objectives**

**Theme 1 – Access to services and facilities**

A visible way of showing if staff can sign, a badge, awareness of support
Accessible premises that leads to accessing goods and services provided by RCTCBC.
Better travel and access and better jobs.
Better use of social media to engage with younger people
Bus Pass received PIP forms need to apply for bus pass. I've got to go to office. I work + can't get time off. I can't do this on line.
Community contact. Make it easier to access and processes simpler. Barriers faced need to remove to be able to report things.
Community infrastructure and facilities. NOT easily accessible. Nothing in my town Treherbert everything has closes pools. Have to travel

Easy read documents still not clear enough. Good that explains what some words mean.
Have to go to council in person if a problem. English on the website isn't accessible.
Mental health does not feature in this how about making sure services are accessible and easy to navigate for those with mental health issues
Mobility... to decrease the inequality experienced by persons who either cannot or choose not to use personal vehicle. With a strive towards a greener future and considering the road network difficulties of RCT and increasing costs, people who do not have access to a personal vehicle should not be discriminated against (and perhaps encouraged if the public transport framework was sufficient for our county's needs).
Need more information about community bus service.
No signposts for visitors. Got to princes to go to toilet but feel obliged to buy coffee. Sometimes use toilets in hairdresser but the steps are a problem because of my mobility issues.
Not everyone can go online. Push to go online but don't have the computer. On the phone for 40 minutes at a time,
Pontypridd is not disabled friendly. No dropped kerb. Can't go for d with my scooter
Public notifications need more visibility to know what support is available
Toilets needs in Pontypridd. Get the fountain ones back. Also more disabled toilets. The one in the bud station was padlock
Toilets needs to be better. Bus station in Pontypridd close at a certain time nothing available when I get off the bus.
Toilets. Have to go to Princes and buy a cuppa.
Use of leisure centres such as disability classes
Waste from gardens. Can't take things to tip. No options.

### **Theme 2 – Engagement, information and awareness**

A lot more could be achieved if the LGBT community were asked to be involved
All working towards some goal of equality in all areas
Development of an 'Allies' type of programme to support vulnerable community members.
Gender equality + advice given
Getting more people to help in the communities, giving young people and other vulnerable groups opportunities of experience and work,
Just that the ultimate aim should be for equality to be simply part of everyday life and a natural outcome of the way people understand each other and their needs.
Learn to appreciate differences as we really are not all equal.
LGBT+ staff network needs a serious revision. The provision is woeful. RCTCBC should look at Cardiff Council's LGBT+ network for examples of good practice.

### **Theme 3 – Training, support and processes**

Better bereavement counselling. Under-funded and overworked.
Community learning - age groups coming still from others

Council need to have more training in BSL.
Desperately need someone who can deal with bereavement. Have to go to loads of places and tell the story all over again. Really upsetting. Every phone call taken an hour. Can we just get to one person? No compassion. Being told I've got to get a job straight away. My husband has only been dead last 3weeks
Disability including conditions that can't be seen such as dementia. All staff should be trained and dementia friendly workplaces and community spaces designed and throughout the borough. Including not discriminating against young people with. Young people caring for and carers. Develop RCT wide dementia strategy to coincide with dementia action plan wales
Enhance the role of Allies at events like Pride and develop closer links between the council brand and the Allies brand.
have respect for older people and have 'local' places for meeting/interaction that are not called - I am lonely - meetings but more we are here at 2pm on Tuesday call in
Not a lot for young people after school e.g. boys club. Need things to do for kids. Darts etc.
staffs rude email etiquette
Understanding of bias in systems against the most vulnerable

#### **Theme 4 – Inequalities and recognising diversity**

Admit we are not all equal and some people cannot do the same things as others and this should not always mean changing the entire world to suit.
Creating a world where no one is talked down to by councillors/politicians.
Ensure pupils who are Welsh first language receive the same opportunities as those who are English first language.
Equal inalienable individual rights. This pertains to freedom of action only and not entitlement to an object. It means you cannot acquire rights by joining a certain group or lose rights by leaving a group.
Equality before the law. Any rules, regulations or laws to be objective. That is to affect everyone equally.
Equality of opportunities - how are we ensuring that young people are given equal opportunity to experience and achieve no matter their post code.
Equality of representation - are our communities represented at every level? If not why not? And what are we doing to ensure this is mitigated for? Committees, consultations.
Fairness for all across all sectors eg bins
Full time nursery places help people back into work more than any other strategy. Most people can't afford child care when starting a new job, the full time places at 3 change that'd reduce the financial commitment for the first few months,
I think equity is more important than equality. There needs to be equity of opportunity for all e.g. an equitable system of CPD for staff, equitable opportunities for school pupils and teachers



I think that staff 'uniform' should be considered as an equality issue as at present there appears to be far more flexibility for women than men. Women are able to wear lightweight dresses, sleeveless tops, sandals etc in the hot weather where there is an expectation for men to wear shirts and trousers.
I would like to speak out against the current trend of creating unisex toilets in public buildings to avoid controversy w.r.t. transgender staff/visitors. I don't know what the solution is, and I guess each case should be considered individually, but unisex toilets are not an appropriate solution. Men's toilet habits -in general- fall well below what is acceptable to women and you may well end up facing entirely new problems. These will be very expensive and problematic to fix in the case of any new buildings where this is built into the primary design without flexibility to change at a later date.
LGBT (Children should be seen and heard).
Mental illness isn't an illness/ Illness suggests that they are sick. They are not but people have been wrong.
More focus for armed forces issues.
More provision for women and girls to get their voices heard
Better access to the Welsh language. Still unequal options to speak Welsh take longer
No but i have an example of positive discrimination in favour of an individual who used his ethnicity & colour as an actual means to be the bully he was & that was in the early seventies. It happens. I advise caution.
Prejudice for people who don't work. It's harder for people to get help. Help for people who don't work.
Recognising that whilst we strive to treat everyone the same out of fairness, everyone is different and unique and should be treated accordingly, sometimes treating everyone the same isn't treating everyone equal - it's not all black and white!
Remove the illegal questions on your application forms
Stop judging persons with spent convictions and judge them on the merit of their work!
The whole organisation needs to be working towards a shared vision for promoting equity for all
There appears to be nothing on ageism - with an ageing demographic should this be an area of focus?
Think about equality for those who are not disabled etc as society concentrates on those who are on benefits etc but doesn't do anything for those who go out to work but still struggle to make ends meet but cannot have additional help as they "earn too much"
To address all equality areas and not be weighted towards one area and not play enough attention to all areas.
Treat employees equally, as opposed to promoting 'favourites'.
Welsh language is currently seen as a negative burden within RCTCBC and this badly needs to change. The language is an important part of our heritage and future and should be adopted as such within the authority.

Where there are benefits to a specific group then this benefit should be given to all groups. It is unfair for a specific group to be given automatic interview where say a white able bodied person has to go through a sifting process first.

Work hard to take less money off us.

### **Theme 5 – Equality monitoring information**

Inclusion of the expanded equalities categories I've mentioned earlier in this survey.

Promoting equity does not necessarily require surveying people for personal information. It involves working towards an agreed goal which will actually make a change or difference.

### **Theme 6 - Housing**

Housing assistance for disabled people - means tested? Is this not counterproductive that you get doors closed to you once you are working.

With regards to housing in the community and through experience not enough is done with the people already living in the area I bought my own council house for example next to me is a council owned home , the neighbours I've had have been appalling , with noise banging etc and when you complain the council are not interested,

### **Theme 7 - Employment**

Career advice much earlier in students' lives, in terms of aspiration children need career advice in year 8. It sounds early but if they are suited or interested in a particular role but choose the wrong GCSE subjects they become disengaged earlier.

Career advice throughout life is important people have much less secure work and find themselves job seeking more during their lifetime. It's very difficult to get back into employment when an industry sector has suffered huge losses because that's where peoples experience lies. Often help guidance and support is the key to getting a job.

Employment within RCT. What is being done to have a REAL benefit for disabled people working within RCT. Guaranteed interviews are a waste of time and is wrong especially when it has been predetermined that the applicant is not going to get the job.

### **Theme 9 – Bullying, hate crime and sexual harassment**

Bullying is just as prevalent in adult situations as it is in schools or colleges, we need to stamp this out and make the door open to people who feel they want to talk to someone about this without fearing for their jobs.

Domestic abuse policies and practises to be revised

Equality of education - <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/bullying>

Focus on discipline

Have a no tolerance rule that applies to bullying

indirect bullying

Monitoring Managers to ensure all employees are treated equally and not discriminated against and bullied at work.

Policing. To protect people's rights. To protect peoples freedom to act. To protect people from being interfered with by other people. We need visible bobbies on the beat approach.

**Misc.**

Agree with suggestions
Clean air
Fining people for having black bags is ridiculous. Fining has gone extreme. Also follow, owing people around who smoke to fine them. Smokers are easy target especially holder people. Revenue overtaken everything.
No my Councillor Mike Powell acts on everything. Not sure if he can do anything but he's good.
Transport
Be practical and reasonable
Following England is certainly not the way forward

DRAFT

Logo

## Strategic Equality Plan

2019-2022

**Picture [RCT specific if possible reflecting the diversity of the Borough]**

This plan is available in Welsh.

This plan can also be made available in alternative formats and languages.  
To make a request please telephone 01443 444531 or email [equality@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rctcbc.gov.uk)

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## Forward from Deputy Leader

### Picture of Cllr Webber

Welcome to Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's Strategic Equality Plan. This plan contains important information about the work the Council is doing to promote equality and diversity. Our aim is not just to meet our legal duties, but also to make Rhondda Cynon Taf a place where everyone matters. We want Rhondda Cynon Taf to be a place where no one experiences discrimination or disadvantage because of their identity or background. The Council sees everyone in Rhondda Cynon Taf as an equal citizen whilst recognising that people will have different needs.

We believe we have a duty to tackle discrimination and disadvantage so that people feel safe from harassment and everyone has access to high quality services.

The Council employs over 10,000 staff and believes everyone should have the opportunity to work for us, with a workforce to reflect the diverse nature of Rhondda Cynon Taf communities so that we can benefit from the skills, knowledge and experience within those communities.

The Council will use its leadership role to promote equality and diversity and share ideas and good practice with partners and other service providers. In developing this plan, we have engaged with our residents, our workforce, our partners and other stakeholders and their opinions and experiences have helped us to shape the equality objectives it contains. Please tell us what you think of this plan and our objectives. The Council encourages feedback to help bring about improvement and to make a difference for the lives of people of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Councillor Maureen Webber

Deputy Leader

## Forward from Chief Executive

### Picture of Chief Executive

As the largest employer in the area, it is crucial that the Council leads by example and fulfils its legislative duties to ensure Rhondda Cynon Taf is a place where discrimination and prejudice have no place. Within our service delivery we work hard to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all, however, we recognise that for some groups of people barriers exist to accessing some services, therefore the actions contained in this Strategic Equality Plan will help to remove those barriers.

Equality and diversity is an essential element of the Council's work. We recognise the benefits of a diverse workforce that works together to provide responsive and flexible services that take account of the different needs within our communities to help combat social exclusion and build strong communities.

Within the workplace we are committed to training and development for our employees to ensure our residents receive high quality service delivery. We will continue to work to eliminate discrimination in the workplace and service delivery and are committed to ensuring the diversity of our residents and workforce is recognised and valued.

Chris Bradshaw

Chief Executive

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## Section 1

### 1.1 About Us

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council covers a wide geographical area and has a population of over 234,000 people. We are the largest employer in the area and the third largest local authority in Wales, over 80% of employees live within the Council boundaries.

We are committed to the principles of equality and diversity and we work to ensure that this is demonstrated in our service delivery and in our employment practices.

Our vision is:

*“For a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all”.*

Our purpose is:

*“To provide strong community leadership and effective services for the people of Rhondda Cynon Taf to enable them to fulfil their potential and prosper”.*

Our [Corporate Plan](#) ‘The Way Ahead’ 2016-2020 sets out how we will achieve our vision and purpose and sets out our priorities. These are shown below:

**Economy** – building a strong economy

**People** – promoting independence and positive lives for everyone

**Place** – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work.

The plan puts residents at the centre of what we do.

The Council is governed by 75 elected Members and operates a Cabinet system. It has a Senior Leadership Team headed by the Chief Executive and attended by Senior Directors, and employs over 10,000 employees in a variety of service areas and roles based within the following groups:

- Chief Executives
- Education and Inclusion Services
- Community and Children’s Services
- Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services.

### 1.2 Purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan



The Strategic Equality Plan has been developed so that we can set out how we aim to meet our commitment to equality and how we will meet legal obligations contained with the Equality Act 2010.

Within the Equality Act 2010, public bodies have an additional responsibility to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. These are outlined below:

## **Public Sector Equality Duty**

### **The General Duty**

When making decisions and delivering services we must have due regard to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (protected characteristics are explained later in this report).
- Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When thinking about how to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't, we also need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and are connected to that characteristic.
- Meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

We also have to particularly think about how it will tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

### **The Specific Duties**

The Equality Act provides a power to make regulations imposing duties on public bodies to support better performance of the general duty; these are known as the Specific Public Sector Equality Duties and are different in England, Scotland and Wales.

The Specific Duties underpin the General Duty and have been developed around four main principles:

- Use of evidence
- Consultation and Involvement
- Transparency

- Leadership.

The Welsh Government published regulations that introduced the Specific Duties for Wales in March 2011, these set out the actions the Council must take in order to comply and include the following areas:

- Setting Equality Objectives and publishing a Strategic Equality Plan
- Ensuring it engages with people who have an interest in how the Council's decisions affect them
- Collecting and publishing information relevant to compliance with the General Duty
- Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and publishing the results if there is a substantial impact on the Council's identified
- Publish employment monitoring information annually
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the General Duty amongst its employees and use its performance assessment procedures to identify and address the training needs of its employees in relation to the General Duties
- Set a gender pay equality objective where a gender pay difference is identified
- Think about including conditions relevant to the General Duty in its procurement processes.

### **Who is protected under the Equality Act 2010?**

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their protected characteristic.

This is the term used in the Equality Act 2010 to identify the types of things that affect how people are treated and can mean people may experience discrimination. The law is designed to protect them, they are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

### **1.3 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Council is committed to embedding the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 into all its service delivery and activities. The Act puts in place a

sustainable development principle which means that we must ‘act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.

(Ref <https://futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf>)

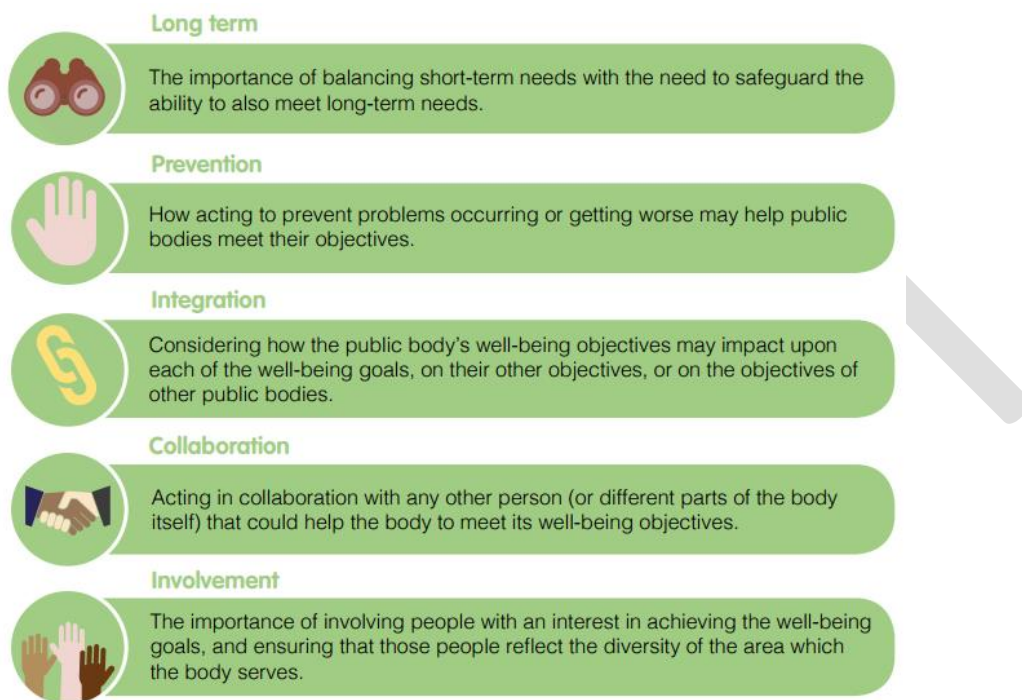
The Act puts in place a duty on the Council as a public body to maximise its contribution to seven national Well-being goals, which are shown below. As a Council, we need to incorporate the goals into all of our work and make sure that when we make decisions we consider the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.



Whilst it is clear that some Well-being goals specifically relate to equality it is important to recognise that equality objectives contained within this plan and their

associated action plans have a significant role to play across all Well-being goals, for example, actions to improve employment for disabled people will contribute not only to 'a more equal Wales', but to 'a healthier Wales', 'a prosperous Wales' and 'a Wales of cohesive communities'.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act also asks individual public services to apply five ways of working:



The 5 ways of working have been used to shape the Council's equality objectives.

## Section 2

### Our Equality Objectives 2019-2022

To develop the equality objectives we have engaged with our residents, engaged with our workforce and used relevant information including Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) reports, Welsh Government reports, internal strategies and results of internal staff engagement exercises. The use of relevant information is explained more in section 3.

Each objective is underpinned by more detailed actions and targets which are shown in Appendix 1 – Action Plan.

#### Objective 1:

**To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive.**

The Cwm Taf Well-being Assessment undertaken in 2017 by the Cwm Taf Public Services Board to inform the Cwm Taf Well-being Plan 2018-2023 recognised that loneliness, isolation and a reduced sense of belonging are significant issues for people in our communities. Consequently, within the Cwm Taf Well-being Plan there is a cross-cutting objective to **tackle loneliness and isolation** in Cwm Taf. This is the key priority for the Cwm Taf Public Service Board in all of its activities.

Without knowing more about the people that make up the communities in Rhondda Cynon Taf, we are unable to identify specific issues or barriers that may prevent them accessing our services or engaging with the Council when they need to. We already have some processes in place that identify people who may be vulnerable and need support but we recognise that more could be done to identify people who face barriers to accessing our offices and buildings, or barriers to our on-line and telephone services and other information we offer. This first objective supports the PSB's cross-cutting objective by working to understand more about the needs of our diverse communities.

We are aware of the lack of advocacy groups in the County Borough to support people from ethnic minorities and some religious groups and therefore we need to do more to engage regularly with these citizens. **We will do more to engage with community groups that support under-represented groups.**

When people access our services we would like to find out more information about them such as their ethnicity, whether they have a disability, their gender, their sexual orientation and other equality monitoring questions. This will help us to ensure the services we offer reflect the diversity of our communities. **We will work with our service areas to develop equality monitoring questions that are relevant and timely.**

We already have a number of projects supporting employment opportunities for people from under-represented groups across the County Borough but we need to understand more about the barriers they face. The [employment](#) rate for disabled people in Wales is less than half than that for non-disabled people. There are also disparities for young people and people from ethnic minorities. **We will undertake an employment needs assessment to understand the barriers.**

A recent [report](#) highlighted that disabled people are demoralised and frustrated by the housing system. We need to know more about the housing needs of disabled people within the County Borough. **We will ensure our local housing market needs assessments look at this important area.**

## **Objective 2:**

**To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities.**

We know from EHRC evidence that inequalities exist within society including the areas of educational attainment, employment and living standards.

We are already working in partnership to improve the transition process for learners with additional learning needs. We have recently consulted on improvements to our learning support provision and our future focus will be on achieving a better alignment of provision to meet needs.

We already have a number of positive strategies in place that look to reduce employment barriers for young people, disabled people and to reduce the gender pay gap in the workforce. However, we recognise we could do more to help more people from certain groups into work. Our apprenticeship programme has already successfully recruited a number of people with disabilities. **However, we intend to apply the recently launched Welsh Government Inclusive Apprenticeships: Disability Action Plan for Apprenticeships 2018-2021 to develop an action plan to increase the number of disabled apprentices. We also want to recruit other under-represented people into our apprenticeship programmes.**

We recognise we need to do more to attract and recruit people from under-represented groups into our workforce as a whole. **We will be reviewing our recruitment and selection policy, process and practice to increase the diversity within our workforce.**

We already work with schools to prevent inequality of opportunity for young people, for example, through working to encourage the uptake of free school meals. But we know we can do more to provide more effective support to young people and families. The newly established Resilient Families Programme is working to provide early intervention and prevention services that improve the resilience of families in Rhondda Cynon Taf. **We aim to work more effectively to identify appropriate multi-agency approaches to supporting young people and families in need.**

We recognise that our town centres currently face a number of challenges. We are already committed to enabling accessible, vibrant and enticing town centres which are at the heart of our communities. **We will modernise our town centres by building on their role as centres for social inclusion, local economic opportunity and the provision of services.**

Our Scrutiny Committees play an important role in reviewing and shaping services and policy and act as a critical friend to decisions makers. They can also have a key role in ensuring compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duties by scrutinising Equality Impact Assessment documentation. **We intend to strengthen this process which will result in more accountability for decision makers.**

### Objective 3:

#### To promote safe communities.

One of our previous equality objectives looked at hate crime. Whilst a lot of positive work has been done to improve the reporting of hate crime, work still needs to be undertaken to ensure the public know how and where to report hate crime and that victims of hate crime understand and are supported to access the support is available to them. **We will review the existing Hate Crime Strategy and work with Hate Crime police officers to develop an awareness raising programme.**

Modern slavery exists in Wales. [Modern slavery](#) affects people of all ages, gender and races. However those that are socially excluded, a minority group or vulnerable tend to be targeted the most. **We will we review and strengthen our existing process towards modern slavery.**

The Council already has an effective, non-gender specific strategy aimed at tackling domestic abuse and sexual violence and there is specific legislation that supports this work. We recognise however, that we need to better understand the specific issues for victims from under-represented groups. **We will work with Women's Aid to develop the freedom programme to develop this understanding about ethnic minority women and male victims.**

In 2017 the Education Inspection body [Estyn](#) produced a review of healthy relationships education. Respect for both oneself and others is a key characteristic of healthy relationships. In contrast, in unhealthy relationships, one partner tries to exert control and power over the other physically, sexually, and/or emotionally. **We will support the wellbeing of our pupils and develop a programme for schools about raising awareness of emotional abuse in relationships.**

We already work with schools on their anti-bullying policies and we collect data about bullying incidents from schools on a termly basis. We know from [research](#) that some groups of young people are more likely to get bullied more than others. **We will work further with schools to develop and enhance their existing policies and support victims of bullying.**

The PERMA (Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Achievement) well-being model which aspires pupils to flourish is being piloted in some of our schools. The model uses the PERMA model as a measure to reflect on the key areas of need in regard to the wellbeing of their pupils. **We will support schools to map the data collected in relation to attendance, bullying and exclusions and will focus on targeted intervention on specific areas of need.**

### Objective 4:



## **To reduce the gender pay gap.**

We are required to consider the pay differences that exist across the organisation and to identify an objective that will address any difference identified.

Whilst pay systems are important in determining pay equity, there are a number of other issues that are relevant in determining what women and men are paid and what roles. These include occupational segregation; availability of full/part-time work in different occupational groups, e.g. lower paid job roles being mainly part-time whilst higher paid more senior roles being mainly full time; availability of family friendly policies and support and organisational culture.

We know that nearly 75% of our workforce are female, and over half of those work on a part-time basis. This has a negative impact on our gender pay gap. We know from work on our previous gender pay equality objective that we need to identify the opportunities for female employees on lower paid grades to gain promotion or development opportunities. **We will ensure that all of our staff, regardless of grade or hours of work will receive a performance review meeting to discuss opportunities for development.**

Work by Cardiff University suggests that there may be pay and promotional penalties for women who have had maternity leave and taken time out to raise their family. **We will support the Equality and Human Rights Commission pledge '[Working Forward](#)' which supports pregnant women and new parents. We will also undertake an analysis of women returning to the workplace following maternity leave, and look at barriers that may prevent them from returning.**

Whilst the number of male and female Chief Officer positions in the Council is equitable, we recognise that female Chief Officers are more likely to be employed on the lower levels of the Chief Officer grades. **We will continue to prioritise this area of work and are committed to positive action to encourage more female employees to undertake management development programmes.**

## **Objective 5:**

### **To create an inclusive workforce.**

The mantra of Stonewall Cymru is 'people perform better when they can be themselves'. This is what we also believe. To get the best out of our employees and ensure they provide the best service to our residents we need a workplace culture that is safe and inclusive. To do this we need to know more about the diversity of our workforce. **We will undertake workplace equality monitoring.**

The [EHRC](#) tells us that bullying and sexual harassment remain widespread in some [workplaces](#). We are already proactive in raising awareness about our Dignity at Work Policy but we need to provide more training to our managers. In response to



the #MeToo movement and the growing rise in reporting of sexual harassment as seen in the media, we recognise that we need to do some work in this area so that our workforce are aware of the issue and know how to report it. **We will develop a programme of awareness and training on sexual harassment in the workplace.**

We are Disability Confident employers. However we need to do more to raise awareness about the talents disabled people have and what support is available to disabled employees and their managers, not just at recruitment but throughout the workplace journey. **We will develop and implement a Disability Confident action plan.**

We will continue to be Stonewall Diversity Champions, and we will replicate good practice learnt from this area to reflect other under-represented groups. **Specifically, we need to do more to support our employees from ethnic minorities.**

We are committed to the Time to Change Wales pledge to end stigma towards mental health conditions and work proactively in this area. Nonetheless mental health conditions are the main reason for sickness absence within the Council. We are working hard to support our employees with mental health conditions through Occupational Health interventions and line manager support, however we recognise that much more training and awareness is needed throughout our workforce. **We will review all of our mental health activities and develop annual plans which provide education, training and interventions for the workforce.**

## **Section 3**

### **3.1 How we developed the Equality Objectives**

Our Equality Objectives will continue to help us meet the Public Sector Equality Duty and ensure we are making progress in advancing equality and inclusion for all protected groups. They will also ensure that we are operating within the framework of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

To identify our Equality Objectives we undertook an 8 week engagement exercise. This included an on-line survey for the public, our Citizens' Panel and our workforce; a number of public engagement events; meetings with specific community groups that reflect the protected characteristics contained in the Equality Act 2010 and meetings with managers who are key to delivering Council services. These engagement activities helped us understand the needs of our communities and our workforce and helped us shape the Equality Objectives and action plan.

The Engagement Report which can be viewed [here](#) gives an indication of the issues which were raised most frequently during the engagement exercise.

Overwhelmingly the feedback was that people supported our proposed equality objectives. There were lots of comments and lots of good ideas and we have used these to develop the actions within the objectives.

The main information we learned from the engagement exercise was:

- People want the Council services and buildings to be more accessible and recognise that digital options are not suitable for everyone
- We need to engage with and involve our communities more, working closely with community representatives
- Mostly people are happy with equality monitoring questions being asked but more thought needs to be given about how they will be used
- People want to see and hear more about equality and diversity topics
- Council employees should have equality and diversity training
- Community spaces and towns should be more accessible
- Involve young people and enable them to have a voice
- Improve employment opportunities
- Reduce the stigma around free meals
- Work more closely with schools on anti-bullying initiatives
- Raise more awareness about reporting bullying, harassment and hate crime.

Areas highlighted by residents but not included in this plan include:

Residents suggested that the lack of toilet provision is a problem. Under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 the Council must publish its Local Toilet Strategy by 31 March 2019, and this will include a plan showing how we will meet identified needs. As this important area of work is being developed it is not included as part of this plan, however, it will be an action in the relevant service delivery plan.

We are already working towards [‘Together for Mental Health’](#). This 10 year strategy sets out the Welsh Government's ambitions for improving mental health and vision for improved mental health service delivery. Developed through engagement and formal consultation with key partner agencies, stakeholders, service users and carers, it covers people of all ages and emphasises the need to promote better mental health and wellbeing among the whole population. It focuses on how to improve the lives of service users and their families using a recovery and enablement approach.

A further objective ‘Objective 5: To create an inclusive workforce’ was created following the engagement exercise. It was clear that a separate objective would distinguish between community and workplace actions.

### **3.2 What relevant information we used**

As well as listening to our residents, communities and our staff we have also used a range of equality information to support us in identifying equality objectives.

We have looked at regional priorities for Cwm Taf, Council Priorities, Service Delivery plans and their Self Assessments and have reviewed the progress that the Council's services have already made in relation to the Public Sector Equality Duties.

We have also reviewed national and external sources such as reports by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Welsh Government policy and priorities, research reports and other relevant statistics.

Whilst a number of external reports and EHRC inquiries have contributed to the development of the Equality Objectives, outlined below are the key reports that assisted in shaping the objectives:

### **Is Wales Fairer? 2015 – Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)**

This report addresses seven key challenges that need to be addressed in Wales. The EHRC states there are major, entrenched inequalities and human rights abuses that will require substantial efforts of public, private and third-sector organisations and of individuals to reduce them.

The 7 challenges are:

- Challenge 1 Close attainment gaps in education
- Challenge 2 Encourage fair recruitment, development and reward in employment
- Challenge 3 Improve living conditions in cohesive communities
- Challenge 4 Increase access to justice and encourage democratic participation
- Challenge 5 Improve access to mental health services and support people experiencing poor mental health
- Challenge 6 Prevent abuse, neglect and ill-treatment in care and detention
- Challenge 7 Eliminate violence, abuse and harassment in the community.

For a number of the challenges we already have effective action plans in place which aim to reduce the inequalities listed above, for example, closing attainment gaps in education.

However, for some of the challenges, we acknowledge that we can do more, for example, by reviewing the recruitment processes to ensure we are capturing the untapped talent of disabled people..

This report has acted as a key driver for the development of the Council's Equality Objectives.

### **Is Wales Fairer? 2018 – EHRC**

During the development of our Equality Objectives 'Is Wales Fairer?' 2018 was published by the EHRC. Whilst 'Is Wales Fairer?' 2015 was a key driver in the proposed objectives that we engaged on, it is important to acknowledge this up to date report and the challenges that Wales face. The format of this differs from the 2015 document with the challenges taking a thematic approach as follows:

- Education
- Employment
- Living Standards
- Health
- Justice and Personal Security
- Participation.

A mapping exercise was undertaken to ensure our Equality Objectives are reflective of the above-mentioned themes, ensuring that our Equality Objectives are relevant and reflect current priorities for the citizens of Wales and our borough. The Action Plan shown in Appendix 1 identifies how the Equality Objectives and actions link to these themes.

### **Cwm Taf Well-being Plan 2018-2023**

The Cwm [Taf Well-being Plan](#) was developed to set out those priorities that the Cwm Taf Public Service Board (PSB) has agreed it can tackle better by working together in partnerships. The priorities were developed following an assessment of the Well-being of the residents in Cwm Taf areas. The PSB monitors the progress of the wellbeing objectives and has the vision of “One Public Service”.

The Well-being Plan is the overarching plan for Cwm Taf. There are other partnership boards that sit under the PSB, including the Regional Partnership Boards, the Mental Health Partnership Board, the Area Planning Board, the Community Safeguarding Board and the Safeguarding Board. These boards have their own plan for their area of responsibility and will contribute to the Well-being Plan. These plans will also contribute to the Public Sector Equality Duties and some of the challenges contained in Is Wales Fairer? 2015 and 2018 (EHRC).

### **Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014**

The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 came into effect on 6 April 2016.

The Act seeks to improve the well-being of people who need care and support and carers who need support. An area plan has been developed for Cwm Taf and this is led by the Cwm Taf Social Services and Wellbeing Partnership Board. The board is responsible for making sure that organisations in Cwm Taf deliver effective services that make a positive difference to people’s lives, now and in the future. The plan can be viewed [here](#).

### **The Corporate Plan ‘The Way Ahead’ 2016-2020**

The Corporate Plan sets out the overall direction for the Council's work over four years. The vision being for 'a County Borough that has high aspirations of all, is confident and promotes opportunities for all',

The Equality Objectives take account of the work already being done to deliver the Corporate Plan.

## **Section 4**

### **How we will deliver and monitor the Strategic Equality Plan**

#### **4.1 Service Delivery Plans**

The actions within the Strategic Equality Plan (Appendix 1) will be delivered through **Service Delivery Plans**. The Service Delivery plans set out the key priorities for each service area to be delivered over 12-18 months. Each Head of Service must complete a Delivery Plan.

In addition to assisting the service with monitoring progress against its priorities, the Delivery Plans also:

- support delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities
- demonstrate how the service is aligning with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act
- provide a framework to ensure the priorities arising from the Council's Corporate Assessment are addressed
- facilitate co-ordination of cross cutting strategies etc.
- inform Personal Development Reviews
- enable Internal Audit to conduct its review of Risk Management arrangements as part of agreed work programme.

It is advantageous to include the Equality Objectives within Service Delivery plans and it ensures equality priorities are embedded and mainstreamed throughout service delivery.

All Service Delivery Plans are monitored by the Group Director and Cabinet Member as part of the Council's performance management arrangements

#### **4.2 Self-Assessment**

In addition to Service Delivery Plans we have a well-established and effective self-assessment process in place. The self-assessment process focuses on impact and outcomes of the services being delivered, it leads to improvements in the experiences and the outcomes for our customers.

At the heart of self-assessment are three questions:

- How well are we doing?

- How do we know?
- How can we improve things further?

The process of self-assessment is continuous and an embedded part of the Council's working life.

#### **4.3 Performance Report to Cabinet**

Performance Reports are prepared every quarter. These reports enable Council officers and Councillors to monitor and scrutinise the progress of all Council priorities and services.

We regularly assess and review our progress in the delivery of actions set out in the Council's key plans and also the performance measures within the Council's Corporate Plan and Service Delivery Plans.

#### **4.4 Publication of the Annual Equality Monitoring Report**

The main purpose of an Annual Equality Monitoring Report is to fulfil the Council's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties which includes its progress in delivering the Equality Objectives.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires that all public authorities covered under the specific duties in Wales should produce an Annual Equality Report by 31 March each year.

### **Section 5**

#### **Contacts**

Rhondda Cynon Taf welcomes comments on all aspects of this report, both in what it contains and what it may not make clear enough about the work we intend to do.

If you have any comments or want to know more about the work the Council is doing please contact:

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**Action Plan**

The following objectives and actions will be further developed as part of service areas delivery plans and specific actions plans.

<b>Equality Objective 1</b>		
<b>To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive</b>		
		<b>Link to EHRC Theme</b>
Action 1	Identify community groups that represent the full diversity of the citizens of Rhondda Cynon Taf and develop accessible communication channels with them.	Participation
Action 2	Identify the number of refugees living in Rhondda Cynon Taf that are not already included in settlement programmes.	Participation
Action 3	Undertake an employment needs assessment which will inform specific action points relating to young people, disability and ethnicity.	Employment
Action 4	A community profile to be undertaken for all library areas to better understand the needs of customers.	Participation
Action 5	Undertake research as part of the local housing market needs assessment into the demand for housing needs for disabled people.	Living standards



Action 6	Undertake a review of the Homestep Scheme to ensure equality monitoring questions are appropriate to identify specific needs with an emphasis on the identification of housing needs for young disabled people.	Living standards
Action 7	Improve and develop the collection and recording of customer equality monitoring information across Council service areas.	Participation
Action 8	To evaluate the experience of disabled people who are on the Homefinder register to understand any barriers to accessing adapted accommodation and to identify improvements to the process as a result.	Living Standards
Action 9	Improve and develop monitoring of customer complaints.	All themes
Action 10	Improve local access to information advice and assistance provision for children, young people and families to promote their participation and engagement	Participation

<b>Equality Objective 2</b>		
<b>To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities</b>		
		<b>Link to EHRC Theme</b>
Action 1	A comprehensive review of the recruitment and selection process to increase the diversity of applicants.	Employment
Action 2	Develop and implement an action plan based on the employment needs assessment specifically in relation to young people, disability and ethnicity.	Employment
Action 3	Recommend within the adapted housing review that the Council commits to increasing the number of adapted and accessible homes being built in the area across all tenures.	Living Standards

Action 4	The implementation of the Develop, Invest and Grow project to improve well-being and equality and diversity outcomes in over 100 small medium enterprises in Rhondda Cynon Taf.	Employment and Health
Action 5	To provide accessible information to the public through a variety of formats with a specific focus on improving accessibility of information for the Deaf community.	Participation
Action 5	Undertake development of the use of assistive technology within the Digital Strategy.	Participation and Employment
Action 6	To strengthen existing Homefinder processes to take into account equality and diversity best practice.	Living Standards
Action 7	To further develop an inclusive approach to apprenticeships.	Employment
Action 8	Strengthen the scrutiny process for the Equality Impact Assessment process.	All themes
Action 9	Encourage the uptake of Free School Meal entitlement through reviewing service delivery models and an effective marketing strategy.	Living Standards
Action 10	Take a strategic approach to our town centres which will benefit from investment to ensure an attractive and accessible environment for local businesses, shoppers, residents and visitors.	Participation

<b>Equality Objective 3</b>		
<b>To promote safe communities</b>		
		<b>Link to EHRC Theme</b>

Action 1	Review, develop and re-implement the Hate Crime Strategy.	Justice and Personal Security
Action 2	Review the existing approach to tackling modern slavery.	Justice and Personal Security
Action 3	As part of Education's Well-being Strategy we will develop a programme for schools about raising awareness of emotional abuse in relationships.	Education, Justice and Personal Security
Action 4	Pilot the PERMA model in secondary schools.	Education
Action 5	Strengthen collection and analysis of data for bullying incidents in schools.	Education
Action 6	Further develop the freedom programme with Women's Aid to better understand specific needs for victims of domestic violence from under-represented groups.	Justice and Personal Security

<b>Equality Objective 4</b>		
<b>To reduce the gender pay gap</b>		
		<b>Link to EHRC Theme</b>
Action 1	Deliver the roll out of the performance review process for staff at all grades.	Employment
Action 2	Improve the monitoring of the performance review process.	Employment

Action 3	Better understand whether barriers exist regarding the progression of women into senior positions.	Employment
Action 4	Support the EHRC pledge 'Working Forward' and implement its recommendations.	Employment
Action 5	Understand more about what prevents women returning to the workplace following maternity leave.	Employment

<b>Equality Objective 5</b>		
<b>To create and inclusive workforce</b>		
		<b>Link to EHRC Theme</b>
Action 1	Develop a programme of sexual harassment training and awareness.	Employment, Justice and Personal Security
Action 2	Undertake a review of all our mental health activities and develop annual plans which provide education, training and interventions.	Employment, Health
Action 3	Source and develop a suite of training for managers on equality and diversity topics.	Employment
Action 4	Become more disability confident as an organisation.	Employment
Action 5	Undertake workplace equality monitoring.	Employment
Action 6	Replicate existing good practice to reflect all protected characteristics.	Employment